What is SmartPatch?

SmartPatch is a highly advanced overlay system that allows network managers the opportunity to have real time visibility of network connectivity and utilisation. The system provides simple and controlled management and recording of common network changes such as those forced by office moves and terminal additions. Referred to as an Intelligent Infrastructure Management System (IIMS), SmartPatch also gives multi-site businesses the tools to effectively monitor and manage all sites from a central location.

The Solution

By adopting Intelligent Infrastructure Management tools as a key part of an IT Service Management strategy, IT Managers can create an infrastructure platform capable of addressing these problems. The ultimate goal is the provision of a 100% accurate, real-time, trusted source of connectivity and asset information that can be incorporated within the core CMDB, and that can be utilised to enhance all associated IT service management tools and processes.

Any physical additions or changes to the network configuration are quickly and accurately planned and executed before being automatically updated and reflected across all management processes, thereby optimising process efficiency and aiding communication and co-ordination between work-streams. Unauthorised events and incidents affecting the infrastructure can be instantaneously identified and forwarded to the appropriate service management tool or team for rectification

The most significant benefits of the system may be summarised as:

• Reduced Cost and Increased Effectiveness of IT Operations
• A Platform for High Availability Network Management Services
• Improved Customer Responsiveness
• Improved Information Quality
• Enhanced Physical Security

Intelligent Infrastructure Management in the office and in the datacentre

Within the datacentre, sufficient space, power and cooling capacity must be allocated to accommodate new application servers. Planning of multiple cable routes is the most time consuming element of the commissioning process and one that is highly susceptible to error, this also extends into the standard office environment. Commissioning a new, or moving an existing, workstation requires significant time and resources to effectively route the required services to the appropriate desktop location.

Prior to the introduction of IIM, the planning of service routing and the subsequent creation of the resulting work orders was a long and complex manual process. Adopting an IIM solution can allow IT managers to simultaneously manage power, cooling and environmental management applications along with space and weight capacities to optimise the process of designing changes.

SmartPatch – the Smart Choice

SmartPatch is the market leading IIM solution, it provides an auto-routing capability within its work order management function that automatically designs routes for the required services to the necessary location via the most efficient and effective cable links available. The work orders required to execute the activity are systematically created, issued and managed by the SmartPatch system. Any actions that do not adhere 100% to the work order are instantaneously identified and rectified if required.

Utilising SmartPatch to automatically provision services within a standard office environment could improve change efficiency (and hence reduce cost) by 40% or more. Within the datacentre IIM has been proven to reduce server service provisioning times by up to 80% whilst simultaneously reducing the number of incidents caused by poorly executed change. If incidents occur SmartPatch can dramatically reduce mean time to resolution (MTTR) by up to 40%.

Successful adoption of IT Service management is critically dependant on a trusted source of documentation. Many organisations currently rely on tribal knowledge and/or numerous sets of spreadsheets, diagrams, whiteboards, post-it notes and the memory of long-serving individuals to document the elements of their physical infrastructure. These methods are no longer acceptable means of managing the IT infrastructure for those organisations that are serious about IT service management.

Principles of Operation

SmartPatch uses a combination of software and hardware to monitor and manage physical network connections. A topology of scanners and intelligent patch panels, send and receive connectivity updates into the SmartPatch for the enterprise (SP4E) software application, providing real-time data and automatically updated records. The software element of Smartpatch not only allows the monitoring and management of physical connectivity, the availability of a fully developed SDK means that the benefits of accurate, real time information can also be integrated into most commonly available network, facilities, configuration and helpdesk management applications.