

Effective Equipment Replacement Strategies

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Network managers are turning to the secondary equipment market as an extra measure of protection from disasters and downtime. The daunting task of ensuring uninterrupted access to networks with fully-redundant equipment configurations has proven beyond the reach of budget-constrained IT departments.

As a result many companies have resorted to protecting only routers and switches at the network core, leaving the edge and remote offices vulnerable in the event of a major disaster or mundane outage. The risks far outweigh the rewards in this scenario as a simple equipment failure at a remote site can cause a devastating ripple effect throughout the entire organization.

In an effort to improve company-wide preparedness for disasters of any kind, growing numbers of organizations are embracing more cost-effective equipment sourcing and flexible sparing solutions. It pays to have a backup plan for equipment procurement and today's secondary market providers offer a variety of options for helping companies safeguard their networks.

Since pre-owned gear typically offers savings of up to 90 percent off list prices, companies seeking a fully-redundant configuration can more affordably deploy a one-for-one sparing solution. An even more cost-effective alternative is a one-for-many strategy, acquiring a spare for every three to five identical network elements.

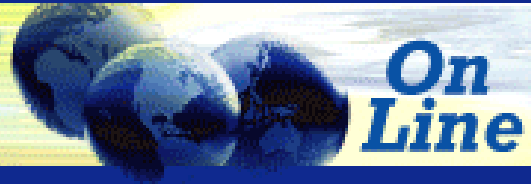
Off-site spares depots are particularly appealing to firms with multiple locations that don't have sufficient space or an ideal central site for storing replacement equipment. Secondary network providers often offer warehousing options to expedite equipment availability and shipment. Similar rapid replacement warranties offered by OEMs often cost many times the value of the covered equipment.

Another reason for maintaining a supply of pre-owned spares is that it lets companies quickly apply a temporary fix for unexpected problems. The secondary market's ability to provide a wide range of equipment with expedited shipping helps maintain maximum uptime. In contrast most OEMs typically need at least four to six weeks to deliver new gear.



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When the network is up-and-running again, the interim solution can be re-deployed for testing and/or personnel training. Using spares in this fashion permits these tasks to be performed during regular business hours without placing negative impact on the primary network.

No matter which sparing strategy is embraced, it's important to note that refurbished equipment from vendors comes with a standard one-year overnight replacement warranty. OEMs typically warranty equipment for no more than 90 days, which could prove problematic if a spare doesn't work many months later when finally needed. The OEM will then usually replace it with refurbished gear.

The same equipment from a reputable secondary market provider would have cost less than half as much and included a longer warranty. When it comes to alternative equipment sourcing and sparing strategies, this market offers an array of choices for bolstering network resiliency and responding quickly to outages when they occur.

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