zpe

Banking on Modernization to Protect a Large Financial Firm

Customers demand high levels of security for even the smallest banking transactions. For a large financial firm with branches across the globe, this requirement is no different. Dealing in private banking, asset & real estate management, investing, and other areas, the company relies on reliable and secure networking to protect their patrons. From the ground up, they need a system that safeguards sensitive data — whether for processing simple account deposits, signing and storing property financing agreements, or complying with audits and regulations.

The Challenge

Providing a secure experience means having the appropriate tools. But the banking firm's legacy out-of-band system was showing its shortcomings.

With many console servers and management gateways, the company's staff had too many tasks to juggle for everyday operations. Server and power management were separate, and their existing solution offered no control of critical automatic transfer switches (ATS). All of this meant their network vulnerabilities were growing along with the potential for critical failures.

They needed an updated solution that could meet evolving security & management requirements. This would mean:

• Modernizing their systems with consolidated appliances
• Gaining centralized management access for multi-vendor configurations
• Meeting security, auditing, & compliance requirements

The caveat was that although they needed to rapidly adopt a new setup, they would need to do so by taking a gradual, step-by-step approach. This would help them prevent major disruptions and minimize implementation risks while continuing to meet business needs.

The company deployed a two-part Nodegrid solution to address their challenges.

They replaced their out-of-band devices with the Nodegrid Serial Console (NSC). This appliance features a highly secure OS with high port counts and a powerful Intel® processor, which meant they could connect their entire stack to a single box. From routers & switches, to PDUs & UPS devices, the NSC was able to efficiently process every connection while serving as a secure, unified access gateway.

The second critical piece that the company deployed was Nodegrid Manager. The software installed easily from a non-dependent ISO image, and allowed them to gain centralized control of their entire system. Coupled with the NSC, Nodegrid Manager would prove essential to meeting all of the firm's requirements.
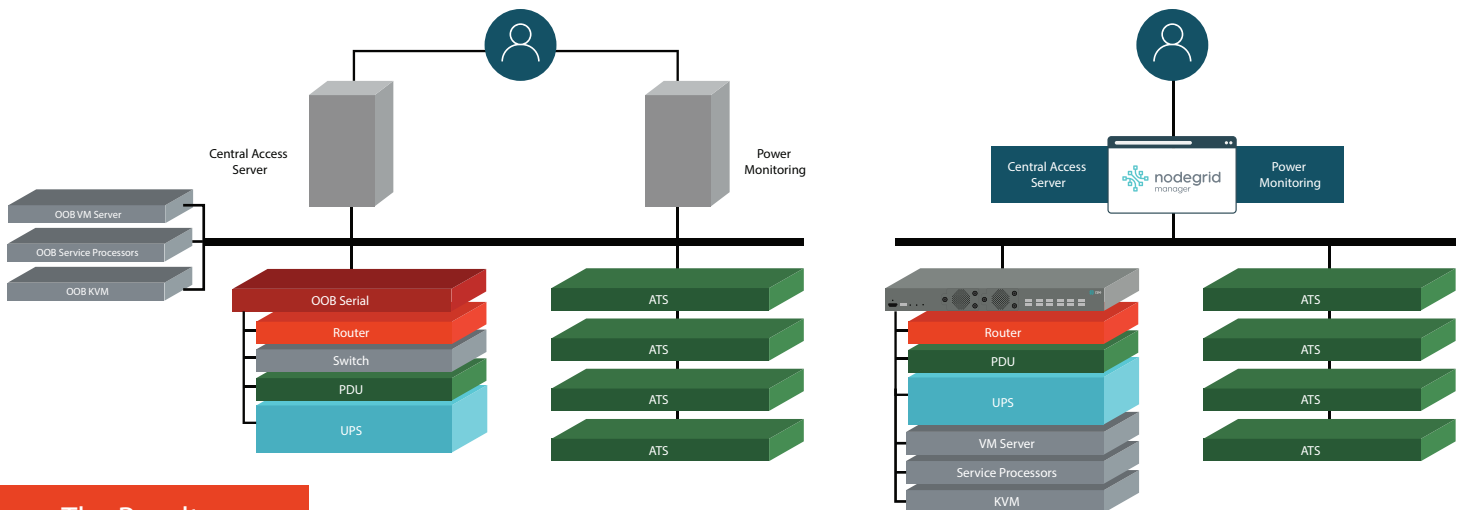
The Results

As a result of adopting the Nodegrid solution, the financial company was able to streamline and fortify their distributed networks — all the while taking the phased approach that they desired.

The NSC allowed them to eliminate many out-of-band devices, and instead unify control of their stack with a single appliance. They were able to gradually implement each NSC at the rack level and set up a system that allows for secure remote access to their entire stack. Nodegrid Manager was used to centralize server and power management, as well as to implement a power monitoring solution that was unsupported by their legacy configuration.

Their Nodegrid solution also served as the foundation for:

• Updating their security features to meet changing standards, even into the future.
• Implementing better traceability and auditing — Through features like data logging and event notifications, the customer could fully document all actions performed on Nodegrid & end devices, as well as who performed each action.
• Complying with legal requirements — Legal stipulations prohibit using end-of-life (EOL) systems. The company chose Nodegrid because of its long product life cycle, which allows for ongoing compliance long into the future.

From the onset, the financial enterprise's main concerns revolved around security and controllability. By modernizing their existing network configuration, they were able to implement a robust system that would strengthen weak points and help them avoid failures. They also gained unified and comprehensive management capabilities, for complete benefits like:

• Savings on deployment time & cost, using powerful hardware as a foundation
• Ease of use with a vendor-neutral solution for centralized management
• Ongoing peace of mind for compliance, thanks to a long solution life cycle
• Logging for compliance and auditing, with notifications for rapid resolution

Using traditional solutions would have significantly prolonged a gradual implementation, or forced the company to opt for an all-at-once approach. But with Nodegrid, they phased in their new solution even for their large-scale deployment. This led to simpler implementation and savings on resources, while allowing them to find and fix issues as they gradually presented themselves. They avoided running two different solutions side by side and the potentially catastrophic problems that accompany such an approach.

They also achieved a unified, easy-to-use management platform that gave them control of all their systems — including their ATS devices. Nodegrid Manager provided secure remote access to every level of their infrastructure, and gave them normalized commands across vendor solutions. This allowed their network staff to greatly reduce response times and maintain secure connectivity, so their global customers could remain online and protected. Because they could now monitor and control their ATS systems as well, they could defend against downtime and ensure the appropriate switches would be used in the event of a power failure.

Finally, they no longer needed to worry about a growing gap in security or how to juggle EOL systems. Nodegrid delivered built-in protection and customizable features, so the company could meet security requirements regardless of future changes. ZPE Systems also continues to provide support and updates to even the oldest Nodegrid products, which means the financial firm implemented a solution that will remain well within compliance for many years to come.

If you need to retrofit or modernize your network infrastructure, ZPE Systems' Nodegrid will take you into the future. As traditional configurations continue to fall short at many levels — from security to management, and everywhere in between — enterprises now realize that only flexible networking will withstand tomorrow's challenges. Nodegrid provides extensible hardware and software to help you evolve with changing requirements.

Call or visit our website for a free demo, and see how you can give your network a head start on the future.