# Virtualization integration a 'game changer' for reseller

**Location:**
Victoria, B.C.

**Type of Sales:**
Technology Sales

**Challenge:**
Delivering superior power protection solutions to its customers, the majority of whom support virtualized environments.

## Background

Since its founding in 2005, Think Communications has strived to provide clients with a single point of contact for all of their technology needs. The company's first order — a lone $5 cable that was too small for the "Big Guys" but was urgently needed by the customer— underscores Think Communication's commitment to satisfy its clients and build long-term relationships.

From that first $5 cable, Think Communications grew into a full-service Value Added Reseller (VAR), staffed by a team of sales, administrative and solution architects who possess extensive industry experience and the ability to understand the challenges companies face when looking for business solutions. In June 2010, the firm launched Think Technology Solutions, a professional services division focused on server, storage and desktop virtualization; DR and Business Continuity solutions; and Cisco network/voice and data services.

## Software that's virtually amazing

As the founder and president of Think Communications, David Saele was well-versed when it came to selling power protection to his customers. But he wasn't prepared for the array of benefits he has come to enjoy since incorporating the Eaton® uninterruptible power system (UPS) line into his offering — and subsequently joining Eaton's PowerAdvantage program.

Considering that the majority of Think Communications' customers operate virtualized environments, the company has reaped tremendous value from Eaton's Intelligent Power® Software Suite, which provides all the tools to manage power devices in both physical and virtual environments. The innovative software solution ensures system uptime and data integrity by allowing users to remotely monitor, manage and control network devices.

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>
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## The Eaton advantage

Having participated in Eaton's PowerAdvantage program since last year, Saele says that the package epitomizes the core values of Eaton as a whole. "It's not just the products, which we knew were great," he explains, "but Eaton's commitment to the channel. We are a small VAR that is 100 percent relationship-driven, so we value companies like Eaton that are also relationship-driven. They really make an effort to understand my business and help me succeed."

To begin with, Saele appreciates Eaton's aggressive upfront rebates, designed to help resellers secure new business. "Discounting the product upfront to help us win deals has been really significant," he acknowledges. "That's a huge value for us."

In addition, Think Communications has benefitted from Eaton's flexible, online training modules, which have been instrumental in helping the sales and technical staff understand how to quote, configure and position the various power protection products.

"The education has been very helpful," Saele reveals, noting that the modules are both thorough and user-friendly. "Eaton is making an investment in educating my team, and giving us the tools we need to be successful.

"I also like the flexibility of the online training, since not all of us have time during the day to carve out an hour to do training," he adds. "But if you can do it in the evening, or 20 minutes here and there, or on a break, then it becomes much easier. "

## Five-Star products

Another boon for Think Communications is Eaton's comprehensive product line, with models offering protection from the desktop to the data center. "From entry-level products to the BladeUPS, we offer the full product scope," Saele reports. "Where we think Eaton really shines is in the data center products, which is a core part of what we do."

Saele is especially impressed by the BladeUPS, which he says is well-positioned and feature-rich. "That's totally the sweet spot and really, there's nobody that can touch Eaton there," he enthuses.

Think Communications even relies on Eaton to safeguard its own systems, having deployed a 5PX in its small data center. "We like to use the technology that we promote to our clients," Saele explains. "We feel that it's almost disingenuous to promote a product that you don't use yourself."

With the 5PX and Eaton software delivering protection and seamless monitoring and management within the company's virtual environment, the setup also doubles as a valuable customer showcase.

"We often show clients our own gear, which really goes a long way with them," Saele says. "So far, in our own VMware environment and testing with the UPS shutdown, all is working as advertised. We recently won an RFP for a virtualized data center where we sold an Eaton 9PX and a 9130."

### Think Communications' PowerAdvantage Benefits:

- **Power management software** that works in virtualized environments is a "game-changer" for Think Communications
- **Access to an expansive product line** helps the firm meet the power protection needs of its data center customers
- **Online UPS training** gives the sales team the flexibility to gain product knowledge on their terms
- **Ongoing Eaton sales support** enables Think Communications to receive any help needed, regardless of the size of the opportunity

## Unmatched support

In addition to exceptional pricing, convenient training and top-notch products, Think Communications enjoys "phenomenal" support from Eaton, according to Saele.

"Eaton is hands-down one of the most channel-friendly and relationship-driven manufacturers out there — bar none!" he says. "When we go out and champion the product, we have a full team that surrounds us; the support is tremendous."

From Eaton's local "feet on the street" — sales reps who are available to accompany Think Communications' salespeople on client calls — to fielding questions from prospective customers, Eaton is there for the reseller every step of the way. And, Saele says, unlike other manufacturers, the company is relationship-driven rather than transaction-based, which makes a huge difference.

"The competition is very hands-off, and if the sales opportunity is less than $100K, no one is really dedicated to it at all," Saele explains. "Eaton, on the other hand, has had sales reps come out and accompany us on visits for orders under $20K. They engage with our clients, ask tons of questions, and come back with the right-sized solution. They are committed to helping us succeed."

That's why Think Communications now leads with Eaton products on every opportunity. If a client specifically requests another manufacturer, "we will go back and ask if they are open to looking at Eaton, which then allows us to go into all of the benefits of the products," Saele says. "Usually, we then get the opportunity to quote both — and in most cases the customer chooses Eaton."

## Results

When it comes to partnering with Eaton, "I feel the love," Saele says. "I feel like Eaton really appreciates my business and is really committed to helping us be successful and meet our clients' needs."

Indeed, since joining the PowerAdvantage program, Think Communications has been able to reap numerous benefits, including the ability to:

- Provide monitoring and management solutions for virtualized environments
- Supply its customers with highly reliable UPS products
- Easily access support from the Eaton team
- Continue to grow its power protection business with Eaton's ongoing tools and resources

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