

SYSTIMAX®

SOLUTIONS

Remote Control Cabling Configuration

The SYSTIMAX® iPatch™ System reduces the need for on-site network technicians at remote offices

Canberra is one of more than 110 Accenture offices in 47 countries employing 75,000 people. It may not be among the largest of these facilities, but Canberra plays its part in making the company a global leader in management consulting and technology services. And, like every other Accenture office, it needs fast, efficient systems to meet corporate standards for customer services and productivity.

The foundation for systems in the Canberra office, which recently moved to newly built premises, is a 300-outlet LAN built using the SYSTIMAX GigaSPEED® Solution. This UTP (unshielded twisted pair) copper cabling system provides performance

exceeding the Category 6 standard and supports gigabit communications to the desktop. So, as demand grows and new network-intensive applications are installed, the office will have all the bandwidth it needs.

When projects start and finish at Accenture offices, demands on their work areas often change. As a result, networks are frequently reconfigured to provide the right data and telephony services precisely where they are needed. The necessary re-patching demands careful planning and execution to ensure vital services are not interrupted and that new connections are right first time.

This presented a dilemma for management at the Canberra office. The scale of their operation did not justify a local network technician; however, they could not risk mistakes in reconfiguring the network. To find a solution, they had to look no further than the suppliers of their network infrastructure, SYSTIMAX® Solutions and its local BusinessPartner, Diverse Data Communications.

The SYSTIMAX iPatch System not only simplified re-patching, Accenture could also link it to their Sydney office via the company's wide area network. This enabled the network administrator in Sydney to download re-patching instructions directly to the



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Clive Beaufoy, Network Operations Lead, Accenture, Australia.

iPatch Network Manager unit in the Canberra office's cabling closet. A member of staff could then follow the step-by-step instructions on the Rack Manager's LCD display, which indicates the patch cord connections to take out and where to re-connect them.

"We maintain the all-important records of network connections in Sydney and, by using the iPatch System, we ensure those records always correspond to the physical reality of the Canberra network," explained Clive Beaufoy, Network Operations Lead, Accenture, Australia. "If the person re-patching in Canberra doesn't execute the changes required, they are automatically alerted - and so is our network administrator in Sydney."

The electronics built into the iPatch panels not only ensures that changes are always executed according to plan, they also send alerts of any unplanned changes. If anyone interferes with the patching, accidentally or otherwise, the iPatch

Systems Manager software on the administrator's PC will warn him and show precisely the connection that is affected.

Based on the well-proven SYSTIMAX 1100 patch panel, the iPatch System saves time and makes the potentially risky re-patching task safer and easier. In addition to showing instructions on an LCD display on the panel, a light automatically illuminates the point where the user should plug in the next connection.

"The system proved ideal for our needs, making important labor savings at offices remote from our central technical resources," said Beaufoy. "It means that they can respond to change quickly in collaboration with network specialists hundreds of miles away - and, equally important, it gives the visibility and control we need to ensure our network assets are always properly configured."

"Network users are starting to see the huge potential of the iPatch System to save them time and money," said David Baird, Director of SYSTIMAX Solutions, South Pacific. "As LANs support increasing numbers of mission-critical applications, the ability of the iPatch System to reduce the risk of patching errors will be increasingly important."

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