FLUKE networks

CASE STUDY

CompuCom Technicians Ensure Fiber Inspections are “One and Done” with Versiv FiberInspector™ Pro

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At a Glance

Customer: CompuCom

Industry: IT Service Management

Location: U.S.

Challenge:

Headquartered in Dallas, Texas, CompuCom enables its customers to focus on their respective core businesses, while CompuCom handles their technology. Offering managed IT services, integration and consulting, as well as teams specializing in data centers, networks, voice and end-user environments, CompuCom supports more than four million users in North America alone. One of CompuCom's customers, a U.S.-based Top 10 Global Retailer, required a higher standard for fiber optic cable inspection, including faster testing and more comprehensive reporting. In response, CompuCom's team turned to Fluke Networks.

Result:

As part of its service to this retailer, the CompuCom team maintains three data centers plus one backup bunker, containing nearly 20,000 servers and more than 150,000 cables. The team chose to adopt the Fluke Networks Versiv cable certification platform with a combination of the FI-7000 FiberInspector™ Pro, OptiFiber® Pro OTDR, and CertiFiber® Pro cable loss testing modules to provide easy repairs and upgrades. Since adopting the FI-7000 when it was first launched, the team has dramatically raised the standards in testing and reporting, while also simplifying test result accessibility and management. The FI-7000 enables faster test results, which have saved thousands of dollars each year. Most important, CompuCom's client has been very pleased with the higher levels of speed, quality and reliability made possible with the FI-7000. So much so, that this client now holds other service providers to similar standards.

Product:

FI-7000 Fiber Inspector™ Pro

Overview

With more than 11,500 employees, CompuCom offers its customers a variety of managed IT services, integration and consulting across various specialized services, including data centers, networks, voice and end-user environments. By managing its customers' IT activities, CompuCom frees them up to focus on their core businesses. As a result, their customers trust CompuCom to handle an excess of four million users across North America alone. In the case of one of their clients, a top 10 global retailer, CompuCom needed to discover and facilitate more efficient and effective ways to meet their customer's high standards for fiber cable inspection, testing, and certification, as well as more streamlined reporting.

Challenges

he CompuCom team of 25 staff, dedicated exclusively to this retailer, maintains three of their client's data centers and one backup bunker, containing nearly 20,000 servers and more than 150,000 cables. The team was responsible for upgrading the existing infrastructure, primarily made of MPO cabling, to a larger LC-APC cable backbone to future-proof the network for support of voice and video applications. To ensure a smooth upgrade and maintain compliance with the client's standards for reporting, the team needed to find a testing and certification procedure that would allow them to prevent installation errors, document results, and minimize related issues in the years to come.

Solution

Contamination is the leading cause of fiber failures and, therefore, an ever-present concern for CompuCom. To minimize contamination issues and fiber failures, CompuCom chose the Versiv platform for fiber cable testing, repairs and upgrades. The combination of the FI-7000 FiberInspector Pro for fiber optic cable inspection, with additional modules for optical loss (OLTS) and Optical Time Domain Reflectometry (OTDR), has provided the CompuCom team with a comprehensive tool set that they, and their client, can trust.

The FIberInspector Pro gives users the flexibility to certify fiber cable end-faces to industry standard IEC 61300-3-35, or manually grade them. The FI-7000 highlights defects on the end-faces, and rather than just coloring the defect area, the FI-7000 colors the defect and highlights its background, making it clearly visible. Defects that fail the IEC standard's requirements are colored red, while defects that pass are colored green. CompuCom found one of the key benefits of the FI-7000 is the ability to record images of end-face inspections, allowing the team to store both end-face images of a fiber directly with the Versiv test results. The team can then combine end-face images with CertiFiber Pro OLTS and/or OptiFiber Pro OTDR test results for the complete installation and certification history, which is available to CompuCom's clients whenever requested.

"We rely heavily on the Versiv platform." said Mike White, Network Infrastructure Manager at CompuCom. "It is a strong toolset that is essential to our fiber inspection, optical loss testing, and OTDR activities. It definitely saves man-hours and makes each job quicker."

Results

The Versiv platform provided the CompuCom team with a single tool that provided complete documentation (end face, loss, and OTDR) for their fiber infrastructure as they migrated from MPO cabling to LC-APCs. The FI-7000 automated the end face inspection process, returning results in just over a second. They used the OptiFiber Pro to provide simple and fast OTDR analysis of each link, and for loss testing, they used the CertiFiber Pro, which they found to be highly accurate and fully compliant with the latest Encircled Flux standards. Each of these tools contributed to improving the team's efficiency and accuracy. Moreover, the team was able to integrate all results into a combined report for each link using the LinkWare™ PC software. As a result, a migration of 3,000 links from 1 to 10 Gigabit Ethernet went off without a hitch. And, if problems come up in the future, the CompuCom team can refer to their LinkWare PC documentation to quickly resolve disputes with third party service providers.

Since adopting the FI-7000 FiberInspector Pro, the CompuCom team has cut its testing time in half, saving at least $3,000 in labor each year. Additionally, it has helped the team raise standards in testing and reporting, and made the management of test results data much easier to share with clients.

"The software package that Fluke Networks offers with the FI-7000 end-face inspector, the OTDR, and the optical loss and copper testing gives me the ability to do a job, save the results, and walk away," continued White. "The most important thing for me is that it saves time and makes each job quicker, more efficient and cheaper. I can now provide my customer with a detailed two-page document that gives OTDR results and end-face inspection results in a seamless format. Nobody wants to go back to the old system because it involved far too much manual work."

The Versiv platform is intuitive, but it does require some training to get the most out of its features. The CompuCom team was very satisfied with the level of training and service they received from Fluke Networks and their local sales partner, Data Strait. "Both the local representation from Data Strait and the engineering and customer support from Fluke Networks have been excellent. They helped us master the file database tree, which really helped us organize our test results. As a former field guy, I know that keeping test results organized is a challenge, so these tools have helped us stay organized in the field, which keeps our database as accurate as it can be."

About Fluke Networks

Fluke Networks is the worldwide leader in certification, troubleshooting, and installation tools for professionals who install and maintain critical network cabling infrastructure. From installing the most advanced data centers to restoring service in the worst weather, our combination of legendary reliability and unmatched performance ensure jobs are done efficiently. The company's flagship products include the innovative LinkWare™ Live, the world's leading cloud-connected cable certification solution with over fourteen million results uploaded to date.

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