

ITAM Disconnect

The Most Unique of IT Assets

In an environment where software compliance failures can be both costly and embarrassing, it is not surprising that IT Asset Managers spend great amounts of time, effort, and corporate resources to ensure compliance. Managing to compliance, however, is a classic case of cost-avoidance. Seldom (if ever) does even the most painstaking IT asset management result in increased revenue. Of all the vast, mind-boggling array of IT assets that are actively managed, few have the ability to impact the top-line numbers of a company. Reducing costs, while very worthwhile, is not the same as increasing revenue. However, one of the key methods by which IT Asset Managers can contribute to revenue generation is by ensuring access to the corporation's website. While content may be realm of the marketing mavens, access to that content falls squarely on the shoulders of the IT managers. Insuring that would-be customers are able to consistently reach your site is one the unique opportunities IT managers have for positively impacting the revenue of their organization.

Any business with a web-presence is familiar with domain names. In some cases, a company's domain, Yahoo.com, for example, is so intertwined with the company's "brand" that one becomes indistinguishable from the other. IT managers understand that the domain name is only one aspect of connecting with potential customers. A company's alphanumeric domain name must be translated, or "resolved" into a specific, numeric IP addresses. This translation is accomplished via Domain Name System, or DNS. Without DNS, the most memorable and most branded domain names would be useless. Despite the mission-critical aspect of DNS, it often remains a relative after-thought of IT managers.. until there is a problem.

IT managers are sure to multi-home their network and have redundant web clusters but they often leave their DNS layer as a single point of failure. If the glue layer that binds human "rememberable" names to computer IP addresses is not present for an organization, it would be as if their network connections had failed or their vast web farm simply was offline. Customers attempting to access content and services such as a website or e-mail will be unable to connect. According to a report by the Aberdeen Group, "DNS-related errors are the second most frequent reason for failed Internet connections."

Outsourced, globally redundant, managed DNS eliminates this single point of failure. When DNS is outside of the primary network, network engineers can redirect traffic offsite regardless of their internal network problems. Again, according to Aberdeen, outsourced DNS has been shown to increase DNS performance in accuracy, availability, reliability, and scalability. Three out of four of these improvements are potentially revenue-enhancing.

With such significant advantages to outsourced DNS, why don't more companies go this route? To be certain, more and more companies are adopting the practice since Aberdeen's report was first published in December of 2000. Yet, many companies feel that their current system of internal management is "good enough". DNS' relative low- priority may stem from the fact that it is neither glamorous nor difficult. Further, DNS is only visible when it is not properly working.

IT asset managers owe it to themselves to investigate their company's approach to managing DNS. After a long, hard day of cost-avoidance, wouldn't it be nice to enhance revenue for a change?

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