

AHEAD

A Complete Guide to Network Lifecycle Management

For a successful enterprise network refresh, each of your locations needs a custom design, equipment procurement, staging, configuration, deployment, and ongoing maintenance. **How is it possible to do all that at tens, hundreds or even thousands of campuses on a tight timeline?**

Here's how AHEAD provides full supply chain visibility and lifecycle management for the thousands of moving parts of a network refresh:



Network Lifecycle Management

Design



Procurement &
Logistics



Staging &
Integration



Implementation



Site Management



Asset
Disposition





Design

Through workshops across IT and business departments, we work with you to settle on a networking vision that aligns goals and reduces risk. We create a full picture of the assets and facilities at a site to prioritize locations and inform procurement and implementation. Then we create an IT equipment Bill of Materials based on an asset-light, standard configuration that we design for each location.

Design in Action:

We document every piece of network equipment and point of connectivity down to the port level across each of your 800 locations. Then we recommend a standard configuration for each location.



Procurement & Logistics

All your purchase orders, order status, and invoice information is tracked and synthesized for you in AHEAD's Hatch IT lifecycle management software. From source to site, you have real-time shipping visibility to schedule on-site resources with pinpoint accuracy. Hatch keeps track of all components, where they were shipped, and where they are in the installation process in case a return is needed.

Procurement in Action:

Automated workflows let you maintain an item catalog from your ERP platform to push asset data into Hatch. Hatch lets you track the skus, price, and delivery status of 800 sets of switches to your 800 locations. 200 sets were recalled by the OEM. Your bill of materials in Hatch tracks the location of the recalled skus so that they are never installed on your network and are promptly returned.



Staging & Integration

We employ a unique approach to asset integration that reduces issues during and after deployment. Inside AHEAD factories we unbox, stage, assemble, and configure assets including data harvesting, burn in, and validation. We also lockdown BOMs to control software and firmware versions as well as to ensure consistency across incremental site rollouts. Our Forge integration infrastructure allows us to conduct automated testing, then push as-built outlines and harvested asset data into Hatch. This enables us to ship entire racks to your sites for true plug-and-play.

Staging in Action:

We ship 90 racks to your various locations with fully populated servers, connected switches, and preloaded software, all configured, verified, and tested by our experts.



Implementation

Implementation in Action:

At each location, we...

- Unpackage, power on, and validate all hardware
- Create and update a CMDB
- Update asset information in Hatch
- Perform any final configuration and imaging of software
- Map existing interfaces to new switches and migrate switchport configurations
- Confirm Syslog, NetFlow, AAA configurations in staging environment
- Remove legacy equipment, wipe or dispose of it, and rack new equipment
- Implement all cabling and patching
- Verify all routing and access points are functioning as expected
- Test all equipment, from servers and applications to phones and printers



Site Management

Ongoing network management is a breeze under the AHEAD approach. Once we complete final installation of your new equipment, the effort to maintain your infrastructure takes a fraction of the time. Every asset is tracked at the location level down to the component, software, and firmware level, including service entitlements.

Site Management in Action:

Over time as equipment requires updates and maintenance, teams can easily identify the specific assets and their location in Hatch and execute these services in the field.



Asset Disposition

Along the journey, equipment will need to be replaced, requiring precise management of maintenance and warranty contracts. By integrating ServiceNow with Hatch, this process is enhanced with an automated approach to data management for contracts. This integration is not a prerequisite but a complementary enhancement that streamlines how you manage contract information. Beyond eliminating traditional spreadsheets, it also saves you from auto-renewals on assets no longer in use.

Disposition in Action:

Hatch independently tracks your service contract dates and asset locations and proactively notifies you to replace equipment ahead of warranty expirations or end of life dates. While ServiceNow integration can further refine this process, the core functionalities for tracking and managing equipment dispositions are fully realized within Hatch. This approach gives you the flexibility to match the level of integration to your operational needs.



AHEAD builds and manages digital platforms that power the most successful organizations in the world. Our consultative approach, unmatched engineering, and innovative solutions combine to accelerate the impact of technology in every client we serve.

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