

Niveo: Networking With You in Mind

Written by Marco Attard
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In AV, it's all about the network these days. Yet now that we are ready to engage the digital shift to networked video, it's clear the network infrastructure isn't prepared with video in mind.

We need internet access, WLANs, routers, network storage, uninterrupted power and more--but most of that networking kit was designed in that "data-is-king" days and hasn't changed.

If that sounds like the perfect business opportunity, meet **Niveo Professional**. An international company with a Dutch and UK headquarters, Niveo launches a range of networking product designed specifically for audio/video installation.

"We're providing an alternative to those traditional networking suppliers who don't specialize and who don't come from an AV background," says Arthur C.D. de Jager, Niveo's Managing Director. He doesn't have to name these companies but we know he means HP, Cisco, Netgear... the IT guys.

"Niveo is not a one-size-fits-all IT brand that is sold in the corner shop. Unlike the IT networking business, it's important to the AV business model that the brand is not over-distributed, that you don't find yourself competing with web shops," continues de Jager.

The Niveo products, says the maker, are built with the AV administrator in mind. The IT administrator, for example, is used to pushing the RE-SET button. But AV requires more stability in the first place as the administrator is not always available on site.

"IT kit can be over-complicated with a lot of unnecessary software," notes de Jager. "Or other times, it can be very cheap but dysfunctional....In a Google data centre, for example, when a server doesn't work, it's thrown out and replaced. That mentality works in an IT environment where replacement is an option, but this horrifies the AV administrators where downtime means interrupted video."

Power over Ethernet (PoE) is another feature used in the Niveo range that might endear itself to AV installers. "So you don't need a separate power cable," explains de Jager.

In what other ways is the Niveo line built for AV installers?

"Our UPS back-up is built for a 19" rack. As soon as the grid falls down, we have up to one hour of back-up—instead of the 5 minutes some IT brands allow for. This extra time can help prevent data loss. When power comes back, our units auto-reset the data," notes de Jager.

Some computer networking electronics have large heat dissipation. (Remember the YouTube video of the Dell laptop bursting into flames? Or a recent news item explaining why Facebook decided the Arctic Circle makes a perfect place for a server farm?)

"Our equipment has built-in protection. If there's a chance of our overheating, it shuts down. We're building kit with special low heat dissipation and so the chances of a re-set due to heat is small. But when we do re-set, it releases the IP address and a manual re-set is not needed."

If that's not a "hot" enough feature, Niveo explains why its Network Attached Storage is built with AV installers in mind.

"We provide a Network Attached Storage (NAS) that probably costs the same as most of the IT brands. But most IT-built NAS is dedicated to data and not used for live streaming. The data rate needs to be set for video streams, and we do this in such a way so they can cope with HD streams," concludes de Jager.

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Niveo let some AV installers test its NAS and the feedback is that the kit is extremely fast for video playback. “You can find cheap IT kit, but data access is so slow, you get glitches in streaming and re-buffering. We can handle 70-80 HD streams at the same time.”

Throughout the networking product chain, Niveo has made consideration after consideration for the AV industry.

The Niveo routers come with simplified functions. “We did a pilot in a hospital with 7 different sites,” notes de Jager. “In a hospital, there have to be secure parts where employees have different rights than visitors. Roaming requires a lot of capabilities to handle up to 500 guest accounts. We’ve made it robust, but quite easy.”

Niveo is in the process of signing up distributors across Europe. Already **AWE** in the UK, **Soudline**

in the Russian Federation and

Genesis

in Benelux have come aboard, recognizing the opportunity.

A wide range of networking equipment and peripherals, designed in Europe with the niche of AV installers in mind...how did the Niveo brand come about?

“It’s a long story,” admits de Jager. “It started a few years ago when we were approached by one of the AV vendors. More and more AV devices are IP based and dependant on networking equipment. We realized that AV needed this networking help in a broader scope.

“Niveo will evolve further, but its mission will remain the same. We want to bring AV the networking quality they need to maintain the integrity of their signal management.”

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