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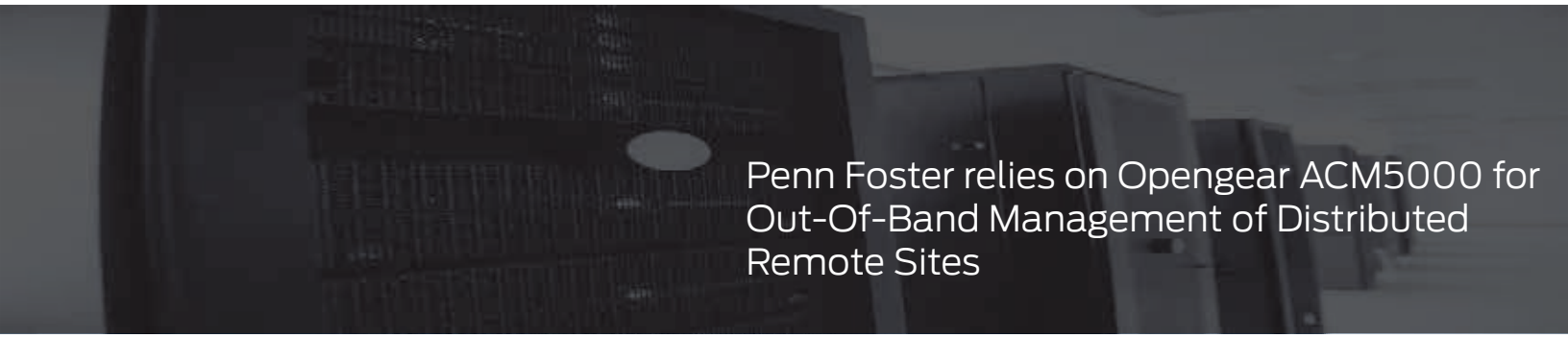


Penn Foster relies on Opengear ACM5000 for Out-Of-Band Management of Distributed Remote Sites

SUMMARY

PENN FOSTER CAREER SCHOOL

Industry:
Education

Customer Profile:
Penn Foster has been a pioneer and leader in helping students achieve their higher education goals for more than 28 years through college and graduate school test preparation and private tutoring. Penn Foster is one of the world's leading providers of accredited distance education.

Challenge:

- Provide simple and cost effective tools for securely and remotely managing network, power and computer devices installed at remote locations.
- Centralized outbound dialing gateway to initiate calls to remote site.

Selection Criteria:
Penn Foster initiated a network infrastructure upgrade, aimed at enhancing out-of-band management tools.

Network Solution:
Opengear secure ACM5000 Remote Monitoring and Management Gateway

Results:

- Enhanced security and visibility of the mission-critical distributed network infrastructure performed Out-Of-Band.
- Penn Foster's IT department now has anywhere, anytime secure access to core network infrastructure to ensure uptime.
- Improved performance, scalability and agility at the edge

CHALLENGES

With more than 200,000 active students worldwide, Penn Foster prides itself on providing convenient, affordable and open access to a secondary and post-secondary education. Contributing significantly to the organization, the IT department at Penn Foster plays a key role in ensuring uptime of the IT infrastructure and online learning sites to continuously provide an academically rich learning environment.

Technology is inseparably linked with learning today, and with an explosion of students using laptops, tablets, and smartphones to access online courses, Penn Foster needed a secure out-of-band mechanism to ensure consistent delivery of educational material to an ever expanding IT infrastructure.

The IT department at Penn Foster was faced with the challenge of upgrading their out-of-band network access to a secure next generation platform that would scale to meet their growing, new demands.

With limited IT personnel at satellite facilities, Penn Foster was driven to find a solution that would:

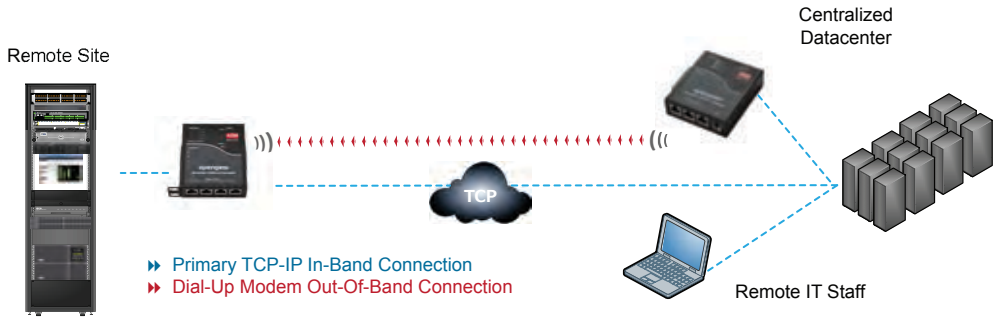
- Centralize the origin of outbound dialing to remote locations.
- Operate as a secure dial-in gateway at remote locations for out-of-band access.
- Monitor and manage APC battery backup systems and deliver secure remote access to the management interfaces to core routing and switching components.
- Provide the best value and functionality at the lowest possible price.

> "Opengear goes well beyond traditional console server functionality providing monitoring/alerting of UPS, serving as an outbound dial RAS server, and of course providing out-of-band access."
>
> - Thomas Jones
> Network Engineer with The Princeton Review Inc.

Centralized Outbound Dialing to Remote Locations

Secure out-of-band access to distributed IT equipment has been crucial for enterprise customers to eliminate the need for onsite remote IT staff or service calls to handle outages. Not only does this save travel costs, but out-of-band access also reduces recovery time in the event of unplanned outages to ensure remote site productivity.

Traditionally, out-of-band access to remote sites during unplanned network outages has been accomplished using analog modem connections. This solution is secure, robust and still widely deployed throughout the world. As technology changes, the overhead for maintaining analog modem requirements for remote IT staff has become and issue for IT management. Most modern laptops and tablets lack internal modems to allow for IT staff on the road or working from home to connect easily to remote sites. Opengear has met this challenge with centralizing the outbound dial connectivity and enabling fremote IT staff to securely connect via a VPN and then trigger an outbound call to remote sites.



Penn Foster's Power Management Imperative

Power failures, spikes, supply surges and brown-outs remain a fact of life - as do the service disruptions, data corruption and mangled file systems that result from such power interruptions. The Uninterruptable Power Supply (UPS) shields critical network infrastructure by maintaining a continuous supply of electric power to connected equipment. Its rechargeable batteries supply emergency power in the event of power loss and if the power loss is extensive the UPS can signal to initiate an orderly power down sequence.

It is imperative that the UPS systems are monitored closely as each one will only provide power for a limited period of time and will require graceful shutdowns for IT equipment in the event of extended power outages.

Penn Foster, like other organizations have deployed more than one brand of UPS system. This can cause management headaches and require proprietary software. Opengear provides the freedom from a single vendor solution by allowing for agnostic UPS systems management. Opengear's unique ability to provide instant notifications and visibility into distributed battery backup systems both in-band and out-of-band gives the IT department at Penn Foster peace of mind.

Low Total Cost of Ownership

Penn Foster was able to improve performance, scalability and agility at the network edge, for a fraction of the cost for any competitor's offering. The result is a drastic reduction in the need for expensive on-site technical staff, on-site visits and improvements in critical network availability.

"I am very impressed with the Opengear ACM5003-M. For the price and functionality I haven't found anything that comes close."

- Thomas Jones

Network Engineer with The Princeton Review Inc.

Key Features: Opengear ACM5000

- Small form factor remote monitoring and management gateway for serial console ports, network hosts, UPS and PDU's, available with environmental monitoring
- 2, 3 or 4 serial ports, Ethernet, USB, V.92 Internal Modem, optional 802.11, 3G Cellular, environmental monitoring
- Internal 4GB Flash Memory for storing offline log data and localized copies of running configuration files
- Heartbeat Monitor with Automatic Failover to out-of-band connection
- Enterprise grade security for compliance with data center access and security policies

About Opengear:
Opengear designs and manufactures next generation console server and cellular router solutions for secure remote access and control of IT devices such as routers, switches, servers, firewalls, uninterruptable power supplies, power distribution units and environmental monitoring devices.

Opengear is privately held with offices in USA, UK and Australia. For more information, please visit www.opengear.com.

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