SPARK DIGITAL EXPANDS POWER MONITORING IN THEIR DATA CENTERS WITH PACKET POWER

Consistency, cost-effectiveness, and ease of use are key factors for New Zealand's largest colocation service provider.

Spark Digital, a leading New Zealand data center services company, wanted to extend its power monitoring capabilities in their existing facilities. Spark selected Packet Power's products because:

- The products are reasonably priced.
- The same products worked in all the targeted facilities, providing a uniform and consistent solution.
- Installation was quick, with minimum disruption to data center operations.
- Packet Power's monitoring network interfaces seamlessly with the company's existing reporting systems.

The installation project went off so well that the company also chose to use Packet Power's monitoring system in a new data center that was built in spring of 2014.

CUSTOMER

Spark Digital

LOCATION: New Zealand

DATA CENTER TYPE: Co-Location and Managed Services

CUSTOMER OBJECTIVES:

- operations management
- **cost allocation**
- energy efficiency
- **data center retrofit**
- cooling

"Packet Power's products were the least intrusive, most cost-effective, and most customer-friendly product when we invested in monitoring improvements in our data centers."

Nigel Furze,
Spark Digital Service Line Manager

ABOUT SPARK DIGITAL

Spark Digital provides New Zealand's private and public sectors with high-performing digital infrastructure via its 20 data halls (over 1,300 racks total) located in all New Zealand's main cities. Spark Digital's racks are primarily used for colocation and Cloud services. In recent recognition of the company's commitment to innovation and excellence, Spark Digital was named a Cisco Innovation Partner of the Year.

Spark Digital's Challenge

Provide additional rack-level power metering, with minimum client inconvenience and maximum ease of installation

Business is good at Spark Digital, the digital services division of New Zealand's country-wide communication services provider, Spark. The company has been building new data centers to accommodate new clients as well as increased demand from existing clients. Spark Digital's data centers are custom-built and designed with a variety of evolving integrated power and environmental monitoring systems all of which needed to remain current with customer expectations for accurate reporting.

This presented a challenge:
Both customers and Spark would benefit from having more accurate real time power and energy usage information, so Spark Digital needed a simple way to augment its existing systems to provide more detailed real time per rack power monitoring to its clients.

The Deciding Factors

Could Spark Digital find a single solution that would work across all of the data centers?

As Spark Digital began to explore its options, its needs quickly became crystal clear. The company needed a power metering solution with the following qualities:

- Works in different data centers with various physical configurations
- Installs easily given the varied setup of the racks
- Installs quickly with minimal disruption
- Works with Spark Digital's existing in-house reporting systems
- Can be installed across time as client and facility schedules permit
- Forwards the company's goal of standardizing its metering systems

ABOUT PACKET POWER

Since 2008, Packet Power wireless power and environmental monitoring has given companies around the world an easier and more cost effective way to deploy power and environmental monitoring in data centers. Packet Power's client's access highly accurate monitoring data via Packet Power's own application or through any third party monitoring system. Most importantly for Spark Digital, its wireless Smart Cables and EMX reporting engine provided a low-hassle, high-ROI solution that worked across their existing data centers.

All options evaluated

Spark looked carefully at all options before making a decision

After evaluating other monitoring products, Spark Digital determined that Packet Power met all the challenges presented. Ultimately, Spark Digital decided that Packet Power's wireless monitoring products were the most effective solution to its challenge of seamlessly augmenting additional power meters into its systems with minimal disruption or complex cabling.

The easy to implement solution

No-fuss installation, happy customers, and some unexpected side benefits

Spark Digital installed a mix of single and three phase Packet Power Smart Cables in three of its data centers. Data from the monitoring units are sent to Packet Power's EMX reporting system, and Spark Digital chose to use the cloud service to link to their standard reporting processes. The relatively low expense to start using Packet Power's products was one of the final deciding factors.

After an inspection to determine the most efficient place to install the Smart Cables, installation was as easy as a plugging in the Smart Cable into the rack PDU. "Power Packet was really useful during the installation process," said Nigel Furze, Spark Digital Service Line Manager. "It was the least intrusive way to set up monitoring."

Spark Digital can now offer all customers the option of billing based on actual power usage. "As a result of installing Packet Power's products, and being able to measure and report on their power usage our customers are able to more simply and accurately measure and monitor their power." Mr. Furze said.

Although Spark Digital has a BMS in place, Packet Power's EMX monitoring and reporting system has been an additional major benefit to Spark Digital in the arenas of billing, customer relations, and internal reporting. According to Mr. Furze, the major advantages of EMX include:

- Spark Digital doesn't have to worry about maintenance or upgrades to the reporting system.
- The EMX interface was online and operational in a flash, with no installation or configuration required by Spark Digital.
- The EMX system collects and exports data in forms that allow Spark Digital to quickly merge it with data from the different reporting systems used in its other data centers, allowing easy company-wide reporting and historical analysis.

HOW SPARK'S EXPERIENCE CAN HELP YOU

Spark Digital did a full assessment of the costs involved in augmenting its data center systems for power monitoring. In addition to the cost of the monitoring device itself, this can include the removal of existing equipment, the write off of any remaining book value of that equipment, Ethernet cables, the cable pulls, switch ports, IT time, and integration into an existing monitoring system or the acquisition, installation and customization of a new DCIM or BMS application. By making it easy to add monitoring to existing equipment, Packet Power's approach saved them time and money compared to other options.

What does the future hold for Spark Digital and Packet Power?

Spark Digital's positive experience led the company to choose Packet Power's products when designing and building a new data center

Spark Digital opened a new data center in Christchurch in spring 2014.

The company's positive experience of deploying Packet Power products led it to choose the EMX Portal and Packet Power's smart cables as part of the monitoring solution. The cables and the EMX Portal are less expensive solutions than standard BMS options, Packet Power's system interfaces seamlessly with the reporting engines in Spark Digital's other data centers, and the headache-free "plug and play" installation boosts the bottom line – not to mention the job satisfaction of employees involved in designing, building and running the new data center.

Packet Power is proud to include New Zealand's premier digital telecommunications company among its satisfied clients, and both companies look forward to working together in the future.

ABOUT DIRECT CONTROL

Direct Control has been installing electronic automation control systems for over 20 years and is Packet Powers New Zealand partner. Offering individual systems design and installation along with complete integration capabilities, Direct Control provides cost effective 'state of the art' solutions designed to be provided in ways that improve business strategies and decisions.