



RARITAN DOMINION SX48

With the Dominion SX products, Raritan has taken its expertise in the KVM (keyboard, video, mouse) market and turned its attention to managing serial console access to multiple systems. Out-of-band serial access has always been a security worry to many businesses, as so many critical network components can be reached using a simple serial port connection or remotely via Telnet. The SX range of console servers are designed to provide a single location that delivers secure web browser access to multiple devices such as switches, routers, firewalls and servers.

The model on review provides forty-eight serial ports and a smart feature is the use of RJ-45 sockets, so with the appropriate serial port converters, you can link all your devices serial ports over standard network cabling. The SX48 delivers plenty of fault tolerance as it uses dual redundant power supplies and a pair of LAN ports so that if the primary link fails, the secondary link takes over. A serial port supports dial-in modem links and a console port is also provided for emergency local access.

On first contact with the browser interface, the unit runs a quick start wizard that secures administrative access, sets the IP address and port number for web access and the default terminal emulation mode. It offers the user the choice: web-browser based access or SSH!!

From the Port Access menu, all available ports are displayed in a matrix and selecting one takes you directly to a connection with the attached device. Security options are particularly impressive as you can lock down access with a wide range of options. The SX48 is accessed over encrypted SSL sessions and you can use the default certificate or select your own.

The configuration menu opens with a complete rundown on the status of each security option and from the Network tab, you can set the IP address of the unit and decide whether to enable or disable dial-in modem access. Port configuration options are extensive as each can be set up with the baud rate required by the attached device, the parity and data bits and the flow control type. Those with administrative access can also lock the configuration of each port to stop the settings being changed by other users.

Three user access levels are supported where administrators have full access. Operators have full read and write access in the serial console window but cannot modify the Dominion's configuration, while observers simply have read access to the serial console window only. During user creation you can also decide which serial ports they are allowed to use. General access security is extremely stiff as you can implement ACLs based on IP addresses and use a range of authentication methods such as

RADIUS, LDAP TACACS+ and Active Directory. Notification options are excellent as you can select from a range of events such as unit reboots, upgrades and errors and request email alerts.

Selecting a port takes you directly to a console session with the attached device. The history menu option provides a list of recent messages passing to and from the device, while the 'Get Write Access' command, allows multiple users to pass this privilege between them. Break commands can be sent to the device and a user list shows who else is using the same port. Logging to a local file can be activated and a smart feature is the Chat option, which allows multiple users to have secure, text-based conversations. It offers NFS Server logging (Keystroke logging) too!!

The Dominion SX servers are an ideal solution for centralising serial console access to multiple disparate devices. They are very simple to set up and use, and deliver extensive security measures to ensure access to critical devices is locked down tight.

This excellent serial KVM switch comes highly recommended by Network Computing. NC

Product: Dominion SX48

Supplier: Raritan

Sales Tel: +44 (0)20 7614 7700

Web site: www.raritan.co.uk

Price: \$4,725 exc VAT

£2,618 exc (to current exchange rate)