

## iomart install and initiate a pioneering platform powered by Cisco.



### Challenge

- Performance and scalability struggling to keep pace with current and future needs
- Hardware deployed on a per customer or solution basis, no common platform
- Complex cabling and patching
- Manual configuration required of every element

### Solution

- Cisco Nexus switches optimised for the Data Centre
- Cisco Dynamic Fabric Automation (DFA)

### Services

- Equipment Fulfilment
- Vendor Liaison on new technologies
- On-site consultancy
- Proof of Concept

### Key Benefits

- Greater Scalability -10 and 40 Gigabit Ethernet with 100 Gigabit capability
- Common, shared platform for all services
- Consolidated connectivity reducing cabling and patching
- Automated configuration based on templates and services deployed

iomart's new system has placed them at the forefront of their industry, gaining recognition from the British Computing Society Awards.

### Background

iomart started out as a dial-up internet service provider, but 14 years on has evolved into a major cloud services business. Mainly dealing with server and website hosting with clients ranging from local businesses to the likes of megabus.com and webuyanycar.com. "Infrastructure is becoming harder to look after, rather than easier," says Richard McMahon, Head of Group Infrastructure at iomart. "Businesses see us as a way to be more economical with their investment. They ask us to invest in the complex infrastructure and their teams can handle all the apps that sit on top."

### Challenge

With a UK data centre capacity of around 3000 racks and an ever expanding and more demanding client base, iomart had a vision of streamlining operations by making things work more like the public's perception of the cloud - a flexible and limitless network of servers that interlink and communicate seamlessly with one another, true automation.

"People think the cloud is magic and can just keep growing forever, but in reality it's delivered through lots of cables and people running round looking for spaces to put servers. If you imagine traditionally you buy a bit of kit with capacity in it, once you put things in all the ports in that kit you need to replace it with a bigger bit of kit, or somehow connect it to another one to keep going. And the bigger they get, the less stable they get, so the more things you connect, the more likely it is to fall on its face," Richard explains. "We were looking for a next-generation network capability at our data centre; we wanted to break the mould a little bit and start delivering cloud infrastructure the way everybody thinks it actually gets delivered. Something designed to scale beyond thousands of devices to tens or hundreds of thousands of devices."

### Solution

iomart have a long-standing relationship with Camworth who have supplied their network kit for a number of years. And while always considering competing technologies, they knew that the Camworth team had the hardware and consultancy expertise to help them install and initiate a pioneering Nexus platform which is Cisco DFA powered.

“Camworth are interested in good relationships with customers, rather than just profitable relationships with customers.”

“We first started working with Camworth because they offered a cost effective solution. I would say having dealt with a lot of large systems integrators, Camworth are by far the most flexible that we’ve dealt with. When there’s an urgent requirement they’ll answer the phone night and day. They have a good breadth of in-house skills that are easily accessible for the end customer and they’re always willing to go the extra mile.”

This was proven when iomart initially had great difficulties in getting the system to work as it was intended. “Dave and his team put a monumental effort into getting it working for us. Without the assistance of the guys at Camworth, we would probably still be trying to get this to work. In terms of aftercare, they’re not just going through the motions. I would say that they actually care. I think they care specifically about what they supply to their customers. They want the systems to work because they want good relationships with their customer base. At the end of the day they’re here to make sales, but they do care that they’re selling the right thing, not just selling for the sake of selling.” says Richard.

### Result & Benefits

Six months on from the installation, the new system has placed iomart at the forefront of their industry. “It’s enabled us to pretty much deploy any bit of kit in any rack, and have them all speak to each other without running cables all over the data centre. We have Structured Cabling, but we no longer need to run cables from rack to rack because the network will allow the communication to happen.” And the success and scale of the project was acknowledged with a nod from the British Computing Society Awards, where they were highly commended in the ‘Data Centre Project of the Year’ category.