Exinda Network Orchestrator

Reviewed by Brien M. Posey





Introduction

Whether they are running on premises or in the cloud, todays' applications are consuming far more network bandwidth than ever before. As such, bandwidth is often in short supply, and applications are forced to compete with one another for bandwidth. GFI's <u>Exinda Network Orchestrator</u> is designed to help organizations to regain control of their network bandwidth once and for all, so that mission critical applications have the bandwidth that they need, when they need it. After hearing about this product from several different sources, I became curious and decided to check it out for myself.

01 Understanding Your Network Traffic

Before you can make the best possible use of your available Internet bandwidth (which is what Exinda Network Orchestrator is designed to do), you need to understand how your bandwidth is currently being used. Exinda provides a number of different charts and dashboard views that can help you to see how your Internet bandwidth is being consumed. You can see an example of this in the figure below.



Exinda Network Orchestrator helps you to understand how your Internet bandwidth is currently being used.

The figure above shows a graphical representation of both inbound and outbound Internet bandwidth consumption. The interface also lists the applications that are responsible for that consumption. In this case, the apps consuming the most inbound bandwidth include ThinkBroadband11, Windows Update, HTTPS, and YouTube. Conversely, the apps consuming the most outbound bandwidth are Zoom and HTTPS.

There are two reasons why this is important. First, an application that consumes a lot of inbound bandwidth does not necessarily generate a lot of outbound traffic (and visa versa). Second, organizations don't always have equal amounts of inbound and outbound bandwidth available to them. In my own organization for instance, I have far more inbound bandwidth available than outbound bandwidth. All of this is to say that simply looking at aggregate bandwidth consumption like some products do, can be very misleading.

Another thing that you might have noticed about the figure above, is that it provides a timeline that plots bandwidth consumption by application, date, and time. One of the things that I especially like about this interface is that you can hover over a demand spike an see detailed information about that moment in time. Of course the console also gives you the ability to examine the bandwidth consumption for a specific application as well. You can see an example of this below.

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Exinda Network Orchestrator helps you to understand how your Internet bandwidth is currently being used.

One of the things that is true on almost every network is that some users will inevitably consume far more bandwidth than others. We've all probably got that one user who will watch a YouTube video while on a Zoom call. The user might even be downloading Windows updates in the background at the same time. Exinda Network Orchestrator can help with this sort of thing as well. Exinda's console makes it easy to tell who is consuming the most Internet bandwidth. You can also look at bandwidth consumption on a user by user basis to find out exactly what it is that the user was doing that resulted in such heavy bandwidth consumption. You can see an example of this in the figure below.

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				Top 30	Inbound A	pplicatio	ns for User	KACALA\Ad	ministrato	er.					
	Name	Packets	Data (HB)			Flowrs	RTT (ms)	Normalize	d Delays ((ms/kb)	Transact	ion Delay	rs (ms)	Efficiency (%)	
	T-1.Hide Details			Average				Network	Server	Total	Network				
	YouTube	416539	587.913	662.87	11623.52		38	369	2167	2536	225	219	444	99.91	
	Windows Updates	346422	492.523	808.53	20644.08		126	111	1063	1194	14976	819	15795	99.97	
	Windows Store	311174	414.173	1517.18	5782.52	36	34	7	383	390	244	435	679	99.51	

Exinda Network Orchestrator lets you examine bandwidth consumption on a user by user basis.

O2 The End User Experience

One of the things that I think really sets Exinda Network Orchestrator apart from competing bandwidth management solutions is its application awareness. It doesn't just stop at monitoring how much bandwidth a particular application is consuming. It uses what it knows about the bandwidth consumption and about the bandwidth requirements for various applications to provide information about the overall end user experience.

The figure below shows Exinda's ability to analyze VoIP calls. Here you can see a chart that quantifies calls based on time of day and call quality. You can easily get a feel for how many calls suffered from poor quality and the number of good quality calls. Notice in the figure that Exinda shows data for both inbound and outbound calls, and it provides specific details on the individual calls that were deemed to have the worst quality.



Exinda Network Orchestrator can quantify VoIP call quality.

It is worth noting that Exinda's application support is not limited solely to VoIP calls. It has native support for applications ranging from Office 365, Microsoft SQL Server, and SalesForce to Netflix, YouTube, and more.

The figure below shows what the Office 365 performance metrics look like. As you can see, Exinda identifies the top internal and external users, as well as the bandwidth that they are consuming.

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KACALA-EXINDA System	Health: OK	Optimizer: ON v	Config: No unsavo	i changes v7.4	.13 (0110)					Thu Oct 22 14:22:8
Office365 Perform	mance					Show data for	Last 30 days 👻			
Inbound Outbound	LAN Interv	al External	Hosts Users							
Application Performa	nce 🧶 9.79/1	0		r		Show mo	re			
Inbound Bandwidth (kbps)						Internal Hosts		Internal Users	
160							Top Listeners (MB)		Top Listeners (MB)	
140							10.10.10.31 💄	67.209	KACAL/Administrator	67.376
120							10.10.10.11 1	3.062		
100							10.10.10.19	0.870		
100							10.10.10.17	0.078		
80							10.10.10.2 💄	0.065		
							External Hosts Top Talkers (MB)		External Users Top Talkers	
80							23.47.208.23	62.788		
20							52.100.22.23	0.714	No data available	
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Exinda Network Orchestrator tracks Office 365 performance.

⁰³ Using Exinda Network Orchestrator to Improve Your Bandwidth Use

Exinda Network Orchestrator includes a plethora of features designed to help you to use your Internet bandwidth more efficiently. One of the things that the software is able to do for instance, is to identify rogue applications that are consuming bandwidth, so that you can put a stop to those applications.

Exinda Network Orchestrator also provides proactive recommendations that can help you to identify and correct potential issues before they become a problem. As you can see in the figure below, the software includes an optimizer that can help you to get the most out of your Internet bandwidth.

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KACALA-EXINDA System	Health: OK Optimizer: ON v Config: No unsaved changes v7.4.13 (0110)	Thu Oct 22 14:14:
Configuration	Optimizer	<u>h o</u>
	Optimizer Policies Wizard	
Traffic Policies		
Optimizor	Circuit 10 - Main circuit (600000 kbps in, 150000 kbps out on bridge(s): 'br20')	Operations
	Virtual Circuit 10 - Jozef Laptop (93000 kbps to / from 'Jozefs Laptop')	Create New Virtual Circuit
Objects		Greate New Policy Actions V
Network	2 10 Zeom12 (Optimize 1% - 10%, Priority 1)	Adlens V
Users & Groups	15 thinktroadBand11 (Optimize 40000 kbps - 90000 kbps, Fronty 1, Edge Cache)	ActionsW
VLANS	60 HTTP download (Optimize 100 kbps - 100%, Priority 7)	-Adots- V
Protocols	Order: Policy: 4587 v Add To 'Jozef Laptap' Create New Policy	
Applications	Virtual Circuit 20 - updates (10% 'Games' traffic on VLAN 'VLAN 2' to / from 'ALL')	Create New Policy
Schedulos	10 yt - quests and owners (Optimize 90% - 100%, Priority 1, Edge Cache)	-Adlets- ¥
Adaptive Response	Order: Policy: 4507 V Add To 'updates'	Philipping -
Service Levels	Create New Policy	
HTML Response	Virtual Circuit 30 - customer 1 (90% to / from 'ALL')	Create New PolicyActions *
System	2 ship (Optimize 4% - 6%, Priority 1, Edge Cache)	-Actions ¥
	3 YouTube 01 (Optimize 4% - 15%, Priority 2)	Actions ¥
Bosic Install Wizard	S sleype (Optimize 1% - 5%, Priority 1)	-Attens- ¥
Network	6 office360 (Optimize 6% - 30%, Priority 1)	Actions
Setup	2 10 Zeom (Optimize 4% - 15%, Priority 1, Edge Cache)	Actions ¥
Optimization	11 Stlahni tousk (Optimize 5% - 20%, Priority 2, Edge Cache)	Actions
Certificates	15 udemy cache (Optimize 10% - 15%, Priority 1, Edge Cache)	Actions
Virtualization Authoritization	40 Remote connections app (Optimize 3% - 10%, Prio(3y 1, Edge Cache)	Artioni
Logging	50 updates (Optimize 1% - 5%, Priority 10, Edge Cache)	Actions
Diagnostics	00 WhatsApp (Optimize 1% - 3%, Priority 1, Edge Cache)	-ACDO15 V
Maintenance	70 Facebook app (Optimize 1% - 4%, Priority 7, Edge Cache)	-Actions ¥
Tools	80 XO (Optimize 1% - 1%, Priority 10, Edge Cache)	-Actions

The optimizer can help you to make better use of your bandwidth.

As you would probably expect, Exinda Network Orchestrator also gives you the ability to set policies for how your bandwidth is to be used. If for example, an organization has a limited amount of inbound bandwidth, it can likely improve the end user experience by allocating less bandwidth to Microsoft updates and placing a higher priority on Zoom calls. You can see what the Policies screen looks like in the next figure.

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					Edit Policy			
Objects	Policy Name:	Facebook app			Quaranteed Bands	idh: 1 % ¥		
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Users & Groups	Schedule:	ALMAYS ¥			Burst Pri			
VLANS	Action:	Optimize	¥					
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Applications	Policy Enabled:	2			Packet Ma	nong		
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HTML Response		ALL Y	ALL Y	Both ¥	ALL Y	ALL Y	Facebook Apache	~
THE HEIPHER		ALL V	ALL	Both V	ALL ¥	ALL V	Facebook Audio	~
System		ALL ¥	ALL ¥	Both ¥	ALL ¥	ALL ¥	Facebook Chat	~
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Network		ALL V	ALL V	both v	ALL	ALL V	Facebook Cloud Audio	~
Setup		ALL V	ALL Y	Both 👻	ALL Y	ALL V	Facebook Cloud Encrypted	~
Optimization		ALL ¥	ALL	Both ¥	ALL	ALL Y	Facebook Cloud File-transfe	· ·
Certificates		ALL V	ALL Y	Both V	ALL Y	ALL Y	Facebook Cloud Wdeo	~
Virtualization		ALL V	ALL	Both V	ALL	ALL V	Facebook Encrypted	~
Authentication		ALL V	ALL	Both V	ALL	ALL V	Facebook File-transfer	~
Logging		ALL V	ALL	Both V	ALL ¥	ALL V	Facebook Stream	~
Diagnostics		ALL V	ALL Y	Both 🛩	ALL Y	ALL V	Facebook Video	~
Maintenance		ALL V	ALL V	Both 👻	ALL V	[ALL V]	Facebook Web	~
Tools		× V	~ ~	Bath M	~ v	¥	L h	¥

This Policies screen allows you to set policies based on various rules.

Finally, Exinda gives you the ability to see how well your policies are working. Any time an organization invests in a new piece of software, it is important to be able to quantify ROI. In the case of Exinda Network Orchestrator, you can see exactly how much you have been able to reduce data throughput. Since there is a direct cost tied to bandwidth consumption, this screen is effectively allowing you to see how much you have lowered your costs. You can see what the reduction screen looks like below.

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			V LA	N Data	WIN Data					
			Dire	ection: Bi-directional V	Reduction Type:	Reduction Throughput ~				
				Red	ction Statistics by P	eer				
					WAN Data (MB)	Reduction Ratio (%)				
				Total 0.00	0.00	0.00				
					on Statistics by Appl					
				plication LAN Data to Available.	(MB) WAN Data (M	18) Reduction Ratio (%)				
			HO US							

Exinda allows you to visualize your throughput reduction.

03 The Verdict

When I write a review for this site, it has become customary for me to conclude the review by assigning the product a numerical score, ranging from zero to five stars (with five stars being the highest possible score). After spending some time with Exinda Network Orchestrator, I have decided to give it a score of 4.9, which is a gold star review.

Overall, I was really impressed with Exinda Network Orchestrator. In fact, the only thing that kept me from giving the product a perfect score was the fact that the product is so feature rich that there is a bit of a learning curve associated with using it. I'm not suggesting that the interface is overly difficult to use, but rather that Exinda Network Orchestrator is a complex product and it can take a while to discover and learn how to use all of its various features.





Schedule your live demo!



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