


Small business marketing firm chooses Cygna Diamond IP toolset for IP address management

A decorative graphic on the left side of the page features several paper airplanes. One is bright yellow and is positioned higher than the others, which are in various shades of blue. They are all angled upwards and to the right, suggesting forward motion and progress.

The Constant Contact IT team was facing a familiar challenge — trying to manage a rapidly growing IP address inventory with an ever-more-complex combination of spreadsheets. It was time to change. Frank Murphy, Constant’s Manager of Network Engineering, wanted a flexible solution that would support process automation and help deliver greater business efficiencies.

IPControl™ from Cygna emerged as the perfect solution. It’s proved to be straightforward-to-deploy and easy-to-use, while dependability and flexibility come as standard fitments. Frank is pleased with the results, and the team has more time to focus on other tasks.



IPControl has worked well for us. The devices were easy to set up in our network, and the system is very stable and flexible. As well as IP address management, it allows us to manage other IP network information, such as VLANs.

Frank Murphy, Manager of Network Engineering, Constant Contact, Inc.

Constant Contact solves IP address management challenges with Cygna's Diamond IPControl™

Challenge

In little more than a decade, Constant Contact has become one of the leading providers of marketing tools for small businesses. Today, more than half a million small businesses worldwide use Constant Contact's tools – which now include email marketing, social media marketing, event marketing, local deals, digital storefronts, and online surveys – to create and grow relationships with their customers. Headquartered in Waltham, Massachusetts, the company also has offices in California, Colorado, Florida, and New York as well as in London, England.

Given the nature of its core business, it's no surprise that the company has an extensive IT infrastructure, along with dozens of web-based customer applications, all requiring IP addresses. Like many firms, Constant Contact had managed IP address allocation using spreadsheets, but it had reached the point where this presented an unacceptable degree of business risk.

Frank Murphy, manager of network engineering at Constant Contact, explains: "We used a shared spreadsheet, but that meant only one person could work on it at any one time. We had also experienced corruption issues and constantly ran the risk of the file being overwritten or accidentally deleted. We knew that there had to be a better way."

The company researched the market for IP address management (IPAM) tools. "We wanted a mature, centralized system for managing IP addresses that would support a multi-user environment, with access control and role assignment options," continues Frank Murphy. "It also needed to offer APIs that we could use to automate some of those tasks and allow us to integrate DNS provisioning."

Solution

Constant Contact selected the solution offered by Cygna. "We chose Cygna's Diamond IPControl" "because of its better ability than other products we looked at to manage our existing active directory DNS," confirms Frank Murphy. Running on UNIX, LINUX, and Windows platforms, IPControl is available as a software application or pre-installed on Sapphire™ appliances. It provides centralized, full lifecycle management of mission-critical IPAM functions, including IPv4 and IPv6 address space assignment, allocation, reallocation, pool monitoring, utilization tracking and creation, and deployment of multi-vendor DNS and DHCP configurations.

Constant Contact chose a high-availability configuration comprising two Sapphire EX10 appliances with pre-installed IPControl software. The first supports the active IPAM environment and is hosted at the company's prime data center in the Boston area. The other appliance is configured as a standby device in the company's disaster recovery data center. Real-time replication between the two assures business resilience.

The solution is dimensioned to provide Constant Contact with sufficient capacity to meet business growth for the foreseeable future and also support the company's planned adoption of IPv6.

Set up was straightforward with the biggest challenge being the extraction of IP address data from existing spreadsheets that did not follow a common convention. With the data imported into IPControl, a brief period of dualsystem running followed to build confidence, before full-scale switchover over

to IPControl as the company's sole IPAM environment. The Cygna Diamond IP solution also included three professional services days to help Constant Contact fully exploit the platform.

Value

Cygna's Diamond IPControl has allowed Constant Contact to integrate all DNS, DHCP and IPAM functions, accessed through a uniform graphical user interface. This has helped the company improve efficiency, security, and reliability of IPAM tasks. The IPControl appliance dashboard provides a centralized portal enabling monitoring, troubleshooting, and reconfiguration of the Sapphire appliances as necessary via an easy-to-learn and easy-to-use web-based user interface.

Business agility has been enhanced, too. The IPControl solution allows IPAM tasks to be effectively delegated to administrators across the enterprise, reducing the burden on the central team. Constant Contact has designated roughly 20 authorized IPControl administrators. This multi-user capability allows changes and additions to be made by different people concurrently, introducing a degree of flexibility not available before.

Frank Murphy concludes: "Cygna's Diamond IPControl has certainly met our expectations. It's very stable and easy to work with, and we use it daily to reserve IP addresses and create new networks. We have also started to leverage the APIs to automate tasks." An example of this is the development of an automated process for server provisioning that is improving speed and efficiency of delivery.



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Frank Murphy, Manager of Network Engineering, Constant Contact, Inc.

Core services

- IPControl™ software pre-loaded on Sapphire EX appliances from Cygna Diamond IP
- Professional services for implementation and exploitation

Toll Free: (844) 442-9462

International: +1 (305) 501-2430

Fax: +1 (305) 501-2370

Sales: sales@cygnalabs.com

Support: support@cygnalabs.com

Billing: finance@cygnalabs.com

cygnalabs.com