Case Study

LinkRunner

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Director of Technology at a educational organization with 201-500 employees

✓ Review by a Real User

✓ Verified by PeerSpot

What is our primary use case?

We use it for general connectivity issues and trying to determine throughput on fiber and throughput on the wired part of the network. We have a lot of excess network traffic and we are trying to determine if it is inherent to a particular run of fiber or a particular network switch. We've been chasing activity around campus for most of the year, including VLANs and things of that nature. A lot of it was pretty simply explained and it was really easy to see on this device.

How has it helped my organization?

The AutoTest feature is really important because it saves time. Instead of chasing something down the old, manual way, with a ping test and a

tracer, and a tone-tester loop-back process, AutoTest saves me something like eight to 10 hours every week.

In terms of network validation, and copper and fiber Ethernet configuration, I can't imagine life without LinkRunner devices. The minute I got the 10G, everybody was fighting over it. They had never used such a device before and it was just breathtaking for them to very quickly see the validation you can gain from these devices. Without one, it's a manual process where you're chasing your head in circles.

When it comes to troubleshooting, I don't even know how to measure its value. It gives you the information you need, when you need it, very quickly. When you're dealing with a school, like we are, you don't have a lot of time. When technology breaks, learning stops, and that's the core product. I can't imagine not having

something like this to help me and my team track down intermittent issues. The amount of time it saves me on troubleshooting varies but I would estimate it's several hours a week, on average.

The speed of the device means that, for what we're looking for, it usually takes 30 seconds to a minute.

Another benefit is the automatic upload of test results to the Link-Live Cloud Service. Over a period of a month, that feature saves me several hours. I can look back on a particular activity at the time it happened and know what we tested and what we found. It has demonstrated its value that way very easily.

What is most valuable?

You can very easily see the VLAN structures and which port is involved on the switch. A lot of detailed information comes back.

It's also helpful that I have both my devices connected to email. Every time they're used I get an email that shows me the test results—fail/pass—and the details around it. When I get back, I review where I was and recall all the details without having to scribble them down on a piece of paper.

If the results were not automatically saved to NetAlly's free Link-Live Cloud Service, it would lose a lot of effectiveness. Without that, you would have to depend on the memory of the device or walk around with a notepad and scribble things down, and hopefully you'd be

able to read what you wrote when you got back. Having that automated process is very important, and knowing it is there even made it easier to make the purchase.

Also, being able to do a packet capture is important.

AutoTest largely gives you a snapshot of what the network is looking like on that particular leg. It helps trace down if we have connectivity. We have a unique setup in the way we structure our VLANs, so it's just important to know which port on a switch is tied to which VLAN structure. When you're out, you're not going to necessarily log in to the switch and automatically start looking. You need to know, "Is this on this VLAN or that VLAN?" Given that they're not necessarily marked clearly, the LinkRunner device makes it a lot easier to really quickly say, "Okay, I need to move this port because this one is dead. Where is another VLAN for it?" You can very quickly determine which of the ports will work.

Also, on very long runs at the end of a building, I am able to do a more in-depth cable test to see if we've got a mismatched pair or a loose wire that needs to be punched down. You can very easily tell when you've got an intermittent connection.

And, of course, the performance of it is pretty handy too. You can start an analysis of what's going on and look at what outgoing port you're going at.

For how long have I used the solution?

I've been using LinkRunner for about a year. It was actually the first purchase I made when I got here. I had a couple of LinkRunners, not the 10G but the wired and wireless combined one, the AirCheck G2. I also have that here. I used that at my previous school for a couple of years.

What do I think about the stability of the solution?

We've never had any issues with the LinkRunner.

How are customer service and support?

I've never had to use their tech support, which is a good thing.

Which solution did I use previously and why did I switch?

In the school where I'm now working, they didn't have any testing devices before I arrived. They did whatever they could, but there was no intelligent testing available. They would just look at the network activity on a switch, which isn't really helpful at all.

I went with LinkRunner in my current job because of my prior experience with it.

How was the initial setup?

Getting it set up was very easy, almost seamless. It was almost plug-and-play. There was just not a lot to it. Within 30 minutes of utilizing it and doing a few tests, you see that it's very user-friendly. Most users adapt to it very quickly and find what they're looking for.

What was our ROI?

We have seen value from the product from day one. It's worth every dime we paid for it, 100 percent.

What's my experience with pricing, setup cost, and licensing?

The area where the product could be improved is by having a lower cost so that I could have more than one. The price is competitive, but everybody would always like to see the price go down. I'd buy another one if it were cheaper.

PeerSpot

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