



## What's New on the Web

### Online Discussion Board Update

Visit [www.afcom.com](http://www.afcom.com) to ask questions and answer your peers' inquiries on this members-only Discussion Board.

### Remote Data Center Technicians

Our current environment does not allow for additions to the corporate data center staff. At this time we have five technicians and one contract technician operating the 7x24x365 data center located in the U.S., and we are about to lose our contract technician. In addition, one of the remaining five technicians is due for maternity leave by the end of the year. Needless to say, it's a challenge to operate with four or five technicians.

To compensate for this, we are looking at adding staff to our India facility with the responsibility to monitor and operate the corporate data center when there is no one on duty in the U.S. data center.

I'd be interested in talking to anyone who has done this type of operations. Please reply to this posting and then we'll initiate a conversation.

Thanks,  
Bill Brown  
Data Center Mgr.

### Broadband in Retail Outlets

Looking to find cheaper way of having broadband in our 86 stores. Has anyone used comcast? Any other ISP?

Peggy

### Data Center Cost Charge Back

We do not currently have a handle on the cost to run our data centers. For quick reference, are there some general guidelines for this that are used? Also, does anyone have a list of items generally included in costs? We run about 12,000 sq feet of raised floor.

Gregory

### Raised Floor/No Raised Floor?

We are in the process of specifying needs for a new data center. One of the ongoing discussions relates to whether or not we continue to have a need for a raised floor in the new facility. In our current environment, the raised floor is used as a cooling plenum and also accommodates network and electrical power cable runs. Over the years, our once mainframe-only environment has become a hybrid of mixed platforms, and while the raised floor was a requirement in the mainframe days for direct cooling and bus/tag cable runs, the need for a raised floor in the rack-mount era becomes more questionable. Of course, as the years have gone by, the bus/tag cables have been replaced by an ever-growing congestion of network and low power electrical cables, to the detriment of proper under floor airflow.



Everyone understands the limitations of our current environment, but they are deeply divided on how to best address the cooling and cabling needs in the new data center. We have talked with several vendors, and done several site visits to explore various cooling and cabling scenarios, but it hasn't been made clear that any one approach is better than another.

For the new data center space, I think that everyone is in agreement that we will move the network and low electrical power cabling above the racks in an appropriate tray/ladder system. The raised floor decision will affect our cooling plan and the placement of the high power electrical cables that would feed the PDUs.

Of course, adding another layer of concern is that we are now also entering the blade server era, and I have real concerns about that kind of concentrated and excessive heat load, and our ability to effectively cool our changing environment without the option of employing the raised floor scenario in the cooling mix.

Do any of you have any feedback on the raised floor need question? If you were building out another data center—or in hindsight, your current data center—how sure are you that you could justify the need and cost of a raised floor?

Dennis

#### **Room Design and Asset Management**

Does anyone have any experience with the Aperture product? Are there any complaints? I used it many years ago when it was GDCM, but have not used it since and may be looking to possibly purchase it again. The only other product I can see out there that might even come close (but not) is Rackwise. Rackwise seems much more cumbersome. I'd appreciate any feedback.

Tony

#### **User Communications in Centralized Data Center**

I'd like to discuss/learn how others are communicating with their users (outside of email) in a centralized environment. Situations I need to plan for include if the email cluster goes down, or needs maintenance, and office is isolated from our data center, which hosts all user applications.

Are there software packages being used to manage this? Does everyone just rely on netsend commands?

I'd appreciate discussing anyone's thoughts or current plans.

Thanks,

Fred J. Aul

#### **Combining Data Center and Helpdesk Operations**

I've been charged with architecting a plan to combine our data center and helpdesk operations into one organization. This was prompted by the recent transfer of a computer operator and the desire to not fill the position. Senior management believes combining these two operations will result in better efficiency. Has anyone successfully combined these two operations? If so, I'd very much like to speak with you. Please email me at [Pat\\_Piechocki@spartanstores.com](mailto:Pat_Piechocki@spartanstores.com).

Patrick