Sustainable Retailer Colruyt Gears up for Growth

COLRUYTGROUP

The family owned Colruyt Group earned €9.5 billion in revenue by delighting customers at its supermarkets, food service companies, and energy businesses across Belgium, France, and Luxembourg. Continued growth prompted the company to stock its IT shelves with Juniper networking, ensuring its stores, offices, and data centers always had fast, reliable, and secure connectivity.

OVERVIEW

Company	Colruyt Group
Industry	Retail
Products Used	SRX5400, MX104, EX2300, EX4600, EX3400, QFX5100, Junos OS
Region	EMEA

CUSTOMER SUCCESS AT-A-GLANCE

Supported

Business growth by increasing network bandwidth

Increased

Network availability by reducing risk of downtime thanks to automated failover capabilities

Improved

Profitability by keeping licensing and maintenance costs low

CHALLENGE

Keep them coming back for more

To keep customers coming back, Colruyt must provide quality goods and convenient services at competitive prices. Ensuring the smooth operation of mission-critical applications and the technological infrastructure that underpin its customer-facing services is key to retaining happy and loyal customers. That's why Colruyt is always looking for new ways to enhance its business infrastructure.

"Everything from the central back-end infrastructure supporting our e-commerce sites to the distributed point-of-sale systems and tablets used by our staff, as well as CCTV cameras, are all connected to our WAN," says Wim Derijnck, team manager, network solutions at Colruyt. "If we were to experience any issues such as high latency, reduced responsiveness, or limited throughput, our customer service could be negatively impacted directly."

"After deploying the SRX5400 next-generation firewall, we are now well on the way to upgrading our network bandwidth to 40 Gbps. The combined power of cuttingedge firewalls, routers, and switches from Juniper Networks will strengthen our overall network reliability and flexibility" says Derijnck.

SOLUTION

Ensuring network stability

Facing a rapid increase in demand for its products and services across the group's portfolio, Colruyt set out to upgrade its WAN and LAN to ensure that it could deal with the growth in network activity. "We recognized that our existing network firewall and switches were not geared up to handle the growth that we expect to see in the coming years," Derijnck says.

To maximize bandwidth and reduce latency while ensuring network stability and security, Colruyt decided that it was time to upgrade to a 40GbE network and refresh the network configuration.

As the first step, Colruyt implemented the latest-generation Juniper Networks SRX5400 Services Gateway, providing the retailer with a scalable, resilient firewall equipped with integrated threat intelligence, an intrusion prevention system, and a powerful routing engine.

In the coming months, Colruyt plans to replace the remaining 100 Mbps Ethernet switches and routers with the new Juniper Networks EX3400 Ethernet Switch, which will provide 1GbE access and 40GbE uplinks.

A critical stage in the network upgrade will involve rearchitecting Colruyt's in-store network switches and routers. The team will replace the existing Spanning Tree Protocol (STP) architecture with a more modern stacked design based on Juniper's Virtual Chassis technology.

"Moving to a stacked arrangement that takes advantage of the latest virtualization technologies will significantly simplify our network topology and make it much easier for us to manage and control traffic," Derijnck says.

OUTCOME

Dramatic improvements for business growth

Once it has deployed the EX3400 switches, Colruyt expects to see dramatic improvements in throughput, preparing the company for increases in network traffic caused by continuing business growth.

"After deploying the SRX5400 next-generation firewall, we are now well on the way to upgrading our network bandwidth to 40 Gbps," Derijnck says. "The combined power of cutting-edge firewalls, routers, and switches from Juniper Networks will strengthen our overall network reliability and flexibility. Also, Juniper Networks' EX Series switches and QFX Series data center switches give us the ability to add new nodes into our network quickly. With this extensible configuration, we will be able to meet any future peaks in traffic caused by further growth or seasonal shopping periods."

By redesigning the architecture of its network switches and routers, Colruyt anticipates fewer and less severe disruptions to the core applications used by staff in its stores.

"Our latest work with Juniper is helping us to simplify and enhance our network," Lefevre says. "We are gaining greater flexibility, robustness, and smarter network management capabilities without compromising on overall performance or adding complexity. Thanks to the smart stacking capabilities provided by the Virtual Chassis solutions, our in-store POS and tablet devices will be significantly less likely to go offline if a stack encounters issues, ensuring a smoother, more responsive experience for customers."

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Bert Lefevre
Network Infrastructure Manager Network, Colruyt Group