

ALLAN HOUSTON

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◦ DETAILS ◦

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◦ SKILLS ◦

Management

Solutions Architecture

Network Design

MPLS, IP Routing, LAN and WAN switching

OSPF, ISIS, iBGP, eBGP, EIGRP and peering/transit

Fibre Optic Infrastructure

PERL, PHP & Python Scripting

Web Applications - PHP, HTML5, Javascript

Open Source NMS - Cacti, RANCID

Database - MySQL/MariaDB

Linux System Admin

Server Applications - BIND9, Apache, NGINX, Postfix, HAProxy

Troubleshooting



PROFILE

IP Network Engineer, and more recently Operations Manager with life-long experience in ISP environments.

Skilled at designing, implementing and supporting networks from small LAN deployments to multi-national WAN environments.

Core skills overview:

- IP/MPLS core networking
- OSPF, ISIS, EIGRP and BGP routing protocols
- LAN Switching
- MPLS IP VPN Topologies
- DSL, Cable and Dialup access mediums
- PERL, PHP and Python Programming
- Network Management Systems
- Linux Operating Systems



EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Operations Manager - MetroConnect at Dimension Data, Durban

September 2013 – Present

Operations Manager for a team of 17, encompassing Network Engineering, Fibre Operations and Billing Administration.

The role is still highly technical requiring network design and architecture skills to cater for eThekwin's expanding network.

Applications development to increase productivity with a view to automating easily repeatable tasks on the network.

Integration of OSS applications to a central monitoring platform, with responsive software reactors to allow real time incident response times.

Senior Network Engineer - MetroConnect at Dimension Data, Durban

February 2011 – 2014

Support and Operation of eThekwin Municipality's Next-Generation Network

Core Networking: IS-IS, OSPF, BGP

MPLS: LDP, Pseudowire, VRF, VPLS

Edge: Flexible tag rewriting

Access: EIGRP, OSPF

Systems Admin: Linux + LAMP

Open Source Systems: Cacti, RANCID

Tool and Application Development: PERL, PHP, Javascript

Travel Sabbatical

September 2009 – January 2011

Total of 14 months travelling through South America, New Zealand, Australia, South East Asia, India and the USA

Senior IP Network Operations Engineer at AOL Broadband UK, London, UK

March 2007 – September 2009

Hired to complement a small team of engineers primarily engaged in migrating the AOL UK network off the AOL Transit Data Network (USA) into the Talk-Talk Group infrastructure.

Encompassed all facets of ISP operations, from design and implementation to ongoing support and OSS systems.

Network Equipment

- Core: Cisco 7609
- Aggregation: Cisco 7609 with MWAM cards for L2TP aggregation
- BRAS: Redback SE800
- Firewall: Netscreen SSG-520s
- Server: HP DL320,DL380

Key Responsibilities

- Resolving all tickets from lower tier engineers, or if required escalating and managing with vendor support.
- Proactive monitoring and reporting of network performance, either by writing new tools or utilising existing OSS functionality
- All on-site upgrade and fault resolution work within the London data centres
- Providing On Call escalation for NOC engineers
- Providing on going training for NOC engineers

Reason for leaving: Sabbatical

IP Network Operations - Core Engineer at Telewest Broadband, Woking, UK

2002 – March 2007

Position upgraded to IP Engineer Grade 4 in 2005 - involving more design and project work on top of existing operational responsibilities.

Design Responsibilities

- Network upgrade design
 - Operational design responsibility for additions to the network.
 - This includes core network and data center designs.
- System & Network integration design
 - Designs ensuring optimal data centre deployment within existing infrastructure.
 - Designs of new data centre networks for new systems and services.
- Network design documentation and handover
 - Providing operational handovers and documents of new products/networks
 - MS Word/Excel and Visio network drawings
- Bespoke Business solution design
 - Non standard business designs such as multi-homed BGP, BGP load balancing

Operational Responsibilities

- End to end operational responsibility for national broadband network

- IP/MPLS Core network based on Cisco 120012/12416 GSR routers – OSPF with multiple NSSA hub-sites. iBGP route reflector deployment.
- From 2005 onwards designated technical lead for the IP Core.
- 10 Gigabit Metro Access network based on Cisco 7609 routers
- 300+ Cisco 7246 UBR DOCSIS access layer – design and deployment of new technologies such as new modulation techniques, automatic load balancing.
- 40+ Cisco 7513 PE Routers – VRF IP VPN, BGP full feeds and default route only for customers, PPP multilink.
- Datacenter networks design and build – design, build, integration and support handover of networks within the main datacenter. This will typically involve deployment of Cisco PIX firewalls, Cisco CSS or Alteon load balancers, Cisco 3750 Catalyst switches.
- Pro-active improvements to service
- Improving on legacy networking designs to make them scalable and supportable.
- Out of hours on call escalations for priority faults
- 3rd Line support to NOC staff via Remedy escalations
- Final point of escalation for all faults – manage relationship with vendor support such as Cisco TAC.
- Management of external BGP peering and traffic flows
- eBGP peering support – new peering requests, checking capacity, working with transit providers/private peers/public peering peers.
- Plan, design and deploy new connectivity to NAPs, private peers

IP Operations - Junior Network Engineer at Telewest Broadband, Woking, UK

April 1999 – 2002

Initially hired as a support engineer looking after a 3Com Total Control dial up platform, on an IP network comprising Nortel BLN routers with a Lucent frame relay/ATM core.

This network developed rapidly into a broadband capable network based on Cisco 1200x/7500 routers and POS SDH circuits on a Nortel OpTera optical ring.

As no formal engineering function was available within Telewest at the time, much of the design and implementation fell to the IP Operations department.

Experience with technology and equipment:

- MPLS Core network (Cisco 12000 GSR)
- POS SDH circuits (Cisco on Nortel Optera ring)
- Metro Ethernet (dot1Q + Martini + Cisco 7600)
- Layer 3 IPVPN (Cisco 7500)
- Business leased line circuits (Cisco 7500)
- LAN switching (Cisco Catalyst and Foundry Networks)
- L2TP + VPDN (Cisco 7200)
- Load Balancers (Alteon and Cisco CSS)
- Cable broadband (Cisco 7246)
- Dialup access (Nortel/Aastra CVX)
- Legacy frame-relay/ATM network support (Lucent BSTDX/CBX)
- CPE equipment (Cisco 2600,3600)
- IP routing protocols – OSPF and BGP
- MPLS technologies – EoMPLS, IP VPN
- DOCSIS cable technologies
- Frame Relay and ATM
- LAN switching technologies – trunking, VLANs, STP
- WAN optical technologies – POS SDH
- RAS – L2TP and PPP
- BAU Operation requests
- Change Management of network infrastructure

Desktop Support Analyst at RTE, London

January 1999 – March 1999

- Support 250 user NT4 network
- Support leased line connectivity + email platforms
- General IT functions

Reason from leaving: Short term contract

Helpdesk Analyst at Internet Africa, Cape Town

January 1996 – February 1999

- 2nd Line helpdesk support for dialup subscriber base
- Windows/Mac operating systems
- Hardware support and customer site installations

Reason for resignation: Relocating to London, UK.



EDUCATION

Fourways High School, Johannesburg

1989 – 1994

Degree: Matric

1. Mathematics (B+)
2. Physics (C)
3. Biology (C)
4. English (A)
5. Afrikaans (C)
6. Computer Science (A+)
7. Additional Mathematics (B)



COURSES

Cisco CCNA - Expired

2009

Cisco CCNP - Expired

February 2013