

Case Study: Sify Technologies Ltd, India



Aruba delivers new business opportunities for managed telecom services giant



Founded in 1995, Sify Technologies Ltd. delivers integrated Internet, network, and data center services across India. Because of the broad scope of its operations, the business is comprised of five business units—Telecom Services, Data Center Services, Cloud and Managed Services, Application Integration Services, and Technology

Integration Services.

“Our relationship with HPE is strategic to our organization, spanning all five of our business units,” states Harsha Ram, Head of Products for Data and Network Managed Services for Sify. “It allows us to deploy industry-leading technologies in-house, and then serve as a reference case as we take the solution to the global market. It also allows us to build up internal expertise that we can leverage on behalf of our customers. HPE and Aruba have been extremely flexible, extremely responsive, and—in spite of being a large organization—they work very well with partners, and that’s our number-one criteria.”

Creating profitable, repeatable engagements

I believe that the way we do business will be very different in 12 to 18 months’ time, and a core contributor will be the Aruba infrastructure. Aruba—the wireless foundation for enabling the digital workplace—will be a major part of our story moving forward.

HARSHA RAM, HEAD OF PRODUCTS FOR DATA AND NETWORK MANAGED SERVICES, SIFY, INDIA ””

“Our Aruba deployment is an example of that,” explains Harsha. “When we began research into a new wireless solution, we looked for one that met two key criteria. Not only did the solution have to address our own challenges, we also wanted to leverage what we did and create a solution we could offer to our clients. We chose Aruba because it offered the performance we needed, along with simple BYOD onboarding and authentication with ClearPass. AirWave gave us the management capabilities that we needed to ensure a consistent user experience.”

“We’ve done a complete refresh of the wireless environment at our corporate office,” adds Harsha, “and are in the process of rolling it out to an additional 23 branch offices across the country. In total, we’ll be able to support over 4000 users across the network. And—most importantly—it’s given us a robust, wireless LAN solution that we can offer our customers with complete confidence based on our experience working with HPE and Aruba.”

REQUIREMENTS

- Eliminate inconsistent performance, dropped sessions, and interference from ad hoc hotspots
- Refresh wireless infrastructure to enable a fast, consistent user experience
- Ensure simple manageability, seamless onboarding, and policy-based authentication
- Convert internal wireless deployment into repeatable, revenue-generating customer engagements

SOLUTION

- [Aruba 802.11ac Indoor APs](#)
- [Aruba access switches](#)
- [HPE FlexNetwork switch series](#)
- [HPE FlexFabric switch series](#)
- [HPE Multi-Services Router Series](#)
- [Aruba AirWave](#) for network management
- [Aruba ClearPass Policy Manager](#) for access control
- [HPE Intelligent Management Center \(IMC\)](#) for switch management

BENEFITS

- Increased satisfaction and mobility for the wireless generation

Delivering communications infrastructure to enable business growth



- Leveraged internal, wireless LAN deployment to create a repeatable customer offering
- Simplified and reduced wireless management overhead
- Built a partnership platform for ongoing innovation across multiple business units

“The Aruba wireless solution has been a great addition to our portfolio, complementing our managed wide area network and wide area network transformation initiatives, both of which are dependent on HPE networking equipment” continues Harsha.

One of Sify’s successes in this area is with the Department of Posts (trading as India Posts), a division of the Government of India’s Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. It manages the world’s largest postal network, serving some 1.25 billion citizens and employing almost 500,000 staff in over 155,000 post offices across the country.

“In 2012, the Department of Posts (DoP) began an IT modernization and transformation initiative with a view to leveraging new communication technologies to improve operational efficiencies, provide best-in-class customer service, and compete effectively against local and international courier companies,” explains Harsha. “The project included moving into the banking sector as part of the DoP’s expansion plans.”

“Sify was chosen as the lead network integrator for the project, and HPE as the equipment provider,” continues Harsha. “The project required that we create a banking network spanning over 30,000 departmental offices across the country, many in rural areas where there is no wired or wireless connectivity. We partnered with state-owned BNSL to supply the Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPSL) network, expanded our own MPSL network as a backup, and deployed an HPE Multi-Services Router Series at each site to provide routing throughout the network.”

Driving greater revenue, regaining market share, creating business opportunities

"We're more than 2 years into the project and it's been a tremendous success," enthuses Harsha. "It's enabled the Department of Posts to become the primary e-governance platform for citizens and government. Having been awarded a payments bank license, in addition to delivering mail and accepting deposits, DoP can now provide life insurance, disburse wages and pensions, and offer a range of additional retail services. It's probably the single largest wide area network across the globe. One of the critical success factors is the capability of HPE Intelligent Management Center (IMC) to integrate and centralize the monitoring and management of those 30,000 routers spread across the whole of the sub-continent."

At the 2016 Digital India Summit & Awards, the Minister for Communication and Information Technology, Ravi Shankar Prasad, commented on the success of the project, stating that "postal service digitization is integral to digital India", and that "core banking linkage of the post office is bigger than that of the State Bank of India." Within just two years, post offices with core banking jumped from just 230 to over 20,000, with more being added weekly.

Our partnership with HPE has given us the capability and confidence to transform from being a service provider to being someone who can actually carry out a network transformation for the digital enterprise. That's huge for our company.

HARSHA RAM, HEAD OF PRODUCTS FOR DATA AND NETWORK MANAGED SERVICES, SIFY, INDIA



"It's easy to do core banking in a data center," explains Harsha. "But getting that functionality down to thousands of rural post offices across the vast Indian sub-continent, that's a major achievement. I believe that the success can largely be attributed to Sify and HPE. It's an outstanding story because it took us just eighteen months to deliver. When you think of a project of that size and scale—with the complexities that India offers on top of it—it's an amazing story."

"But it hasn't just been a success for the Department of Posts," states Harsha. "Our partnership with HPE has given us the capability and confidence to transform from being a service provider to being someone who can actually carry out a network transformation for the digital enterprise."

Enabling co-location with high-performance networks

"We've also standardized on HPE FlexFabric 5900 and 5930 Series Top-of-Rack (ToR) Switches in our six data centers," adds Harsha. "While our co-location clients have a variety of server and storage platforms from different vendors, our business and engineering teams decided to standardize on a common network platform with HPE. Having a robust, high-capacity, and flexible platform allows us to scale on demand to meet the needs of our customers." To become even more agile, SIFY is exploring the possibility of deploying software-defined networking with HPE.

"One of the key drivers for the move to HPE is the convergence we've seen in the industry," adds Harsha. "Most of Sify's contracts require that we keep the client's network running for the next four to five years. I don't want an acquisition happening two years down the line when I've bet my business on that vendor being around for the next five."

Building on success to meet the needs of the wireless generation

“With HPE, we’re building solutions that meet the needs of the 21st Century,” states Harsha. “I’m probably on the borderline between the wired generation and the wireless generation. But the new workforce belongs to the wireless generation, and for them, wired is a limitation. It actually creates a mental block in many cases. That’s why our partnership with HPE Aruba is important for both us and our customers.”

Harsha sums it up: “We’re building on our success and extending our partnership by moving into wireless LANs with HPE Aruba. We have a number of opportunities with financial institutions and automobile dealerships, and we’re encouraging them to go with Aruba as a wireless solution instead of deploying a wired infrastructure. It allows them to create a secure, scalable, digital workspace. It’s allowed us to move our sales force to the Cloud as part of our mobility initiative, and now we’re doing the same for our customers.”