

# Impress Holdings Deploys a Virtualized Infrastructure with Force10 E-Series and VirtualView Technology

**Customer**  
Impress Holdings



**Industry**  
Online Media

**Application**  
Virtualized Data Center Infrastructure

**Highlights**  
Impress Holdings chose the Force10 Networks TeraScale E-Series switch/routers and VirtualView technology to improve network control in their virtualized environments and for a more robust and future-proof network infrastructure.



*As a leading online media company, Impress is relying on Force10 Networks to implement a reliable, robust and future-proofed infrastructure, offering its customer an always-on approach to enjoying its online content.*

As a media company founded in 1994, the rapid growth of Japan-based Impress Holdings reflected the Internet boom that was underway at that time. The company launched Japan's first Internet-related magazine in 1995 and started the country's first e-mail newspaper the following year. In subsequent years, Impress expanded coverage to other industries as well as by launching new online magazines, including Enterprise Watch, PC Watch, Digital Camera Watch and INTERNET Watch.

As Impress continued to grow and provide more content through their expanding group of online sites, the company's IT administrators sought to gain greater transparency into their network traffic conditions in order to deliver a more stable service that would also accommodate future growth. After a vendor review period, the company chose both the Force10 Networks TeraScale E-Series family of switch/routers and Force10 VirtualView™ technology to improve network control in virtualized environments.

VirtualView, part of a suite of management offerings contained within the Force10 modular operating system, FTOS, also delivers hardware configuration features, including link aggregation. Under the Force10 Reliable Business Network framework that delivers unparalleled resiliency, network control and scalability performance metrics, VirtualView helps network administrators gain unprecedented control and tunability over total system performance.

## Providing Needed Performance Without Complexity

As Impress migrated its business away from print publications to online e-zines, network reliability became more important than ever. If sites are down, services are unavailable and Impress' customer base, its advertisers, are not happy. While Impress avoided any drastic outages, it required a more robust and future-proof network infrastructure.

Impress deployed the Force10 E300 switch/router to provide the core reliability required to maintain a high quality of service (QoS) under any traffic conditions. Its 3-CPU system architecture and distributed forwarding delivers predictable performance during dynamic traffic loads. This, coupled with FTOS, helped Impress lessen complexity – even as more Websites are being added – by reducing operations and management overhead. Recognizing that unplanned downtime for their business, for even a short period of time, can result in revenue losses, Impress selected the E300 for its system architecture that prevents packet loss during a component failure, including while processing traffic at Terabit speeds.

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## Customer PROFILE

“Force10’s networking solutions provide enterprise-class reliability and performance and an elegant simplicity and cost effectiveness.... We won’t have any worries about performance for several years.”

**Mr. Oyama**  
Network Architect  
Impress Holdings

“We were initially under the impression that Force10 was mostly deployed at carriers and ISPs,” says Mr. Oyama, network architect at Impress. “However, we soon learned that Force10’s networking solutions provide enterprise-class reliability and performance and an elegant simplicity and cost effectiveness more suited to our needs. We won’t have any worries about performance for several years.”

### Bringing Critical Visibility to a Growing Organization

With a reliable and resilient network in place, Impress wanted greater network traffic measurement functionality and improved insight into the types of visitors the sites were receiving.

With more than 100 Websites to manage, Impress decided on deploying a virtualized infrastructure, which enabled them to optimize resources but can conversely make it more difficult to see specific applications or infrastructure behavior. If the network experiences difficulty without offering any transparency, it can be complex to diagnose. Initially, Impress used free traffic analysis software but found the functionality limited. Administrators would have to identify the heavily-loaded servers by analyzing their server logs. Over the long term, the solution was not capable of sufficiently scaling to tackle the needs of managing an increasing number of Websites and visitors.

Impress selected the Force10 VirtualView technology that accompanied the deployment of the E300. By leveraging the VirtualView suite of features, network administrators were able to reduce the complexity of administering and monitoring core-to-edge traffic flows for their virtualized machine (VM) environments. VirtualView enabled them to establish a traffic baseline, and once set, they were able to better enforce internal SLAs for bandwidth allocation per application or VM.



*Impress migrated its business away from print to online publications, making network reliability ever more important.*

Force10’s VirtualView provides real-time traffic samples through the sFlow protocol, and Impress uses the data for network performance analysis, including modeling for simple operations and rule basis and snapshots for detailed analysis.

With VirtualView, Impress is realizing new network efficiencies with real-time traffic analysis that enables visibility into bandwidth fluctuations for individual sites. When Impress now publishes a popular article, managers can monitor network traffic spikes and allocate bandwidth accordingly. Previously, their SNMP monitoring would only show the total bandwidth increase for a single server hosting multiple Websites.

“If regular bandwidth usage is high, we can proactively secure the necessary resources to add to that site and avoid drops in response time. The servers are virtualized into a pool allowing resources to be delivered promptly and dynamically,” says Oyama.

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**Mr. Oyama**  
Network Architect  
Impress Holdings

VirtualView also provided some unexpected benefits: Impress recently received a poor response time report from one of its 10 remote locations and by using the analyzer software to see the bandwidth usage details, network administrators were able to determine that the location was using almost all of its VPN bandwidth to access the server for business applications. The administrators were then able to quickly solve the problem by changing the VPN location to a dedicated line. Previously, identifying and reporting problems was difficult and very time consuming. VirtualView, however, enabled quick problem solving on site while maintaining the needed QoS.

“Making networks reliable and visible is essential as the network speed increases and applications diversify,” says Oyama. “Having a solid network with consistent performance, coupled with being able to see how the network is performing, makes it possible for us to properly manage and invest in it.”



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