

Ascend

Competitive Analysis

Ascend Pipeline 85

Purpose

The purpose of this Analysis is to provide an overview of the Ascend Pipeline® 85 vs. 2 key competitors: Cisco and Ramp Networks

Brief Product Descriptions:

Cisco 770 Series Access Hub

The Cisco 770 series are multiprotocol ISDN routers with integrated four-port Ethernet hubs and a call connect/disconnect switch. The 775 and 776 models include two POTS interfaces. The 770 Series supports Cisco's proprietary CiscosIOS Port and Address Translation feature that allows a single IP address to be assigned to the LAN.

- Four-port Ethernet (10Base-T) hub (models 772, 775, 776)
- One ISDN BRI port
 - S/T and U interface (models 772 & 776)
 - U interface only (models 771 and 775)
- Two POTS (models 775 & 776)
- Built-in NT1 device (models 772 & 776)

Pricing

Base Price Model 771: \$749

Base Price Model 776: \$949

Additional charge for multiprotocol routing and compression software: \$150

Additional charge for more than 4 users: \$300

Ramp Networks WebRamp IP

The WebRamp IP is an IP router with an integrated eight port Ethernet hub. WebRamp routes IP only – it has no bridging, IPX, or AppleTalk routing functionality (a separate WebRamp product, WebRamp IPX, supports IPX). It is marketed to home and small business users who are not familiar with IP, by promoting EasyIP™, its GUI configurator. EasyIP also supports Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP), and single as well as dynamic IP. WebRamp lacks a number of important features such as SNMP support, compression and security.

- Eight-port Ethernet (10Base-T) hub
- One BRI (U Interface only)

Pricing

Base Price: \$899



The Ascend Pipeline Competitive Advantages

More Features and Capability For Less Money

- Pipeline 85 – Adds a four-port Ethernet hub to the high-performance, management capabilities and router functionality of the Pipeline 50 and the two analog ports of the Pipeline 75.
- Network Address Translation (NAT) allows the Pipeline to connect a LAN to another network even if the devices on the LAN do not have valid addresses for the remote network. NAT can assist a company that is not able to get official addresses for their entire network because the supply of IP addresses is rapidly diminishing or for remote sites that want access to the Internet.
- DHCP Server Spoofing enables the Pipeline to assign IP addresses to all the workstations on the Ethernet segment, saving configuration time per workstation.

A Total Solution From the Market Leader

- Internet-compatible – The Pipeline seamlessly connects with the MAX™ at the central site. Ascend dominates the industry with a 50.6% share of the total access concentrator asynchronous ports, and 62.2% share of the ISDN PRI access concentrator ports (Q2'97 Market Share, Dell'Oro Group, 8/97).
- A scaleable product family providing end-to-end remote access solutions
- Products which are cost-effectively tailored for specific applications
- Ascend's remote management protocol allows Internet Service Providers and network managers using Ascend's equipment to remotely monitor the Pipeline. They can check configurations or change settings directly from the central site when it is required. The Pipeline supports remote management using SNMP, Telnet and Syslog.

SmoothConnect Ensures Easy and Economical Connectivity

- The Java-based Pipeline Configurator allows users and administrators to configure Ascend's Pipelines over Ethernet in a graphical "point and click" environment. Easy for technical and non-technical users alike, the Java application is compatible with Windows and Macintosh operating systems, and enables users to be up and running in 15 minutes or less.
- Enables touch tone configuration of ISDN B-channel telephone numbers using an analog telephone
- Automatic AutoSwitch and AutoSPID detection
- Dynamic Bandwidth Allocation monitors bandwidth needs, and minimizes line costs by initiating and disconnecting ISDN channels as needed.

Optional Integrated Secure Access Firewall

- The first fully integrated router firewall delivers outstanding perimeter protection and simplified security management for only \$500 MSRP, a fraction of the cost of less secure and non-integrated security solutions. Certified by the National Computer Security Association (NCSA); rigorous testing by NCSA provides independent assurance to customers in the firewall selection process.

Selling Against the Competition

Competition Weaknesses

The Ascend Advantage

Cisco 770 Series

CiscoIOS enables proprietary Port and Address Translation

— Pipelines support open Network Address Translation (NAT) protocol

Extra charge for features (\$150 for multiprotocol routing and compression)

— Multiprotocol routing and compression are standard features in Pipeline 85

Extra charge for DRAM memory upgrade

— Pipelines do not require memory upgrades

Lacks integrated, dynamic firewall solution for Internet security; no authentication/encryption combo in the same package

— Dynamic firewall software option is available on the Pipeline 85 with authentication/encryption in the same package

\$300 extra charge for multiple user software upgrades

— Pipelines do not require multi-user upgrades

Ramp Networks WebRamp IP

Only supports concurrent access to two sites

— The Pipeline enables access to multiple sites

Does not support bridging, IPX or AppleTalk routing/spoofing

— Multiprotocol routing is standard on Pipeline products

Does not support compression

— Compression is standard on Pipeline products

Does not support SNMP

— The Pipeline allows remote management using SNMP, Telnet, and/or Syslog

Limited security: lacks an optional integrated, dynamic firewall solution for maximum Internet security; no support for token-based security — limits security in corporate LAN access applications.

— Dynamic firewall software option is available on Pipeline 85. The Pipeline 85 supports token-based security.

No analog (POTS) ports

— The Pipeline 85 features two analog ports for flexible, convenient fax/phone connectivity and advanced voice calling features such as CLID, call hold, transfer, conferencing

Unproved design with little shipping history

— Pipeline products have been shipping for more than three years with a solid track record in the field

Additional Information

Quick Glance Competitive Matrix follows

Competitive Matrix — Pipeline 85

Price (MSRP)	Ascend Pipeline 85	Cisco 776	Ramp Networks WebRamp IP
Price range	\$1,095	\$949-\$1,399	\$749-\$899
Price range with Firewall/IPSec	\$1,595	N/A	N/A

Key Features

Bridging	Yes	Yes	No
IP Routing	Yes	Yes	Yes
IPX Routing	Yes	Yes	No
Analog (POTS) (RJ11)	2	2	No
Advanced Calling	Yes	Yes	N/A
Multi-User/Unlimited	Yes	Extra Charge	253 max
Multilink PPP (MP) Support	Yes	Yes	Yes
MP+ Support	Yes	No	No
BACP Support	Yes	Yes	No
SNMP Support	Yes	Yes	No
Stac Data Compression	Yes	Extra Charge	No
Network Address Translation	Yes	Proprietary	No
GUI Configurator	Yes	Yes	Yes

Security

PAP & CHAP	Yes	Yes	Yes
Encryption	Optional	No	No
Authentication	Yes	No	No
Token-based Security	Yes	No	No
Dynamic Firewall Support	Optional	No	No

Any feedback or suggestions are welcome. Please send any pertinent competitive information to the attention of the Competitive Marketing group in Alameda (x72081)

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