



NETGEAR Switches

Review From A Customer



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

Review by a Real User

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CEO at a tech vendor with 11-50 employees

WHAT IS OUR PRIMARY USE CASE?

We use it for the SMB market, small and mid-size businesses. In Belgium, compared to America, a small/mid-size company in Belgium has 50 to 100 people. It's a little bit different than in the U.S. We're using mainly the GC728XP, that's a 24-port switch; and the GC752XP, that's the 84-port switch. For the smaller ones, we use the GC110P. For the access points, we only use the WAC510.

HOW HAS IT HELPED MY ORGANIZATION?

We recently had a problem with a client, a restaurant in the city. We had installed the Insight management solution for the switches and the access points, and another solution for the router. On Sunday, a day we don't normally work, we got a call from the client that there was a problem with one of the access points and one of the switches, regarding their table-booking solution. Through the Insight app, I was able to quickly look at possible problems at the client's location. We determined that the switch that the table-booking system was connected to was down. It was offline. I told the boss of the restaurant to have look at a particular cabinet because there is one switch that's stored away beneath the point-of-sale system and the booking system. There was an adapter that was not inserted in the power plug. It was pretty easy to determine the problem at the client's, without going to the client and having a look at it myself. It was solved in five minutes and that's something we couldn't do in the past without Insight.

WHAT IS MOST VALUABLE?

Remote management is the most important thing for us. And monitoring, of course, allows us to see when something is wrong with a client. We get notified that an access point is down, for instance, or that there are too many clients on one access point, so that we can log into the portal and manage the solution with the client instantly, from either a laptop or a cell phone, with the Insight app. That's the most important feature for us. I also find it very easy to use and deploy. I have a few colleagues who aren't so involved in technology and they can set it up pretty easily with a cell phone or with a laptop. They scan the serial number or the QR code on the device, it gets automatically assigned to a client, an Insight portal, and the configuration and firmware updates

happen automatically. It's very easy to use, very easy to config. You just to put in the configuration once, and all the devices that you scan and assign to that client or that location will be updated and installed automatically. The remote troubleshooting is easy to use, intuitive. The alerting is very clear. It's very apparent when you have an alert on a device. It comes to the foreground and it says that device has an issue and then you can directly look at the issue of the device. The Facebook login is very important for our clients.

WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT?

The main negative thing is the speed. When you use the portal, if you have a lot of customers and locations in the portal, and you need to scroll through those clients or those locations, it takes a pretty long time to load those pages and to select the client. That's the problem in the portal on the laptop, and it's the same problem in the portal on the app.

FOR HOW LONG HAVE I USED THE SOLUTION?

One to three years.

WHAT DO I THINK ABOUT THE STABILITY OF THE SOLUTION?

Up to now we haven't had any stability issues with the Insight application. We have been using the Pro version for the last four or five months and we haven't had any stability issues with it.

WHAT DO I THINK ABOUT THE SCALABILITY OF THE SOLUTION?

We have a restaurant here in the city that uses something like 22 access points, so it scales pretty well. I don't think there is an issue on that side. It's still a small business solution, it's not a large-enterprise solution. NETGEAR has other products for that. But for the SMB market, it's a pretty nice, scalable solution.

HOW ARE CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT?

We did have one problem with an access point. It was defective. We sent it in and three days later we had a new product, so the tech support was really helpful. They had us do a few things and then they said, "Okay, send it in and we'll send a new one." That took three days and we had a new device. The tech support is pretty good.

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

We used Ubiquity. The main reason we switched was because we had a lot of defective products from Ubiquity. The main problem was that, in Belgium, there was only one year of warranty on Ubiquity products. It was not such a good deal. They're cheap. They're pretty good. We had the devices for three years and then we had something like three, four, or five defective access points, and they were all out-of-warranty. The first one that went down was one-and-a-half years old. With the one year of warranty, we couldn't do anything about it except buy a new one. With NETGEAR hardware, we have lifetime support and lifetime trade, so I didn't see any reason not to change. They're better products, the management platform looks better than the Ubiquity Unify version. The price was good, the support as well, and, I must emphasize, the warranty is a lot better than with the Ubiquity products.

HOW WAS THE INITIAL SETUP?

Setting up the Ethernet switches is pretty simple and straightforward. They have a device, they create a client, they create the location in the Insight portal, they scan the device, and it gets automatically assigned to that location. Firmware updates, setup, and the configuration are automatically deployed. It's very easy to deploy a new client. On average, for the setup and the Insight portal, deployment takes about ten to 15 minutes. In general, the deployment of a switch and, let's say, five access points, including the firmware updates and pushing the configuration, takes about an hour. For our team, internally, we had a webinar for training. All the guys followed the webinar and they started directly with the approach of installing the Insight environment. It was all explained on the webinar from NETGEAR. In terms of needing to be an IT expert to deploy and support the network, you do have to know something about IT. If you don't have any knowledge of IT, I don't think that you can deploy the Insight Pro - I'm not talking about the Basic or the Premium versions. For the Pro version, you do need some IT knowledge, but for the Basic or for the Premium version, no IT knowledge is necessary, because all the setup is done through the mobile app. The entire process is very, easy for the Premium. With the Pro version, you have the extended portal on the internet, and you have a lot of more features than in the Basic and Premium versions.

WHAT WAS OUR ROI?

If you look at our customer with the restaurant, the return of investment is less than one year. You can put in these devices, have the latest software, the latest features, and especially in summer, when the restaurant has a lot of people, it's an attractive solution for doing some marketing around it. You have a good WiFi solution, and you can extend it to your guests.

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

Insight pricing is okay. It's very competitive. The costs of the hardware and additional services weren't low because Unify is much cheaper, but the costs conformed to the market. When you look at the hardware specs, the price and the warranty, the complete package was much better than any other vendor. If you consider those three main aspects of NETGEAR Insight and NETGEAR Insight devices, and you put them next to Ubiquity or Cisco Meraki, or even TP-Link, in our opinion, it's better hardware, it has a better warranty, and for the price you have to pay, it's a pretty good product.

WHICH OTHER SOLUTIONS DID I EVALUATE?

Before we went to NETGEAR, we had a look at, of course, Ubiquity; we had a look at Meraki vs NETGEAR, and we had a look at TP-Link. All together we had four in the running, and NETGEAR came out as what we thought was the best solution and, in the end, it was the best solution.

WHAT OTHER ADVICE DO I HAVE?

Just try it. It's a good product, it's a good solution. If you come from Ubiquity, it's a little bit different but, in the end, it's all about the devices and the reliability of the devices. With NETGEAR you get that good device reliability and you get a little cheaper price than Cisco Meraki. As for the remote management tools, the general look and feel are okay, but the speed could be increased. That's one of the minor points of the Insight portal, is that it sometimes lacks in speed when loading certain pages for certain clients. In general, there are about 18 to 20 internal users. For the guests it ranges from, let's say, from one to 100 or 120. We require no staff for deployment and maintenance. With Insight, if you look at it from the standpoint of a reseller, you don't need to have one dedicated person for management of it, because it's all done on one portal, one application. When there is an alert from a device or a client, you can have a look at it, but you don't need a dedicated resource for management of the environment. For the moment it's not necessary to increase usage. It's pretty brand new. I rate the solution a nine out of ten. They could make it a ten by making the interface faster, providing more devices to choose from to put in Insight, and by adding a few more features to the Insight portal; software features, like reporting and alerting. Those two things should be extended with extra features.

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