

Following the green brick road

STEVE HERMAN, Vice President of Data Center Business Development at CBTS, gives the low down on data center dos and don'ts.

What would be your top tips on how to go about getting the most out of your data center? Are there any important dos and don'ts?

Steve Herman. First, be aware of the future, but do not try to future-proof. Customers in our facilities continue to add storage capacity and processing power at a very progressive rate. To this end, plan for the growth and ongoing needs of the data center, but do not try to over-build or over-engineer the facility for massive power density. Over-building the facility day-one traps capital, increases operating budgets and dilutes the value of the data center to the business.

Secondly, know your data center's capabilities and limitations. Many data centers I have seen have been constructed over a period of years and many times these facilities have seen ongoing modifications. As infrastructure is added to the facility, it is critical that the facility not go through 'organ rejection', thus leaving a point of failure that was not present or even known.

Thirdly, establish and adhere to strict process and procedures for operations excellence. We have all seen data centers that have cardboard boxes stacked to the roof, or cabinets of spaghetti wiring, the semi-hot/semi-cold isle deployments, and one of my favorites, the MIA maintenance program. You have invested time and energy into your data center processes, it is criminal to allow them to be compromised. The core of the data center is to support the business, make sure your facility is doing just that.

Finally, follow the green brick road. The day of reckoning is coming; where metrics for power consumption and exactly how/where the power is actually being consumed is in

our near future. These metrics should help you manage your facility and tune the infrastructure to maximize its capabilities. Now is the time to start, leverage the metrics to make data driven decisions regarding the lifecycle of the current facility.

What is the key challenge that organizations are facing in terms of gathering and managing data? How does your solution help overcome this obstacle?

SH. Organizations are now facing the explosion of storage. If you consider one vertical of storage – video, it is mind-bending how much data customers are storing; video for surveillance, online social networks, entertainment and so on. CBTS provides enabling technology for corporations to deploy their storage requirements. We provide premier data center facilities located within a geographic area that are interconnected with a private and redundant DWDM network. This network enables customers to perform real-time replication of storage across sub-millisecond primary and redundant network paths. Thus, if customers desire to utilize the facilities for a worldwide production SAP deployment, we can provide the enabling services. If a customer's business driver is to deploy an archival solution (of-flood the labor intensive backups), we provide that enabling service.

Virtualization is possibly one of the most overused (and, for that matter, misused) terms in networking today; nevertheless, its potential – when implemented correctly – is enormous. What are the benefits of virtualization and what role do you play in this sector?

SH. X86 virtualization allows us to transform servers and storage into network devices. Through virtualization and effective cloud architectures we can provide ubiquitous, inexpensive computing resources that will make

the hypothetical utility models of the past a sustainable and profitable reality for the future. Over the next year you will see the term cloud computing slowly replaced by virtual datacenter. Cloud will be relegated to the public internet space. CBTS' role is to address the unique concerns of enterprise business customers looking to realize the cost advantages of utility computing without sacrificing security and control.

What new developments can we expect to

see from you over the next six to 12 months?

SH. As a tier-2 data center provider, we will expand our flexible solutions outside our current footprint. You will see announcements over the next six to 12 months demonstrating our national expansion of our data center footprint. ■



Steve Herman is Vice President of Data Center Business Development at CBTS. He is responsible for data center site analysis and procurement, data center construction and data center migration and integration for enterprise customers.