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# Start-up offers net management Fisher-Price style

Vineyard Networks uses cloud-based, software-as-a-service model to deliver network management and monitoring capabilities to SMB customers.

[Network/Systems Management Alert](#) By [Denise Dubie](#) , Network World , 09/28/2009



### [Network management start-up Vineyard Networks](#)

wants to make monitoring and reporting on performance from network devices, WAN connections and voice applications simpler for IT departments not equipped to take on a [large management software suite](#).

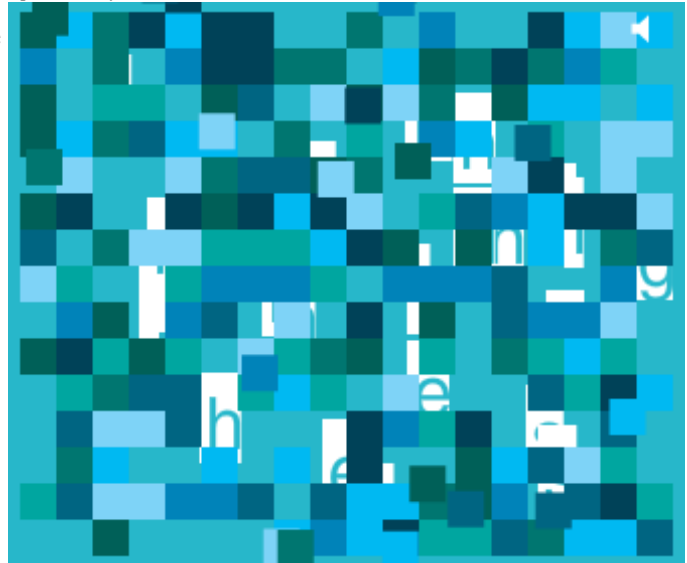
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Based outside of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, Vineyard Network was founded in May 2008 by Jason Richards, who now serves as president, and others. The founders wanted to create what many before them have also attempted: easy, inexpensive network monitoring and management technology for IT managers that couldn't devote money, time and energy to complex software that promised to help them better run their networks. Named after an aspect of the local landscape, Vineyard Networks proposes with its NetCore on Demand technology to make network management "Fisher-Price style."

"Our product includes a small unmanaged probe, a SaaS service and a network exploring interface on the customer site. We kept it very Fisher-Price style. If customers want to know more details about something, they simply click on it and the data is there," Richards explains.

Having launched in the early stages of the economic recession, Richards says he realized the company had to be able to show customers results fast with its technology. Richards and his team chose to deliver NetCore as a [cloud-based service](#) that was priced with a subscription model, taking advantage of the current interest in cloud and the ease with which customers can implement [SaaS](#). Also taking into account the lack of budget dollars,

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Richards wanted customers to be able to buy NetCore, see results and sign up for the services on a monthly basis. That's why contracts can be signed on a month-to-month basis.

"When I meet with customers, I can see they have a problem understanding management technology and the implementation of it," says Richards, who most recently worked as a regional sales manager for [Packeteer](#) (acquired by [Blue Coat Systems](#)) before launching Vineyard Networks. "Our goal was to deliver ease of use, to make software that doesn't require a lot of set up or maintenance."

NetCore on Demand includes an application-aware probe called NetView, which is installed on the customer site. When customers sign up, they provide an IP address and the gateway address on their network. Vineyard Networks configures the NetView hardware probe to monitor that environment and customers install the device in-line or off of a span port. The vendor then delivers an interface called NetCore via a secure SSL connection. It monitors WAN and LAN connections, Layer 7 service information, application traffic across networks and response time metrics. The probe and service work together to collect network data such as NetFlow from [Cisco](#) about every 60 seconds and stores up to two years of historical data, Richards explains.

Vineyard Networks launched beta product in April and made its product generally available in June of this year. To date, Vineyard Networks has signed about 50 customers and currently is working with another 50 potential buyers evaluating the product. With 11 employees, Richards says the company will continue to focus on small to midsize companies as its "sweet spot," but doesn't rule out larger companies being interested in NetCore.

"Our real target customer is one that is looking for a simpler solution to network monitoring and management," he says.

Competitors range from Fluke Networks, ManageEngine, SolarWinds and NetScout to the recently acquired [NetQoS](#), which buyer CA plans to put to work using its application-aware network management technology.

Available now, NetCore on Demand is priced by the number of devices from which data is being collected. Small organizations with less than 250 end users could pay between \$150 and \$170 per month, for instance, while larger customers with more than 100 locations could contract the service for between \$1,000 and \$1,500 per month. There is no initial set-up fee and the monthly rate includes maintenance, upgrade and support costs.

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