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Bill McGowan - ATEN US Distribution Account Manager

Company:
ATEN Technology, Inc.

Industry:
AV Manufacturer

Technology:
Audio/Video

Website:
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Location:
Irvine, CA, USA

ATEN and NETGEAR: Working together to deliver simple, powerful AV over IP.

SUMMARY

AV-over-IP is a game-changer, but for many AV professionals, understanding network technology is unfamiliar territory, so making the learning curve as straightforward as possible is essential. At the same time, both the channel and users need AV-over-IP solutions that are flexible and high-performing.

This is why, for 1Gb AV-over-IP connectivity, ATEN is using the M4300 pro AV switch from NETGEAR. ATEN's US Distribution Account Manager Bill McGowan comments, "Plug the M4300 in and it just works, without the need to go into complex settings."

This experience has been the catalyst for the two companies collaborating, with ATEN recommending the M4300 for many 1Gb installations and even using the SDVoE-compatible switch in its own state-of-the-art demo center in Southern California.

BACKGROUND

Why ATEN and NETGEAR are working together is a story of coincidence. NETGEAR's Sam Broadbent was at a trade event held by a Pro AV distributor. He spotted ATEN's booth, and had already heard of the company - one of the world's leaders in AV/IT connectivity and management - but was curious to find out more. He started talking to Bill McGowan and the two quickly found out that they had something in common: the NETGEAR M4300.

McGowan stated, "We'd had a Pro AV installation project for a plastic surgery customer in Beverly Hills. The customer had just moved into new offices and had multiple meeting rooms, conference rooms and other areas where there was a need to connect high quality AV equipment with a 1Gb switch."



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THE CHALLENGE

"The 1Gb switch we had originally chosen just didn't work well. We needed to find a fast replacement, and one of our team had access to a NETGEAR M4300 switch. As we had not used one before, we did not know what to expect, but it worked perfectly – straight of the box – without needing any modification or configuration changes. It was pure plug and play, it was outstanding, and it saved the day."

Bill McGowan later relayed this positive experience to Sam Broadbent when they met at the distributor event. Continues McGowan, "Events like this are great for networking, and although we found the M4300 ourselves, and none of this was planned: those conversations with Sam led to the two companies collaborating together more closely on 1Gb Pro AV. It's an example of how chance meetings can lead to great things."

FOCUSED ON AV PROS

NETGEAR's Sam Broadbent adds his perspective. "We have the same goal: making it simple for Pro AV resellers to expand into AV-over-IP, without having to become IT experts."

"Many AV professionals do not – or want – to have network technology experience. So, giving them a switch solution that is plug-and-play, with preconfigured settings and without the need to go into a Web GUI and work it out for themselves, is a big advantage of the M4300. But the flexibility to configure the switch and multicast is still there. While the market potential for 10Gb is vast, there is a big opportunity for the AV channel to offer customers cost-effective AV-over-IP solutions based on 1Gb, which in many cases, will fit their needs."

RESULTS

ATEN has also just finished redeveloping its main demonstration room in Southern California. The room displays wide range of solutions that ATEN provides, as well as being a training center for Pro AV resellers and specialists, who can bring customers along to see technology in action. To support the devices connected to the local area network, ATEN has chosen the M4300, based on its overall positive experience with the switch.

Bill's colleague YT Liang also comments on the fact that after a power outage, the M4300 recovers with the previous configurations still intact. "That has been another benefit for our Beverley Hills customer: they do not need to call us out to re-set the switch every time the power goes down."

Bill McGowan concludes, "The AV over IP market is a big opportunity for AV Pros and together, ATEN and NETGEAR can provide a 1Gb connectivity solution that is simple, reliable, flexible – it just works, without any specialist knowledge. For our channel and their customers, that is essential."

