

Testing on CLOUD 9

The number of new data centres is set for a significant increase in the next few years to cater for the world's insatiable demand for data storage. One factor which will push the requirement for data centres is the success of the Apple iPad and similar products from other manufacturers.

Apple alone sold over 7 million iPads in the last quarter of 2010 and plans production of even greater numbers during 2011 and beyond. The vast array of smart phones and portable tablet devices that can now access the web, and do not use traditional hard drive data storage – in addition to the consumer market's use of social networking web sites such as Facebook & MySpace and tools such as Twitter and Blogs – have created a greater demand for cloud computing. All this data has to be stored somewhere, theoretically up on the 'cloud', when in reality it is stored down on earth in data centres. It is not just the reliability of data storage but also increased storage capacity that will be a critical factor when designing heating ventilation and air-

conditioning (HVAC) for data centres.

The consultant's objective in commissioning the HVAC in a data centre is to ensure the data hall is designed for the required servers and data storage equipment. It is here the use of load banks as server simulators enable close representation to live running conditions.

Hillstone Products has, for over 20 years, designed, manufactured and rented load banks for specialised markets. "Our range of 19" rack mounted load banks have been supplied to test both HVAC and the electrical power infrastructure" said managing director Paul Smethurst. "When the rack mounted load banks are fitted into our 20KW Mini-Towers, data halls can be commissioned and even sold to clients prior to 'fitting out' of the racks".

Load banks have an important role within data centres being used for testing black starts generators, UPS systems and standby batteries, in addition to HVAC.

"We are able to react quickly and efficiently to requests for rental equipment, with our own fleet of vehicles, which provides an



unparalleled nationwide delivery and installation service to meet the requirements of our data centre customers".

Recent projects have included the supply of over 2.5 MW of 19" rack modules to a leading co-location customer, thus allowing the sale of available new data halls. This project also included the use of over a hundred mini towers to ensure an even heat distribution was achieved prior to the racks being installed. When the racks and cooling containment pods are fitted, the rack mounted load banks are then fitted into the racks to ensure full server simulation is achieved during commissioning.

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