Key findings and conclusions:

- 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 with 52 GbE ports consumed 28% less power than the Industry Average consumption for comparable products.
- Energy efficient architecture uses 65nm silicon technology to lower power consumption.
- Effective management GUI allows administration of power saving options for all ports, by schedules or usage.
- IMC Platform supports management and network monitoring including power consumption statistics.

3Com Enterprise Class Baseline Plus Switch 2952 with 52 GbE was evaluated by Miercom under the Certified Green Program for power consumption and energy efficiency. We analyzed the overall environmental impact and business enabling green benefits that the 2952 switch offers to its customers.

In hands-on-testing and analysis of 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 (48 10/100/1000 Mbps auto sensing and four 1GbE SFP ports), the switch proved to afford customers a highly economical, manageable and energy efficient Layer 2 switching solution. Utilizing the latest silicon technology and energy efficient design, the 2952 Smart Switch Series leverages its green features to promote environmentally sound network practices.

The 2952 switch is operational with default settings and can also be configured using a web browser GUI. The GUI has an Energy Saving option which enables port scheduling to work at variable speeds during specific times of a day as needed by the business. In addition, the switch will power down the idle ports not running any traffic resulting in additional power savings. As shown in Figure 1, 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 has an annual (continued on page 3)

Figure 1: 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 Annual Energy Cost

All Ports Loaded, Annual Use Estimate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SUT Annual Cost</th>
<th>Industry Average Annual Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3Com 2952 Switch</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>$90</td>
</tr>
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Annual cost for the Baseline Plus Switch 2952 was calculated to be $65 for 52 ports as compared to the Industry Average of $90. This is a 28% cost savings for power consumption alone. See the Business Case section on page 5 for additional details and calculations.
How We Did It

The 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 was evaluated for environmental impact by looking at the individual components as well as its special features and capabilities. Testing focused on the power consumption and efficiency of the product. A full audit was conducted to analyze the overall product specific environmental impact.

Lab testing was conducted for power consumption under load. Measurements and audit results were verified with site survey assessments. The 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 was configured and tested using 48 10/100/1000 Base-T ports and 4 SFP 1GbE ports. We measured power consumption changes by scheduling the independent ports for power down and configuring them for rate changes via GUI. In addition, we measured the power consumption at idle with no traffic, no links, partial load and full load.

**Measuring Power Consumption:** The power consumption of 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 was measured with varying network and link loads that a switch would typically experience in a real-world deployment. Power consumption was measured using a Dranetz Encore 61000 Power Analyzer from Dranetz-BMI (www.dranetz-bmi.com). The SUT was loaded with traffic at various rates and packet sizes in accordance with RFC 2544 Benchmarking Methodology for Network Interconnect Development.

Power consumption measurements were taken during system boot-up, idle, and with 70% and 100% load. Power consumption was measured, while running Layer 2 traffic from an XM2 and 1600T traffic generators from Ixia (www.ixiacom.com). Traffic was applied to each of the 1 GbE ports while stressing the product with the features it supports. All power measurements were taken at 110 volts and 60 Hz frequency. Frequency was also regulated at 50Hz and 60Hz to test actual power provided in other countries. In addition, power measurements were also taken for varying frame size from small to jumbo size to analyze any change in power consumption.

Miercom recognizes Ixia as an industry leader in energy efficiency testing of networking equipment. Ixia’s unique approach utilizes coordination of energy measurements with network traffic load – allowing energy consumption to be graphed against network traffic volume. Real-world traffic is generated by Ixia’s test platform and test applications, principally IxNetwork for layer 2-3 routing and switching traffic and IxLoad for layer 4-7 application traffic.

**Environmental Analysis:** Miercom’s environmental review of the 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 also entailed an examination of the 3Com company-wide and product-specific environmental impact reduction efforts. Analysis includes comparisons to industry averages for competitive products that were also tested.
(continued from page 1) running cost of $65 under the Business Case described on page 5. This reflects a 28% savings when comparing costs for switches that are configured with 52 1GbE ports. The cost analysis is described on page 5 under “Business Case.”

Power Efficiency

Power measurements were taken with different Layer 2 frame sizes and traffic loads. The effect of the various traffic sizes on the power consumption was measured. Baseline Plus Switch 2952 was loaded with 70% and 100% traffic. As shown in Figure 2, the power consumption at idle state with all links up registered 59.27 watts. With 70% 512 byte load, the watts used increased to 59.94. At 100% load there was an increase of 1.03 watts for a total 60.3 watts.

We took additional measurements for power consumption using different frame sizes and found that when using Jumbo frames (9216 bytes), the power consumption was 59.88 watts, an increase of only 0.61 from idle without traffic. We noted that an increase in the frame size caused the power consumption to decrease as shown in Figure 2.

A Web based management GUI provides access to dynamic port speed throttling for the Baseline Plus Switch 2952. This feature can reduce the load on the processor, for example, a schedule can be created to change the load to a lower rate on all 52 ports in order to reduce the power consumption. See Figure 3 for more details.

The 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 used 30% less power than the Industry Average (IA) of similar 52 port GbE switches. At 100% load with 512-byte packets, the IA was 85.2 watts, while Baseline Plus Switch 2952 consumed 60.3 watts. At 70% load 59.9 watts was used. See Figure 5 on page 5.

The total annual power consumption by Baseline Plus was calculated to be 519.67 watts compared to Industry Average of 719 watts. 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 used 1.15 watts power per port as compared to Industry Average of 1.64 watts per port at full load. The Business Case described on page 5 shows that deploying 3Com baseline switches in a network can reduce energy bills by 28%.

Product Efficiency

The 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 with 48 1GbE ports and 4 SFP fiber uplinks can provide greater media flexibility for data transport and achieve greater distance connectivity.

The Switch 2952 is easily manageable via a web browser interface for configuration, monitoring and administration. Features include LACP (Link Aggregation Control Protocol) for automated device grouping, which helps to prevent traffic bottlenecks. Integration with 3Com Intelligent Management Center (IMC) Platform provides all basic tools needed to manage and monitor a network including the power consumption at each node. IMC delivers full Fault-management, Configuration, Accounting, Performance and Security (FCAPS) solution and can be used to map the network topology, with indicators for connected devices and port locations.

The Power Profile shows the energy consumed while using different frame sizes and traffic loads. Power with all links up and without traffic was 59.27 watts. This was gradually increased as Layer 2 traffic was added to the switch. With an increase in frame size and throughput, the power consumed decreased.

Figure 2: 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 Power Profile
48 1Gbps ports, at specified frame size and load

![Power Profile Chart]

Source: Miercom, January 2010
The 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 uses 65nm silicon to improve the green capabilities of the switch with lower power consumption. Switch 2952 has an auto-idle power down mode which can also decrease energy consumption.

New security features are supported including SSL to encrypt all HTTP traffic for secure access to browser based management. The switches also include automatic DoS protection.

Quality of Service offerings allows traffic prioritization and classification of real time traffic into eight priority levels mapped to eight queues.

The web interface GUI as shown in Figure 3 has all the ports listed to allow an administrator to schedule ports to work at low bit-rate or even power off when not in use. This is another energy saving capability in the network.

Baseline Plus Switch 2952 offers a switching capacity of 104 Gbps loading the same with 100% traffic. We measured the power consumed for jumbo frame size and found it uses 25.3% less Watts/Gbps than the Industry Average as shown in Figure 4 on page 4.

Business Processes

3Com strives to reduce landfill waste, by reducing the physical size of their products and simplified packaging. Paperless documentation is now available online, further reducing materials used and facilitating recycling activities.

3Com demonstrates their commitment to the environment when planning and designing 3Com facilities and operations. 3Com implements recycling and waste reduction programs, energy management systems for controlling light and heat, a global print-on-demand system for marketing and sales materials, all part of eliminating and reducing landfill waste.

3Com employs technologies that enable employees to work remotely, reducing travel and damaging emissions. IMC controls multiple devices from a central remote location and allows the administration of all devices on the network. Remote backup, mass configuration changes and other similar functions can all be performed without delays.

Figure 3: Management Interface with Energy Savings Settings

Using the intuitive built-in web interface, an administrator can use the Energy Saving option to modify the ports for low bit-rate or shutdown by time-of-day. Ports can easily be set to low speed or shutdown at pre-scheduled times.

Figure 4: 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 Power Efficiency

A comparison of the power consumption relative to performance throughput for the switch under test compared to the Industry Average (IA). The Baseline Plus Switch 2952 uses 25% less watts than the IA.
traveling to various locations. Carbon footprint is again being reduced.

Green Innovation

All 3Com products are designed with the latest silicon technology. The 3Com’s Baseline Plus Switch 2952 uses 65nm technology, providing enhanced performance without increasing power usage. This has led to 31% savings from the previous generation 90nm silicon.

In addition to reducing power consumption, heat generation and cooling requirements, the built-in dual speed cooling fans run at a lower speed and reduce the amount of energy that fans require.

3Com also uses texture mapping rather than printing, electroplating or bronzing to reduce materials used in product manufacturing. Recyclable materials are used whenever possible in component manufacturing.

Shipping by sea rather than air is 3Com’s preferred choice for global distribution of products, reducing overall impact on the environment.

Affiliations and Standards

As a Contributing Member of the Green Grid, 3Com is involved in efforts to standardize methods for measuring energy efficiency. Through membership, 3Com is able to vote on initiatives that complement participation in the IEEE 802.3 Ethernet working group’s activities, especially its IEEE P802.3az Energy-efficient Ethernet Task Force. As an ENERGY STAR partner, 3Com is part of a global effort to help customers realize money savings and protect the environment through energy-efficient products and practices.

3Com products comply with both the European Union’s RoHS and China-RoHS directives, which regulate and restrict the use of hazardous materials in the manufacturing of electrical and electronic products.

Business Case

Figure 1 shows an annual savings of $25 for Switch 2952 compared to the IA. The annual costs were compared to a typical switch being used with varying traffic from idle to the maximum line rate.

The Annual Use Estimate (AUE) is based on a duty cycle of 12 hours per work day each week. During those 60 hours approximately 10 hours will be running at 100% load while the remaining 50 hours will run at 70% load. Weekends and the remaining 12 hours per day are considered as idle/ready for a total of 108 hours per week.

To calculate the annual cost, multiply the kilowatts by total yearly hours; and multiply this result by the cost factor of 12.5 cents per kWh.

Certified Green

Miercom conducts environmental analysis on products using holistic view, considering power efficiency, manufacturing, and other factors which are part of the product and its lifecycle. Power consumption and power efficiency are very important metrics for comparing products and are typically all that are discussed in other organizations’ green reports. We believe a more comprehensive approach, which reveals true business case savings to customers for the other environmental benefits a vendor’s product may afford, is a better approach.

Competitive indexing with industry average is achieved by comparing measured results from products in a given class. This comparison allows a single view of the annual cost for power consumption of a product, and comparison information that will help the user understand if the evaluated product affords an overall advantage for power efficiency.
Miercom Certified Green

The energy-saving attributes of the 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 were evaluated by Miercom in accordance with the Certified Green Testing Methodology. The product met the required criteria to achieve the Miercom Certified Green Award.

Based on our hands-on testing and the verified representations made by 3Com, Miercom confirms that 3Com Baseline Plus Switch 2952 is designed to provide effective and environmentally sound networking solutions.

Baseline Plus Switch 2952 gives customers a highly economical, manageable and energy efficient Layer 2 switching solution. Utilizing the latest silicon technology and energy efficient design, the 2952 leverages its green features to promote environmentally sound network practices.

About Miercom’s Product Testing Services

Hundreds of product-comparison analyses have been published over the years in such leading network trade periodicals as Network World, Business Communications Review - NoJitter, Communications News, xchange, Internet Telephony and other leading publications. Miercom’s reputation as the leading, independent product test center is unquestioned.

Miercom’s private test services include competitive product analyses, as well as individual product evaluations. Miercom features comprehensive certification and test programs including: Certified Interoperable, Certified Reliable, Certified Secure and Certified Green. Products may also be evaluated under the NetWORKS As Advertised program, the industry’s most thorough and trusted assessment for product usability and performance.

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Energy Efficient Switches