



ONE WEEK WITH

and



John

Carol

John manages a growing mid-sized enterprise DC. He's hands on, always on the go. John demands a lot from himself and from his staff.

Carol manages a mid-sized co-lo data center. She's very strategic and takes a long-range view. Just as energetic as John, but always seems to have things under control.

While John and Carol work in different environments, they have similar challenges.

Both are responsible for managing **high-density, heavily-meshed leaf-spine fiber networks** that are **quickly growing and evolving**.

Despite limited staff and increased expectations, they must:

- Ensure three 9s of availability
- Develop a best-fit solution for seamless, easy-to-scale migration to 25G/40G/100G
- Manage personnel for highest productivity at lowest cost.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES

John uses the hands-on method. He decides to continue managing the network infrastructure manually using a combination of custom-designed spreadsheets and the occasional sticky note. It's not perfect, he admits, but at least he doesn't have to change anything. He'll just ask his staff to work harder and put in a little more overtime, just like he does.

Carol is convinced that, given her network's size and growth rate, she has reached a tipping point—managing her network manually is inviting risk that will only continue to increase. She decides the time is right to invest time and precious CapEx in selecting and implementing an automated infrastructure management (AIM) system. Yes, there will be a learning curve and upfront cost, but she's calculated that the right solution can begin paying for itself shortly.



Six months later, John is still plodding along (although at a more frenetic pace) and Carol has her AIM solution up and running and her staff is getting used to it. Let's spend a week with each and see how they're doing.

MONDAY MORNING



Even before John and Carol get into the office, they get calls that a critical application has lost the connection to the switch and has gone down.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY, LOW MTTR



John is in the office by 7:35am and his staff has been searching for over an hour, trying to locate the disconnected ports.

It's all hands on deck as they check server connectivity—one port at a time. With more than 2,300 ports and miles of cabling, it could take half a day to bring the server back on line. And spreadsheet logs aren't much help! Not the way John wanted to begin his week.



Carol is in the office by 7:45am. She scans her email and takes a minute to call her husband. The disconnected server? That was taken care of before she left home.

Her AIM system sent an alert to Carol and her crew showing the location of the disconnected ports and exact time the server went down. A quick call to her tech manager confirmed that the issue had been resolved immediately.

MONDAY AFTERNOON



Just after lunch, both John and Carol hear that familiar "ping" on their phones; a calendar reminder that two unused servers need to be decommissioned today in order to reduce the power usage and free up rack space and switch ports

DIFFICULTY MANAGING LARGE AND COMPLEX DC ROOMS

John can't remember where the servers are located. He does remember making a note of it and starts rummaging around the notes on his desk to try and find it.

He finally locates and decommissions the servers. But the tech forgot to disconnect the patch cords to the switch, creating yet another unused switch port that does nothing but consume power and occupy valuable ports.

In less than 30 seconds, Carol has used the AIM system to find both servers and created work orders to decommission both immediately.

She emails the jobs to the assigned technician and reminds him to disconnect the patch cords and post confirmation of the finished job to the AIM system so she can cross it off her list. She goes upstairs for a cappuccino.



TUESDAY



It's late afternoon and John and Carol are packing up to head home when they get a call from a Sales VP. A bank of servers at another data center owned by the organization has been deployed for a new customer and he needs them to go live immediately! John and Carol need to work with a smaller data center team on the other side of town to handle the connectivity.

MANAGE REMOTE LOCATIONS WITHOUT REMOTE SKILLED STAFF

"Are you kidding me?," John thinks to himself. "I know where that place is and it has no skilled staff. I'll have to send somebody down there." It's 5:50pm, raining and traffic is at a standstill. Instead of trying to sweet talk a tech into going, he decides to go himself.

"I was leaving anyway," he grumbles as he pulls on his raincoat.



"No problem," Carol chirps. She opens her AIM dashboard and locates the remote facility. "Good luck to anyone trying to get out there at this hour," she thinks to herself. Accessing the facilities asset list, she looks for the best way to connect those servers to the required switch ports. "Bingo," she says as she creates a work order with all connections needed.

In the remote data center, a port LED begins blinking while Carol calls the facility's administrator. "Josh, do me a favor. If you go to Row 5A at the very end, you'll see a red port LED flashing. Please, connect the port; the AIM system will send me the new connection alert. Thanks, I'm headed home."

WEDNESDAY



On John and Carol's to-do lists: provision a new circuit in preparation for bringing a new HelpDesk application on line.

SMART & GUIDED CIRCUIT PROVISIONING

It's noon and John's team has spent the past hour looking for the right server. Once they find it, it might take another hour to isolate the server ports, cables and cords, and panel ports that need to be connected. After that, they'll need to aggregate the 10G links to a 40G port. Then they'll have to manually configure the port and server access settings.

Halfway through the process, one of John's techs turns to his co-worker and asks sarcastically, "Are we having fun yet?"



It's noon and Carol's team is enjoying lunch at their favorite Mexican restaurant. Earlier in the day, they used their AIM system to select source and destination ports of the circuit. The system mapped them automatically (aggregation ports included).

Once Carol approved the configuration and settings, the AIM system handled the rest, executing the programmed task orders and sending Carol confirmation of the successful provisioning. The whole process took about 15 minutes.

Olé!



THURSDAY



Last month was a busy one at both John and Carol's facilities. There were a lot of moves, adds and changes. Their respective bosses have asked John and Carol to run a full physical layer audit to ensure their databases are accurate and up to date.

IMPROVE EFFICIENCY

John has blocked a solid week for the audit and has scheduled it to begin on Monday. He is spending today updating and preparing spreadsheets, assigning his techs to prepare rows and racks, and making sure there is enough staff to cover the control room and phone calls. Each audit is filled with surprises, so he really doesn't know what to expect.



Carol's audit is scheduled for today—during her lunch break, to be more specific. Because her system automatically recognizes and logs any change in the AIM physical layer connectivity, the information is accurate, up to date and instantly accessible. Carol generates an audit report, which also provides a detailed profile for every asset.



FRIDAY



It's the end of the month. Time for John and Carol to compile their SLA metrics for the month.

MEASURING AND MEETING SLAs

Between the server outage on Monday, the last-minute trip to the remote data center Tuesday evening and preparing for next week's asset audit, John either didn't have time or forgot to record his staff hours for connectivity tasks, troubleshooting and incident management. He is torn between just using last month's numbers or telling his boss the truth.

Either way, it's going to be a long weekend.



Carol waits until her last job ticket is closed out at 5:55pm, then she logs into the AIM dashboard, pulls up her custom reports menu and runs a previously configured report. She checks the metrics she needs... they look good. She downloads the report to a spreadsheet and comparing with last month's report, she prints some trending graphics. She emails the reports to her boss and heads for home.

It's going to be another great weekend!



WHAT WILL YOU ACCOMPLISH THIS WEEK?

Managing higher fiber densities, point-to-multipoint connections and heavily-meshed leaf-spine architectures requires unprecedented visibility, intelligence and control within your cabling system.

AIM systems from CommScope let you monitor and document your cabling infrastructure—end to end—plus track the location of all connected devices, in real time.

- Improve operational efficiency
- Minimize downtime and MTTR
- Increase staff productivity
- Reduce the total operating cost of your physical layer

For more information on AIM systems from CommScope download our Brochure: [imVision® Automated Infrastructure Management](#)

AIM provides visibility of your DC connectivity!