Microsoft Campus: Platform Adoption Center

D-Link Business Class xStack™ Switching Solution

Challenge: The Microsoft Platform Adoption Center (PAC), located on the Microsoft Campus in Redmond, Washington, is a facility that bridges the world of internal product engineering at Microsoft and the world of independent software vendors and enterprise businesses. With training rooms, secure offices for visitors, and hundreds of state-of-the-art computers that are constantly refreshed with the latest builds of operating systems, developer tools, and servers, the PAC is a facility where Microsoft can introduce new products to its customers and partners and provide the company with the valuable service of observing how customers use their technology.

“We needed a reliable high-end switch line for the lab rooms. Since the PAC is devoted to new technologies, we wanted to partner with a vendor that had a fresh approach to switching solutions with a comprehensive line of network products. That’s why we selected D-Link.”

Solution: The D-Link sales and technical team worked closely with Microsoft to determine which products would be best to upgrade the PAC’s network. With a solid layout in hand, D-Link xStack Series switches and Gigabit Interface Converters were chosen for their high quality, affordability and reliability.

“We are pleased to be working with Microsoft to further enhance their Platform Adoption Center,” said Jennifer Wu, director, product management, core Ethernet group at D-Link. “This partnership creates tremendous additional value to new and existing Microsoft customers, as well as Microsoft Regional Directors, MVPs and ISV partners.” “This is an example of D-Link’s commitment to providing businesses with robust networking solutions that can perform under the heaviest traffic,” added Wu. D-Link xStack switches are used at the Microsoft PAC for the core Gigabit switching architecture. The PAC data room houses thirteen server racks and one switch rack for the new D-Link xStack switch line. Configured in a ring architecture, the data room utilizes eight D-Link xStack switches configured for redundant data paths and a 40Gbps stacking architecture that supplies 312 ports of Gigabit connectivity to the data room servers and the rest of the PAC. The PAC has four training rooms, two conference rooms and thirty-six lab rooms for center activities. Two of the training rooms also utilize the 48-port xStack switch line for training room connectivity. For connectivity in ten of the thirty-six lab rooms, D-Link Web Smart Gigabit switches are utilized for network edge connectivity. Proving D-Link from core to edge, the PAC is a live network emphasizing D-Link’s strength in the networking arena.

Benefits: D-Link greatly enhanced the capabilities of the Microsoft PAC by installing D-Link’s new high-end networking xStack Series high performance stackable switches for the data center backbone of the PAC and training rooms. As a result, the PAC
is now able to transfer data at least twelve times faster based on practical tests like system re-imaging, video streaming, and raw file transfers to NAS devices. In addition, Microsoft installed D-Link smart switches in some offices to enable guests to configure them for whatever bandwidth-intensive applications they need.

“D-Link offers very nice solutions that are easy to deploy, easy to work with and have very intuitive web interfaces,” said Grant BlahaErath, PAC Architect. “D-Link’s web interface doesn’t hide functionality from the user, but organizes the interface in an effective way. The xStack Series has excellent performance for the price and works very well in the data center as our central switching stack. Our facility has to cater to a wide variety of events, some with very complex and demanding network requirements presented on a short schedule. The xStack ring architecture lets us add and remove switch components in an agile fashion which helps us meet these challenges,” added BlahaErath.

One of the several D-Link powered training rooms available in the PAC that can now offer attendees and guests robust and flexible 10/100/1000 Mbps connections.