

IN BRIEF

Industry

- » Media (Satellite Broadcasting)

Challenges

- » Improve customer service by delivering LAN-like application performance worldwide
- » Support the merger of Intelsat and PanAmSat and ensure performance for an even greater distribution of employees
- » Enable a global IT consolidation strategy for cost control
- » Control bandwidth costs

Solution

- » Steelhead appliances were deployed in each of 20 offices
- » Both in-path and WCCP deployment methods used
- » High availability deployments in five locations

Benefits

- » File and Email servers consolidated from about nine offices – with no performance loss
- » LAN-like performance of centralized sales and support tools
- » Avoided the need to do major bandwidth upgrades

Intelsat

Riverbed® Steelhead® Products Accelerate a Global Sales Force for Satellite Services Provider

Intelsat is the leading provider of fixed satellite services (FSS) worldwide and is the leading provider of these services to each of the media, network services and government customer sectors, enabling people and businesses everywhere constant access to information and entertainment.

An extensive customer base, including some of the world's leading media and communications companies, multinational corporations, Internet service providers and government/military organizations, utilizes the company's services. Intelsat serves customers in over 200 countries and territories, making it a true global operation. Real-time, constant communication with people anywhere in the world is closer, by far.

Challenge: Enabling an Even More Responsive Business

Intelsat was a company amidst change. Following the acquisition of PanAmSat, Intelsat wanted to continue investing in its businesses, and ensure that it was remaining customer focused.

"It was an interesting time for the company," noted Dan Campbell, director of network

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engineering. "Most people would think that enabling the merger of two companies was a big enough project to handle in and of itself. But we also wanted to make sure that we upgraded our capabilities and accomplished existing goals such as application

centralization. That meant finding smart, manageable IT infrastructure solutions that could keep us ahead of the game."

Intelsat's operations take place around the globe. With offices across the United States as well as offices in Germany, England, Australia, China, and India among other countries, Intelsat needed to ensure that every employee had very fast access to key applications. "With the acquisition, we were adding some offices where we didn't have them before, and existing offices were growing as we merged the two workforces. We didn't want this complexity to impact our customers, so that heightened the demand to make sure our applications were running as seamlessly as possible," said Campbell. "For example, when a sales rep – anywhere around the world – is trying to book a deal, he or she needs immediate access to our satellite reservation system. Often times the rep is sitting with the customer when using the system, so speed is central to not only booking the business, but showing customers how we can support them."

Campbell also discussed their consolidation project. "We were actively consolidating IT infrastructure from remote offices at the same time. Both file servers and Exchange 2003 servers were to be removed from many remote offices. We knew application performance would be an even bigger issue as we pulled these servers back to our central data center. Given that many of our sales people were working on high latency, low bandwidth connections that are difficult or expensive to upgrade, we had to find a way to manage all of this effectively."

"Out of the 20+ sites where we deployed Steelhead appliances, about 9 sites had file servers and email servers that we could now remove."

Solution: Steelhead Appliances Overcome Performance Limitations

Campbell and his team used a careful, multi-stage research process when looking for a WAN optimization solution. "We started by doing the research on paper," recalled Campbell, "We looked at the Gartner Magic Quadrant, as well as what vendors we already had in-house that might have WAN optimization capabilities. We decided to look at four vendors: BlueCoat, F5, Juniper, and Riverbed."

"From there, we brought the vendors' products in-house so that we could kick the tires. We had three main characteristics that we used to grade the products:

1. **Performance.** Did the product do enough for our applications, especially given that we had some custom-built applications?
2. **Ease of implementation.** How quickly and easily could we get this into our network?
3. **Ease of management.** How easy would this solution be to operate and what types of tools did the vendor provide to assist its operation?"

Campbell reflected on the trial process. "We have a really complicated network. It's a mix of leased lines, Frame Relay, VPN, broadband Internet, and of course satellite. We're based

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completely on Cisco routers, but we have many different models. Not only that, we're probably running about 10 different versions of IOS. Because our network supports the operation of our core business and commercial services, we don't bring a router

down just for a 'routine upgrade.' So we would expect any WAN optimization product we use to be able to integrate easily into this complex environment."

Campbell discussed in detail why he chose Riverbed. "Performance of the Riverbed Steelhead appliance was second to none. It performed best across our range of applications, which meant we would be able to provide better performance to all of our distributed workers and support the IT consolidation project. The Steelhead appliances were as close to plug-and-play as you could get. The configuration was simple, and the devices were reliable. Their flexible in-path and WCCP deployment required little to no re-architecting of our network, and worked great with our heterogeneous Cisco environment. Finally, Riverbed has really robust management. I was impressed by the Central Management Console, which gives us the ability to centrally report on performance, manage appliance configurations, and push out software images for upgrades."

Benefits: Better Client Service, Worker Satisfaction and Simpler IT Management

Intelsat noticed immediate benefits upon deployment. "We were getting reports in from across the world that application access had dramatically improved. The interesting thing was that it wasn't just from offices in India or Germany, as you might expect. We were even getting reports in from as close as Atlanta that application performance had improved significantly.

"This performance increase also helped make our consolidation project a reality. Out of the 20+ sites where we deployed Steelhead appliances, about nine sites had file servers and email servers that we were able to remove. We will also be pulling out some applications and the servers that host them in the near future. Not only do we save the capex for not having to refresh this equipment, but we would save significant opex by reducing the support and maintenance costs. We did all of this without having to implement bandwidth upgrades at most of the sites."

"This solution was revenue-impacting. After all, when our field teams can respond faster to customers in pre-sales or post-sales capacities, our clients appreciate the improved service. We can ensure that customers are getting what they need in a timely fashion."

Return on Investment

Campbell talked briefly about ROI as well. "For us, the soft benefits of a satisfied customer base combined with the prospect of a more productive sales team were the true drivers behind this project. When executives saw what Riverbed could do for our customer support and customer responsiveness capabilities, this project received very fast approval.

"There are a number of hard cost savings associated with this technology that are great to keep track of too. First, there is the bandwidth savings element. It's easy to do reporting and see how much bandwidth the company is saving. But just thinking about bandwidth savings is half the story. When you look at our IT consolidation project, it couldn't have been a reality without the performance boost that Steelhead appliances delivered," concluded Campbell.

SUMMARY

Intelsat needed to provide its global workforce with LAN-like application access so that they could enhance customer service and responsiveness. At the same time, the company underwent profound changes: it expanded its footprint with the acquisition of PanAmSat, and completed a global IT consolidation project as well. After looking at other products and also considering bandwidth upgrades, Intelsat chose to deploy Steelhead appliances to 20 locations worldwide. Steelhead appliances not only provided the best performance compared to the alternatives, but also the easiest integration and ongoing management.



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About Riverbed

Riverbed Technology is the IT infrastructure performance company. The Riverbed family of wide area network (WAN) optimization solutions liberates businesses from common IT constraints by increasing application performance, enabling consolidation, and providing enterprise-wide network and application visibility – all while eliminating the need to increase bandwidth, storage or servers. Thousands of companies with distributed operations use Riverbed to make their IT infrastructure faster, less expensive and more responsive. Additional information about Riverbed (NASDAQ: RVBD) is available at www.riverbed.com



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