

FEATURED COMPANY

Power Is The Name Of The Game

Server Technology Offers An Array Of Power Distribution Solutions For SMEs

by Holly Dolezalek

MANY SUCCESSFUL COMPANIES adhere to the motto, "Find something you're good at and stick with it." Server Technology in Reno, Nev., has found that it's good at power, and it's sticking with that.

Since 1984, Server Technology (800/835-1515; www.servertech.com) has been bringing products for cabinet power distribution to the market. Most of the company's employees are at its Reno



Server Technology Solutions for the Data Center Equipment Cabinet

headquarters, except for its sales and support teams located in their regional and global locations.

Server Technology is best known for its Sentry line of power distribution units and switches. But the company has recently reached into the power market in a different way: the Sentry Power Manager software, which allows users to track and monitor all of their PDUs with a single interface.

Basic family includes units that provide simple power distribution for equipment cabinets and applications as well as branch circuit management for 20- or 30-amp devices. These units can distribute 120, 208, or 230 volts. The CB-12H has space for 12 NEMA or IEC 60320 outlets, while the CB-24V has space for 24.

The Metered family distributes power but also monitors local current, including aggregate load verification per circuit, so that users can avoid overloading the circuit

when installing new equipment in a cabinet. Some units in the Metered family are wired for three-phase load balancing for power distribution. The family includes 15 models, many of which are rack-mountable, with varying numbers of available outlets (up to 48).

The company's Smart family of PDUs combines the capabilities of the Basic and Metered families with the ability to monitor

environmental conditions and initiate remote rebooting. The Web-based GUI for these products allows users to turn outlets on and off, monitor conditions, and set conditions for email or SNMP alerts. Products in this line vary by voltage (up to 400 volts in three-phase), capacity (up to 60 amps), and number of outlets (up to 84). The Switched family includes all of these capabilities and other features such as smart load shedding, sequenced power, and outlet grouping.

The -48VDC family of products provides power for routers, switches, and servers. The company also offers a fail-safe transfer switch for power redundancy and a per-outlet power sensing, or POPS, unit. The POPS unit can do everything a Switched unit can and provides power monitoring information for each individual outlet or device, including power, current, and voltage.

The company has also been revamping its power management software to meet the needs of the data center. Sentry Power Manager tracks a company's PDUs, including capabilities for capacity planning, environmental monitoring, reporting on power trends, and efficiency measurement.

A Recipe For Success

Nicholson says that Server Technology has succeeded over the years by sticking close to its core competency: power. "We have over 20 years of expertise in this market, and we've stayed on top of the features and functions that customers want," he says. "We have what we think is the biggest engineering group in the industry [Server Technology has more than 30 full-time engineers], so we've made big investments in staying on top of the market."

The company has been growing, especially overseas, and Nicholson says that the growth has posed a challenge to the company to maintain the environment and culture that has served it well. "It's been difficult to support all that international business, and meanwhile, the marketplace is getting ever more competitive with new companies coming in all the time," Nicholson says.

But Server Technology has no plans to depart from the focus that has kept it successful. "We're constantly releasing new products, and we're going to continue advancing the technology and offerings

c o n t a c t

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- Server Technology specializes in power management offerings designed to help SMEs get the most out of their power infrastructures in times of rising energy costs and environmental concerns.
- The company's Sentry families of power distribution units go beyond power distribution with such capabilities as environmental monitoring and email alerts.
- "We've got over 20 years of expertise in this market, and we've stayed on top of the features and functions that customers want," says Calvin Nicholson, director of product marketing.

that we're already doing well in," Nicholson says. "We're not going to branch out into other areas."

Server Technology's salespeople conduct direct sales of its products through its offices in the United States and abroad, but a network of channel partners sells Sentry units all over the world. The company sells more products through its channel partners than in direct sales, although it used to be the other way around.

Nicholson says the company doesn't focus on any vertical market because companies in all verticals need power distribution. But he says Server Technology has done well in the financial segment, possibly because of the increased need for security in that market. Server Technology also doesn't focus on any particular size of company. "We have over 1,000 SKUs, and what companies buy depends on what they're trying to accomplish," he says. "The smaller companies tend to have lower densities, so they need models for lower power and current, but we find we've got something for just about everybody."

In The Works

The company is researching a way to offer a monitoring solution that will upgrade an existing POPS unit. "If that PDU doesn't have metering or intelligence built in, this solution will monitor the PDU and gather some information, such as current load or environmental monitoring," Nicholson says. "The tool will be a way to upgrade a cabinet without replacing the PDU, so it will be an inexpensive way for a company to get some monitoring and metering that they don't currently have."

The company will also begin offering a complete service organization in the next few months. It has always offered phone support for its products, but the service organization will provide such onsite services as power audits, installations, and fault-tolerant testing.

Nicholson thinks there will be a solid market for services such as these and the Sentry products, especially as power management becomes more of a priority. The desire to go green has converged with the desire to save money, and Nicholson notes that even as the cost of power has been going up, the availability is going down in some areas. For example, some of Server Technology's customers in San Francisco have facilities that can't get any more power than they're currently getting. That makes power management all the more desirable.

"You can see that the amount of power being used and the growth of data centers are unsustainable," Nicholson says. "Steps are going to have to be taken, and financially it just makes sense to know where and how power is being used." ■



Sentry Power Manager

"We've offered a product like this before, but Sentry Power Manager has been revamped for the data center," says Calvin Nicholson, director of product marketing for Server Technology. "It's expanding our presence in software as well as hardware, and we're becoming both a hardware and a systems company."

Power Distribution Solutions

The Sentry line of power distribution units includes several product families. The

A Look At Some Of Server Technology's Offerings

Product	Description
CS-12HD	This PDU has dual-input power distribution, 12 outlets, and provides power distribution and power and environmental monitoring.
CWG-16V	This PDU has 16 outlets and can monitor current load, voltage, power, apparent power, crest factor, and power factor per outlet or device.
CW-24V	This PDU is a switched cabinet PDU with 24 outlets and support for 20- or 30-amp power input and 208V, 240V, or 230V configuration.
Sentry Power Manager	The SPM is a Web-based CDU interface that can track and control all networked PDUs. It can monitor power draw, environmental conditions, power efficiency, and other variables.



CW-24V PDU