

Hey network engineers, you're not doing enough! Try facilities management too

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Sep 25 2009 5:23PM GMT

It is ironic that right as Gartner released research showing engineers are managing 20% to 30% more network components than they were last year, networking pros are about to receive even more on their plates by way of facilities management ... of all things.

This week the IP for Smart Objects (IPSO) Alliance announced a certification and compliance program to ensure vendors release IP-based smart objects that interoperate. You may be thinking, what the h&%ll do I care about smart objects? What *is* a smart object?

Believe me, you should care. Smart objects are sensors and actuators that run in a range of applications from smart grid management to building automation. The IPSO alliance is hoping to accelerate the use of IP in these devices. That means that enterprise lighting systems, for example, can be networked into the LAN. Among the many use scenarios, facilities management systems will communicate to network managers when a system is wasting power without actual use. It is feasible that these systems could save enterprises as much money as greening data centers.

On a larger scale, IP-based energy and building management means that utilities will implement smart meters in enterprises and homes that will warn home base of outages and waste. These smart meters will be part of larger IP networks laid over utility grids. In addition to enterprise and consumer savings, regional governments will spend less, enabling them to direct money to other crucial projects.

Cisco has already moved in on the action with its EnergyWise software initiative. EnergyWise is embedded into Catalyst switches and used to control not only power within the network, but also on PCs and building control systems. So it's no surprise that Cisco is a member of the IPSO Alliance, along with Ericsson, SAP, Sun Microsystems and Google.

All of this innovation may be exciting, but for network engineers it means the need to gain more skills (possibly even certifications), more responsibility and assuming an even greater role in every enterprise. As this happens, they will have to demand the manpower and support necessary to expand in this new direction.

Via <http://itknowledgeexchange.techtarget.com/networkhub/hey-network-engineers-you%E2%80%99re-not-doing-enough-try-facilities-management-too/>