



Palo Alto: Cisco's networking 'empire' will die

The outspoken founder of Palo Alto networks claims Cisco's networking dominance will waver if it continues to spread itself too thinly.

By Jennifer Scott, 10 Feb 2011 at 16:16

Last week, during its annual conference, Cisco defended itself for moving into more varied markets, such as servers and [security](#). This week, however, one of its competitors claimed the strategy would be its downfall.

Nir Zuk, outspoken founder of [Palo Alto Networks](#) and ex-employee of a number of networking heavyweights, compared the Goliath company to historical fallen regimes and warned the company against spreading itself too thinly.

In an interview with *IT PRO* at this week's NetEvents conference in Barcelona, Zuk said: "History shows empires die when they try to spread too wide. Over 2,000 years ago it was the Greeks and the Romans, 100 years ago it was your British empire and now where I live [the US] is losing its [power]."

"We see it in the high tech companies too."

He claimed Cisco should "stop playing in fields they aren't specialists" in and cited occasions where the company had overplayed its offerings.

"Every year we heard they were going to kill Checkpoint but now that is a \$1 billion company," he added.

"Anything beyond routing and switching, Cisco are just not dominating in."

Zuk said he hoped the company would "revert back to what they are good at" but when we asked if he thought they would, the founder merely shrugged his shoulders.

"I strongly believe companies focusing on their core competencies will be the most successful," he concluded.

Earlier this week, [Zuk gave a keynote presentation at NetEvents](#), making bold claims that both Nokia and Microsoft were "dead companies" for their lack of innovation in their respective markets.