



# NETGEAR Switches

## Review From A Customer



From IT Central Station, the leading review site for enterprise technology solutions.

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## Review by a Real User

Verified by IT Central Station



Owner/CTO at a tech services company

### WHAT IS OUR PRIMARY USE CASE?

We use the switches for our clients. We're an IT services company. We set them up for our clients when they need networks built or when they upgrade networks or adjust network infrastructure. We switched over to the Insight product line. We use the GC510 and GC510P, which is the Power over Ethernet model. We also use the GC728X and 728XPs, and the 752Xs and 752XPs.

### HOW HAS IT HELPED MY ORGANIZATION?

It is very easy to use. They give you the ability within the screens to make changes and you can push them down to all the devices at once. It's saving us a lot of time in terms of making changes on our customers' equipment by making changes at the organizational level and just pushing a button to push them down to the equipment. Using the Insight product line and the Insight Pro interface has reduced the amount of time that my organization needs to spend on two things: Setting up the equipment. By having it all configured in the system and being able to push down the configurations to all the devices at once, we've saved at least 50 percent of the time we would spend setting up new equipment for our customers. The other piece where we've saved a huge amount of time is in maintenance. For the networking equipment we used previous to Insight, you would have to log on to the equipment and push up the firmwares that had the security fixes in them, and do it manually. By using the Insight product line, we can schedule the firmware updates for all the equipment at the same time or at different times, but we can have it all automated and that's easily saving us six to ten hours of labor per customer per quarter.

### WHAT IS MOST VALUABLE?

Two of the most important features are the ease of monitoring and setup. The setup is a breeze with the Insight switches and monitoring of the Ethernet switches for our clients through, in our case, the Insight Pro account, is also a breeze. NETGEAR has made it really easy to deploy these devices because you just put in the serial number and the system dials home and finds the right account to be attached to. I can set up and preconfigure everything for my client in the Insight Pro interface, put the serial numbers in, so when we bring these things online, they can go home, they can get their configuration, they check in, and do all that stuff automatically. And through the Insight product line, you can push the settings down to all your Insight devices. For

example, we have one client that has three Insight switches and when we make a change to their network - for example, we have to add a VLAN for whatever purpose within the organization - we can make the configuration change and push it down to all three switches at once. We don't have to individually log on to each switch to make the change. I really love the remote management as well. One of the biggest benefits of the remote management is that it's easy to use and you can use it from a mobile device or tablet with the app they've developed. I have technicians and engineers who work for me and support my customers. If one of my engineers is out in the field at a client and an alert comes in from another client, that engineer can take that alert and look at it in real-time using the app on his phone. He can figure out what might be the problem and actually even solve the problem without the issue having to be transferred back to the main office to have someone else address it. The remote troubleshooting features provide a single pane of glass where I can see my all my clients' equipment. If they're reporting a problem, I can go to the Insight Pro interface online and I can bring up that client and I can see all their devices and the status of all their devices. I can start to dive into it and look at, "Okay, what's the throughput on this switch?" I can then quickly identify, "Well, there's something attached to this switch that's causing a flooding of the network," for example. I can then actually identify which port it is and then address it quickly.

### **WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT?**

One area that has room for improvement, and I know NETGEAR is working on it, is adding more features to the product lines in terms of what we can manage through the Insight portal. There are certain features that we can turn on and push down to all the devices, but not all Layer 2 or Layer 3 settings are there yet. NETGEAR is working on that, but one of the things that is not 100 percent is the feature set that they make available through the Insight interface.

### **FOR HOW LONG HAVE I USED THE SOLUTION?**

One to three years.

### **WHAT DO I THINK ABOUT THE STABILITY OF THE SOLUTION?**

We have not seen any problems with it. It seems very stable. We're getting alerts when things are going wrong, so it's not like we're missing anything. My impression is that NETGEAR has a very stable platform in the Insight product line.

### **WHAT DO I THINK ABOUT THE SCALABILITY OF THE SOLUTION?**

They have a very scalable product line. They offer quite the range of networking devices and equipment. Between their Ethernet switches, their access points, and their firewalls, they've got a veritable range within each of those product categories that can meet my needs and, I would assume, the needs of our customers, anywhere from enterprise level down to the mom and pop shop.

**HOW ARE CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT?**

Their support has been very good. Any time we've had an issue, which has been minimal, they've been very responsive and things have been resolved within 24 hours, tops. Usually, most of the stuff gets resolved on the initial call.

**WHICH SOLUTION DID I USE PREVIOUSLY AND WHY DID I SWITCH?**

Previously, we used different equipment. I switched to them because they not only have the Insight product line saved us a lot of time, but it's also very cost-effective compared to other solutions out there. I believe that from a dollar value perspective, the Insight product line is an excellent product line. You get lots of features for the price that you're paying and you don't get that kind of feature-density-per-dollar with any other product line out there.

**HOW WAS THE INITIAL SETUP?**

The initial setup is straightforward. We create an Insight Pro account, which is pretty straightforward, and then add my engineers to the account so they have access to all the customer's stuff. Adding a new client into our Insight Pro account is very easy. So setting up the whole Insight infrastructure that we use to manage and monitor all the Insight devices on behalf of our clients is a breeze. As far as setting up the equipment goes, I mentioned earlier that they dial home automatically and then we can push configuration information down to all the devices at once, so it's definitely a breeze to set up multiple devices. The deployment time on average for the customers where we've used this equipment is on the order of one hour. Previously it would take us anywhere from six to eight hours to preconfigure things, test them, and push it out. In terms of our implementation strategy, we get the equipment in-house and we bring the equipment online for the customer in our lab. We preconfigure everything and set it all up and verify that the configurations are all working. In the past, that could take anywhere from six to eight hours to do. It included downloading firmwares, uploading them one at a time to each switch, setting the VLAN settings or the Layer 2 or Layer 3 settings on each switch individually, then connecting them all together, and making sure they were all working. With the Insight product line, it takes an hour or less because we plug it in, they dial home, we do the configuration to the cloud, push it down to all the equipment, and then we can see immediately if it's all working properly through the Insight interface. If you wanted to deploy this type of equipment without IT expertise, I'd say you could do it. The reason you could do it is that, the way the Insight products are set up with the portal interface, they make it very easy to identify the features that you want and to turn them on or off without necessarily understanding how to get into the switches themselves and make those changes on the switches.



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### **WHAT ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION TEAM?**

Everything was done internally.

### **WHAT WAS OUR ROI?**

The return on the investment, in switching to Insight, is that my staff needs less time to manage those devices, compared to the previous devices that were there. My staff has been able to go out and do more work, take on additional products. It has also freed them up to do things like some additional education and training and to improve their skill sets, which makes our whole organization better.

### **WHAT'S MY EXPERIENCE WITH PRICING, SETUP COST, AND LICENSING?**

The pricing for what you get with the Insight product line is very fair and the value is there, including the annual licensing fees for the Insight Pro for each device. The pricing is very fair for the features that you get. In fact, I believe that the Insight Pro level, which is their highest level, where you get a lot of features with the Insight, is a bargain. You get a lot of good features for what you're paying there annually. I feel that the pricing for the devices and licensing is low and, obviously, it helps the business because I was able to upgrade to the Insight product line and get better, newer, more modern equipment at a very reasonable price. I was able to take some money that was saved from a budgeting perspective and spend it elsewhere within the organization to improve other aspects of the business.

### **WHICH OTHER SOLUTIONS DID I EVALUATE?**

I looked at Cisco Meraki vs NETGEAR, and Ubiquiti as well. I ended up choosing NETGEAR because of the cost, the quality, and the ease of use. Insight makes it easy. I know Meraki is Insight-like: you plug them in, they dial home and you can set it up, but Meraki is very expensive compared to NETGEAR. I also looked at HPE switches.

### **WHAT OTHER ADVICE DO I HAVE?**

Definitely consider the Insight product line, but make sure that you understand what you're getting and that you're getting the right piece of equipment within the Insight product line. Consider getting that licensing so that you can manage it online. The number of users in our organization is about 25. In terms of their roles, there are financial folks who are using it for the organization, there are service people who are using it, and the executives are obviously on the system and using it as well. For deployment and maintenance, as far as staff goes, I don't even need a full-time person for it. Their role is just to do the configuration: Set up the devices per the design that was done for the network and then maintain it. The maintenance is just monitoring it and then fixing

anything that might come up. I don't need full-time people to do that. Insight is, today, about 15 percent of the equipment on the infrastructure. My plan is to actually get it to 100 percent. My intention is to take it all the way and have everything Insight-based.

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