



Executive Summary

Industry

- Service Provider

Environment

- MPLS network, with NZ and Australian carrier interconnects
- Points of presence (PoPs) across NZ and Australia
- Infrastructure supporting: Fastcom Private IP Network capability and Fastcom Access Resilience (automated failover)

Technology Needs

- Network automation around a highly complex, reliable, flexible, secure, and scalable IP network
- Ability to embed and automate business rules with zero-touch provisioning
- Efficient and rapid onboarding of new capacity and capability to support customer demands

Extreme Solution Components

- Extreme Fabric Connect™
- ExtremeSwitching™ X870 Series and VSP 7200 Series

Results

- Reduced customer onboarding across the network from weeks to days
- Network automation achieved through shortest path routing
- Extreme Fabric Connect enabled significant business growth without having to increase network management resources
- Improved capability and competitiveness to deliver new services quickly and win business



Fastcom Deploys Extreme Fabric to Power Business Growth and Deliver Differentiated Services

Fastcom is a New Zealand-based managed services provider that specializes in networking, telecommunications, cloud, security, business community, and IT services. Central to Fastcom's services and solutions is its own MPLS network that operates in both Australia and NZ, interconnecting with a number of primary carriers in both countries.

Up until 2019, when the company embarked on a strategy to significantly grow and diversify its customer base, Fastcom's business had largely relied on word-of-mouth and referrals. To ensure it could onboard new customers and provision/support networking services both efficiently and cost-effectively as growth accelerated, Fastcom realized that it needed to upgrade its Layer 2 network switching from its existing Cisco and Juniper environment.

"Setting up and managing our customers on our existing IP network was a complex and time-consuming process, so we knew we had to simplify and automate as much as possible to support our future growth."

Craig Allison, Sales Director, Fastcom

Fastcom chose Extreme Fabric Connect as the most efficient switching technology for its Layer 2 IP network, providing Fastcom and its customers with the flexibility, automation, and security needed to deliver greater

resilience and a better overall service. Fabric Connect (based on enhanced Shortest Path Bridging/IEEE 802.1aq) provides Fastcom with a new way to design, build, and operate its network. Fabric Connect uniquely solves many of the limitations of traditional network designs – allowing Fastcom to make network changes more quickly and without risk.

“If we had taken a traditional switching approach with our network upgrade and expansion, the more devices we added across the network, the more we’d need to provision meaning the greater potential for something to go wrong. The mitigation of risk from network changes is critical for us. Deploying Extreme Fabric Connect means almost zero touch from an ongoing management perspective, and configuration on the switches is minimal compared to a conventional deployment.”

Daniel Kinross, CEO, Fastcom

Fastcom completed the entire core network upgrade on its NZ MPLS network, from planning, migration of circuits through to swapping out, and retiring the previous vendor hardware appliances over a nine-month period. The result is a scalable and flexible infrastructure that supports Fastcom’s 20% year-on-year growth target in new customer acquisition and the expansion of its services within its existing customer base. Despite the growth, Fastcom has not had to increase its management overheads and is achieving a rapid return on investment (ROI) from the project.

With Extreme Fabric in place, there is no longer any scheduled downtime associated with upgrades or updates across the network, nor change windows for the provisioning of new services. If technical issues or outages arise on the network, Extreme Fabric automatically applies its shortest path routing to dynamically reconnect the network without dropping any data packets.

“Extreme’s Fabric Networking has significantly de-risked our business for onboarding customers,” said Kinross. “A new connection now means just ten lines of code on added devices, and two pieces of config to connect a new customer from the top of North Island to the bottom of South Island.”

Provisioning of new services and onboarding customers used to take between three and four weeks. That timeframe is now just days. More importantly, with a more resilient, automated infrastructure and less time/effort required to manage it, Fastcom can now focus on building additional capacity and functionality across the network.

“As demand increases, we adjust the supply. For our clients it’s more about throughput, low latency, and contention. Our managed approach solves this by continuing to ensure network capacity caters to demand, with headroom,” said Allison.

“With an increasing use of cloud services, we’ve seen a significant growth in the amount of data our customers are moving across the network. With Extreme Fabric, we’re getting higher uptime and availability that translates into better delivery of services for our customers. We also have, the flexibility to support the range of insourced and outsourced IT services models our customers want,” he continued. “This is allowing us to deliver a comprehensive and highly competitive set of services in the areas of telecommunications, cloud, backup and disaster recovery, security, and connectivity.”

“We are currently only using a fraction of the capabilities of our Extreme Fabric switches, and are now starting to explore the use of Fabric Attach technology to extend the automation, configuration, and management benefits of fabric networking into more devices across the network. This will deliver additional capability and benefits to our customers.”

Daniel Kinross, CEO, Fastcom



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