Challenge
Automotive, energy and mobile parts manufacturer Linamar needed to move away from an inefficient, multi-vendor environment to implement a centralized, uniform data solution that could serve locations across the globe.

Solution
Avaya and Combat Networks worked with Linamar to install a new, next-generation data solution to help Linamar operate in an easier, more cost-efficient manner.

Linamar simplifies operations with world-class data solution

Automotive, energy and mobile parts manufacturer turns to Avaya to provide uniform, centralized communications that save on costs

Challenge

Linamar Corporation is a world-class designer and manufacturer of metallic components and systems for the automotive industry, energy and mobile industrial markets. Based in Guelph, the company operates plants across the globe and, in turn, relies on precision and attention to detail to produce the best possible products. Linamar knows the importance of using finely calibrated instruments to get the job done, yet when it came to the company's data infrastructure, the system the team depended on to power the company's communications wasn't up to par.

"Linamar has many locations across the globe, and there was really no uniform footprint in terms of network

architecture from one plant to the next," says John Biel, Network Architect at Linamar. "There was different equipment installed in different plants from different manufacturers, and it was challenging to centrally manage."

"Linamar is a diversified, global manufacturing company that moves quickly to identify and capture market opportunities," adds David Patterson, Vice President, Combat Networks, the Avaya partner who helped implement the new solution. "The pace of change, rapid acquisitions and entrepreneurial spirit makes it exciting for Combat to work with Linamar to keep the networks current and managed centrally."

Solution

Among the many reasons for a solid data solution, Linamar needed an automated system that would pull data from production lines: this would verify quality and production schedules and improve efficiencies overall.

When Linamar decided to upgrade its data network worldwide, it turned to Combat Networks to provide an Avaya data networking solution that could easily be implemented.

Linamar required a multi-site, future-proof network which would create redundancy and make it easier to upgrade the system down the line without drastically changing the infrastructure. As such, a number of Avaya products were used to get Linamar's simpler, centralized and more affordable data network up and running.

Some of the products include:

- **Avaya Ethernet Routing Switch 8800:** The ERS 8800 is a proven, tested, resilient and intelligent network solution that scales, delivering hundreds of gigabits per second and hundreds of millions of packets per second of real-world performance to the core. This flexible architecture reduces the complexity of network design, making it ideal for large-scale enterprise campuses.

- **Virtual Services Platform 7000:** VSP 7000 provides cost-effective, 10GbE consolidation for existing core switch deployments and can deliver flexible connectivity options in the campus distribution layer.

- **Avaya Ethernet Routing Switch 4800:** The Avaya Ethernet Routing Switch 4800 Series is a stackable system providing high-performance, convergence-ready, and resilient Ethernet switching connectivity.

- **Avaya Wireless LAN 8100:** The WLAN 8100 Series enables enterprises greater productivity and operations efficiency through a unified wireless/wired architecture. It offers greater wireless capacity and performance through a simplified network infrastructure. It is optimized to support real-time applications such as voice, unified communications and video.

Today, Linamar harnesses the power of its new data infrastructure to better produce products on their manufacturing floor. When Linamar is producing an engine block on a production line, the process of moving the product from machine to machine is fully automated, notes Biel.

"Ethernet allows our machines to communicate using Avaya's standards-based solutions, as well as our own in-house Manufacturing Monitoring System, instead of depending on a specific vendor's proprietary system," says Biel. "And it's not just the machines on the floor that depend on the new network; everyone from the office staff to those operating the company's ERP system are benefiting."

Also, with Avaya's global presence, the standard for the solution can be set in Guelph and then be quickly and easily rolled out in all other Linamar locations worldwide.
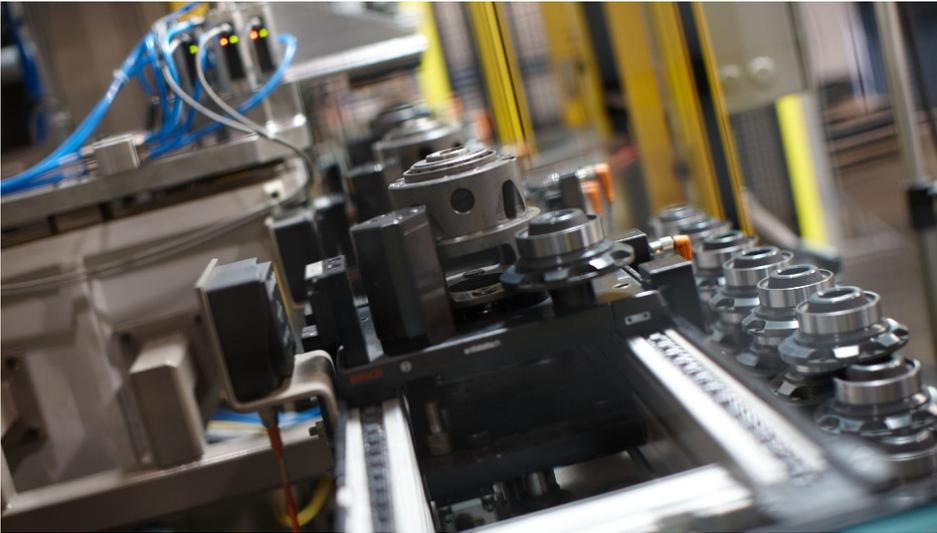
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—John Biel,
Network Architect at Linamar

Benefits

Simplicity
The Avaya technology has made it much easier for the IT department to provide support as now there is one solution in all the company's locations. VSP 7000's provide 10 GbE access to Linamar's virtualized data centres for fast and reliable access to critical manufacturing data using Avaya's Shortest Path Bridging (SPB) technology.

"Our IT team is small, so it was very difficult to have a few people manage multi-vendor solutions in locations around the globe," says Biel. "But with the new data solution we support just one system – drastically accelerating problem resolution and reducing travel in situations where we previously had to be on site."

Cost savings

Because Linamar now has one robust data solution, it does not have to spend money to maintain and upgrade multiple systems and locations — it is one system with one price tag.

The data solution has also increased the productivity of manufacturing processes on the plant floor, as workers on the production line now have access to computers that automate many of the production processes, making things run quicker and smoother.

"Centralization of our data network has not only made our IT support easier, but it's also saved the company money," says Biel. "It's much more cost efficient to run the one system than it is to run multiple solutions."

Ease of implementation

The solution was also easily rolled out to Linamar locations around the world, thanks in part to the superiority of the product and Avaya's global presence.

"Because of Avaya's global footprint, we can easily set the standard here in Guelph of how we want our systems to run and then the local plant can easily procure and implement the same solution in Europe or Mexico," says Biel. "The rollout has been extremely easy."

Room for Growth

Because Avaya data solutions are highly resilient and adaptable, they make centralizing all communications applications extremely easy, something that Linamar is now doing with its voice portfolio.

"The data solution has been great, and now we're in the process of upgrading our telephone systems as well," says Biel. "We're introducing Avaya IP Office into many of our locations, and are looking forward to fully using all the collaboration tools at our disposal."

Solutions

- Avaya Ethernet Routing Switches 8800
- Avaya Ethernet Routing Switches 5000
- Avaya Ethernet Routing Switches 4000
- Avaya Ethernet Routing Switches 3500
- Avaya Virtual Services Platform 7000
- Avaya Wireless LAN 8100
- IP Office™ Platform

ABOUT LINAMAR

Linamar Corporation is a world-class designer and diversified manufacturer of precision metallic components and systems for the automotive industry, energy and mobile industrial markets. Building on the foundation of more than 40 years of successful growth, Linamar is a leading-edge supplier of engine, transmission, driveline, modules and systems, as well as mobile aerial work platforms. To learn more, please visit linamar.com.

ABOUT COMBAT NETWORKS

Combat Networks was founded in 2001 to focus on providing Avaya solutions to Canadian corporate, government and public organizations. The technical resources at Combat provide network design, installation, support and professional services to enterprise sized customers across Canada. Combat is an Avaya Platinum partner, certified to provide expert level support for voice, unified communications, data networking and video solutions. To learn more, please visit combatnetworks.com.

About Avaya

Avaya is a leading, global provider of customer and team engagement solutions and services available in a variety of flexible on-premise and cloud deployment options. Avaya's fabric-based networking solutions help simplify and accelerate the deployment of business critical applications and services. For more information, please visit **www.avaya.com.**