

Luxury Diamond Jeweler LEVIEV Builds World-Class Network for Growing Retail Empire with Force10 Networks

Customer PROFILE

Customer
LEVIEV



Industry
Luxury Diamond Retail

Application
Data Center and
Wiring Closet

Highlights
LEVIEV selected the Force10 C300 resilient switch to build a high performance network that supports its retail stores and dispersed mobile workforce.

As the second largest diamond dealer in the world, LEVIEV knows that the value of a diamond depends on its clarity, cut and color. It's these one-of-a-kind pieces that have adorned countless red carpets and film festivals around the world. LEVIEV is the only diamond retail company that is completely vertically integrated; from mining and cutting rough diamonds to polishing the stones and manufacturing jewelry, it is uniquely involved in all facets of diamond production.

Retail for LEVIEV meant not just opening a boutique on Madison Avenue but developing a mobile sales force and temporary showcases in such exotic locales as Cannes and Monaco. Since it was important for LEVIEV to build a converged network that was both sophisticated and flexible, LEVIEV turned to Force10 Networks and the C-Series family of resilient switches.

Upgrading the Network for Greater Manageability

As LEVIEV looked to expand into the luxury retail diamond market, Gireesh Sonnad, chief technology officer at LEVIEV, faced a network performance problem. The LEVIEV network at the New York City head office had grown into an unreliable and hard-to-manage system. Numerous network outages had resulted in noticeable disruptions of business operations – disruptions that were unacceptable in a retail space that leveraged technology to better serve its wealthy clientele. In addition to the London and New York boutiques, LEVIEV was planning additional locations in Moscow and Dubai, so Sonnad had to rethink the LEVIEV network from a global perspective.



From the LEVIEV High Jewels Collection; presented to the company's clientele via Force10-enabled selling tools.

"With our previous network, we had trouble getting one part to talk to another," Sonnad explained. "It was cumbersome – if not impossible – for us to handle some of the requests efficiently and keep up with the management of the system."

Instead, Sonnad wanted a new converged network with an infrastructure that could support both data networking and real-time communications applications, including Power over Ethernet (PoE)-enabled VoIP, video conferencing and a building-wide wireless network.

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Force10 Delivers the Trifecta

The new (New York-based) network would be the central data center for a growing group of LEVIEV boutiques and would serve a mobile sales force that depends upon their network every minute of the day. Sonnad and the LEVIEV management team wanted to feel comfortable that their network would be reliable, stable and ready to accommodate future growth. After analyzing various competitive options, LEVIEV deployed the Force10 C300.

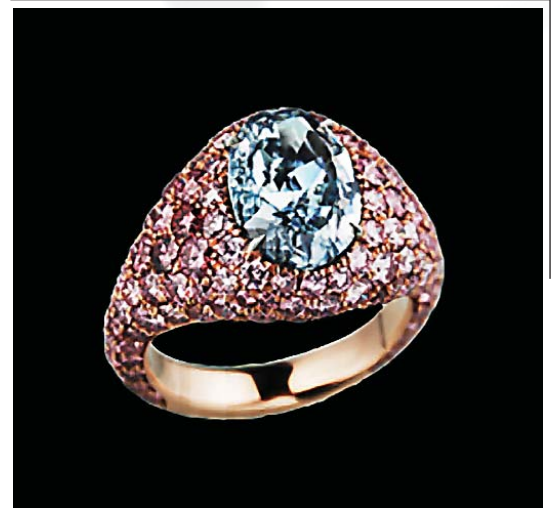
“Our main focus is to keep things simple, rather than overly complex, while still obtaining the necessary functionality. Considering these requirements, Force10 rose to the top of the list pretty quickly,” explained Sonnad. “The C300 was the only choice that offered us the trifecta of Gigabit Ethernet density, compact form factor and PoE on every port.”

On top of that, Force10’s pricing was the most competitive. “We felt we got the best deal on both value and functionality,” Sonnad shared. “It was very easy for us to choose Force10 once we decided how we wanted to implement our network.”

Building a Reliable Network Foundation with Force10

LEVIEV deployed the Force10 C300 at its New York headquarters in 2007 as the foundation of a converged network that not only connected the international boutiques and mobile workforce, but also powered backoffice applications and other critical business applications.

Sonnad explained the central role of the C300 in the network: “The C300 is the backbone for the boutiques and headquarters; it runs our network infrastructure, everything from the servers down to the IP phones and all PoE devices scattered throughout the network. Everything goes through it in one shape or form.”



State-of-the-art selling tools enable LEVIEV to showcase extravagant pieces, such as these, to their clientele.

Supporting up to 384 line-rate Gigabit and 64 line-rate 10 Gigabit Ethernet ports, the Force10 C300 provides the scalability that allows LEVIEV to expand its network as new boutiques are added without significant additional investment. With full 15.4 Watt power to all Gigabit Ethernet ports, the C300 provides the power LEVIEV requires to support its VoIP phone system and wireless access points.

Given its network design and requirements, LEVIEV deployed PoE across all ports in the C300. Utilizing Force10’s PowerSmart™, a flexible power provisioning technology, LEVIEV can tune its network to optimize power consumption. PowerSmart dynamically senses power requirements from devices connected to the network and provisions the required power to the port, reducing total system-level power consumption. Additionally, PowerSmart allows LEVIEV to set policies on a per-port basis with regards to power priorities, enabling the company to protect valuable or business critical ports in the event of a power supply failure.

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To increase system-level reliability, the C300 supports FTOS, Force10’s modular operating system. With inline service and diagnostics, FTOS allows Sonnad and his team to troubleshoot any issues without bringing the network down. Additionally, an industry-standard command line interface (CLI) simplifies the process of deploying new equipment while utilizing existing knowledge and tools. Open, standards-based management tools also simplify network maintenance tasks, allowing Sonnad and his team to easily configure, manage and modify the network.

New Network Increases Sales Flexibility

With a new network, LEVIEV was able to enhance its sales process with state-of-the-art tools. Retail salespeople in the New York, London and Moscow boutiques now use wireless tablet PCs for real-time access to a variety of multimedia resources, including videos and pictures of celebrities and socialites wearing particular pieces of jewelry – persuasive selling tools for luxury jewelry that has an average price point of \$500,000. Salespeople can also access customer databases that include detailed information on the habits and preferences of LEVIEV’s clientele as well as the history of a particular diamond or setting.

“The devices allow salespeople to be more attentive to customers,” Sonnad said. “That attention provides a more sophisticated level of service that our clientele expects, and we are happy to provide.”

With Force10 at the core of its network, LEVIEV’s sales force can move independently from the boutiques and still deliver the same quality of service that it is known for. During a prestigious worldwide event such as the Cannes Film Festival, LEVIEV can, for example, build temporary showrooms with access to the main network that enable the company to bring its exclusive jewelry designs to its clientele.

“We’ve noticed a significant increase in speed of access to much of our information,” said Sonnad. “Salespeople worldwide rely and depend upon 24/7 access to the network’s centralized resources.”

Those in the luxury diamond business are by nature security conscious, and the boutiques’ physical locations are highly secure. Regarding network security Sonnad said, “Force10 gave us just what we needed and a lot more, too. We feel very comfortable that our data is secure, safe and protected.”

Happy Customer

“The one aspect that I’ve been most happy about is the reliability and stability of the system,” Sonnad said. “Since we put the C300 in, the system hasn’t blinked; we haven’t had a single minute of unplanned downtime.”



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