

INDIA'S ONLY IT BUSINESS WEEKLY!

EXPRESS Computer



Networking the mutual fund industry

CAMS implemented Dax Networks' WAN solution for servicing the mutual fund industry, which helped it maintain service delivery timelines with 24/7 uptime. By **Renuka Vembu Page 15**



IVR: making payments easier

atom Technologies launched IVR (Interactive Voice Response) payment services in the market, which enables remote payments over the phone by punching credit card details on any landline/mobile phone key pad

Page 19

PEER-TO-PEER

Networking the mutual fund industry

CAMS implemented Dax Networks' WAN solution for servicing the mutual fund industry, which helped them maintain service delivery timelines and 24/7 uptime. Renuka Vembu gets into the details



Computer Age Management Services (CAMS) is engaged in providing transaction processing and customer care services to the mutual fund industry. They have adopted advanced technology for servicing their clients through the service centers that is spread across all the major cities in the country.

The service delivery timelines and maintaining uptime 24/7 remains critical to the company. The criticality here assumes added

importance because of the volatile nature of stock markets and price variations which affect the Net Asset Value of mutual fund schemes. Timeline was a critical aspect as all of CAMS's activities were time sensitive and needed close monitoring due to the financial impact. This was coupled with the fact that the solution had to cater to the large retail investors' financial and non-financial transactions processing requirements.

The objective

The company needed a WAN solution primarily to facilitate transaction processing for investors located across the length and breadth of a vast country like India. After looking at multi-parameter based evaluation like costs, convenience, connectivity, dependability, reputation, support, etc., they selected Dax Networks as their chosen vendor. "The idea behind seeking a WAN solution is that a private network

will be more easily amenable to customized infrastructure and effective to criticality and operations management," said N K Ramakrishna, Vice President, Technology, CAMS, Chennai. In each of the locations, the company has now deployed 1+1 router configuration.

The implementation

The pilot run and the first phase was executed in Chennai in 2005. He added, "We deployed the solution in a phased manner due to the load traffic, i.e. based on transaction intensity across the geography. This was the natural choice in our case, considering the huge transaction volumes we process every business day and its financial implications."

From then on, year after year, CAMS has been increasing its investor service centers across India. The network topology has remained the same throughout. In total, under this project, Dax's Routing solutions have been deployed across the country in over 140 Investor Service Centers of CAMS that are connected in real-time to their back office in Chennai.

Work process

The remote investor service centers are connected to the data center through a Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) network. In each investor service center, Dax has deployed dual DX-805E routers configured in 1+1 mode. DX-805E router is terminated with one high speed serial link and additional slot for voice.

DX-805E has a comprehensive suite of software features built in, including routing features such as RIP, OSPF, BGP4, which is required for domain differentiation as well as VoIP software suite.

Following Dax's highly structured pilot run, the implementation went through smoothly. Dax has multi service provider termination and hot standby option across two routers in each center, and this thereby ensures that CAMS is assured of 99.99% uptime and will be able to maintain its SLA even in remote cities at a nominal cost.

Problem areas

The challenges faced by CAMS fell in three broad categories—connectivity, technology infrastructure and business continuity plan. To explain it in depth would be:

The first challenge was the need for a solution where the network downtime was zero with no manual intervention. Dax addressed this by combining cost-efficient and guaranteed uptime solution by positioning two routers in each location. While the first router handles the

Implementation in a nutshell	
Company	CAMS
Solution	Dax Networks' MPLS based connectivity of investor service center across the country to the data center based in Chennai and redundant connectivity to DR site
Aim of implementation	To connect the investor service center with the data center and provide 24x7 uptime
Year/ Time of implementation	First phase in 2005
Cost of implementation	Apart from the product costs and the bandwidth costs, there were no major investment costs
Phases of the implementation	First phase started in the year 2005. As and when investor service centers were added, they were connected to data center with Dax solution. As of today, 147 investor service centers are connected through Dax solutions
Challenges faced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Connectivity ■ Technology infrastructure ■ Business continuity plan
Benefits	CAMS realized high price-performance and value for money solution with guaranteed critical network uptime

secured VPN link, the pre-configured second router was made available for critical link uptime, in case the primary router failed.

CAMS wanted Box level redundancy in the router, which was addressed through features, viz. standard VRRP (Virtual Router Redundant Protocol) and proprietary VBRP (Virtual Backup Redundant Protocol). This means that a futuristic setup of concurrent WAN links with multiple routers over the secured VPN networks would still benefit from router level redundancy vide Dax routers.

CAMS wanted special technical and warranty support to address any critical post sales requirement across the country. They got a customer friendly SLA from Dax which further assured them of the right choice of their critical infrastructure investment.

Benefits leveraged

In each of the locations, CAMS has deployed 1+1 router configuration. This redundancy in design has helped them in ensuring availability at all times.

CAMS has got high price-performance and value for money solution with guaranteed critical network uptime. The pre-configured redundant router option at all the locations ensured total protection for safe connectivity. A comprehensive three year warranty backed up by stringent SLA option protects

CAMS investment.

Investment put in

Only the product costs and bandwidth costs were the investment put in by CAMS. All the cost heads put together provided them with a solution where transaction processing achieved significant economy in term of cost (including opportunity cost), convenience and reliability.

The next level

As the company is expanding with additional bandwidth between its data center and disaster recovery site, they have started implementing 10G backbone bandwidth termination using Dax's Layer 3 switch, DX-0524GT, between these sites.

Ramakrishna asserted, "This is an ongoing project. Initially the project was implemented for a few of our locations in the year 2005. The first phase of implementation was completed by connecting 140 locations. As of today, the scalability of networking has increased and the number of locations being connected is more than 200. Every year, CAMS has been increasing its investor's service center across India and Dax will continue to provide the connectivity solutions as per CAMS requirement."

As the next phase of the project, Dax will be implementing WAN solution for an additional 75 locations. ■

renuka.vembu@expressindia.com

The challenges faced by CAMS fell in three broad categories—connectivity, technology infrastructure and business continuity plan