

## VeriSign to spend more than \$300M on tech upgrades (Update)

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VeriSign Inc., whose technology is key to allowing Internet users to access Web sites with names ending in ".com" and ".net," plans to spend more than \$300 million over the next decade to upgrade its systems.

The upgrades will allow VeriSign's machines to handle up to 4 quadrillion requests per day from computers trying to reach those sites. That's a thousand times more lookups than the 4 trillion per day that the company can currently handle.

Ken Silva, the company's chief technology officer, said Thursday that the latest changes are needed to keep up with ballooning Internet traffic and with spikes in usage caused by major news events and computer attacks.

Traffic volume is expected to soar along with the expansion of technologies such as Internet-connected televisions, navigation systems and video streaming.

VeriSign is in two big businesses that are critical to the functioning of the Internet but both remain largely out of the public's view.

The most recognizable business involves selling "certificates" that Web sites can use to tell Web browsers that they are using encryption to protect data passing between a user's computer and the Web site's servers. That's important for banking and e-commerce sites in protecting customers' data. VeriSign is one of several large vendors of such Secure

Sockets Layer (SSL) certificates.

VeriSign also operates the registry of all ".com" and ".net" domain names. That means it's responsible for ensuring that Internet users can reach sites registered with those names.

When someone enters a Web address into a browser, the traffic doesn't go directly to servers operated by that Web site. It often has to go through servers operated by VeriSign and other companies to translate the written name, such as verisign.com, into a numeric Internet Protocol, or IP, address that computers can understand.

The last major infrastructure upgrade VeriSign announced was in 2007, when the company said it would spend more than \$100 million to boost capacity tenfold by 2010.

The amount represented about a quarter of the total \$373 million VeriSign spent in those three years on all its capital expenditures.

Last year the VeriSign, which is based in Mountain View, earned \$245.6 million on revenue of \$1.03 billion.

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