

CASE STUDY: Freudenberg IT

IN BRIEF

Industry

- IT Managed Service Provider

Challenges

- Created value-added services to better serve customer needs
- Accelerate application performance for a globally distributed client base
- Reduce expensive or congested network bandwidth into remote offices
- Overcome difficulties in IT consolidation
- Improve slow remote data backup and replication

Solution

- Deployment of 95 Steelhead appliances across FIT and client sites
- 15 Steelhead appliances and the CMC deployed in the Freudenberg IT data center

Service Provider Benefits

- New premium service offering created based on Riverbed's Steelhead appliances
- Improved client satisfaction
- Reduced bandwidth consumption by 50%

Client Benefits

- Improved data throughput by up to 4x
- Reduced bandwidth consumption by 50%
- Enabled server consolidation without performance loss



RIVERBED® STEELHEAD® PRODUCTS SOLVE DATA MANAGEMENT AND APPLICATION PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS FOR A LEADING IT SERVICE PROVIDER

Overview

Freudenberg IT (www.freudenberg-it.com) is a part of the Freudenberg Group, with about 500 employees and a revenue base of more than 60 Million Euros. FIT provides IT services to small and medium-sized businesses, specializing in automotive supply, discrete manufacturing, logistics providers and technical trades. As an international full-service IT provider, FIT also implements, optimizes, and operates IT systems in SAP environments.

Challenge: Accelerating applications on limited bandwidth for a Distributed Client Base

Freudenberg IT is a distributed organization supporting a client base spread across the globe. FIT regards customer satisfaction as an inherent part of its growth strategy. Mr. Heiko Rüschen, team manager, presales with FIT noted, "We have sales, finance, operations, and marketing clients all over the world. With our successful growth strategy in place, it's critical that all our clients – no matter where they are – can make full use of our products. A satisfied client base is the key to our success and growth."

Catering to such a widespread client base, FIT was facing multiple challenges. Clients were complaining of poor application performance. Many users were frustrated with the speed and performance of major applications like SAP, SQL, MAPI, and Lotus Notes. Even simple tasks like file sharing, data back up and replication were unacceptably slow, sometimes at locations where plenty of bandwidth was readily available. For example, one client, Brammer, was unable to run SAP smoothly due to increased traffic over the WAN. Merkel Freudenberg Fluidtechnik, a premier FIT client, maintained two separate IT infrastructures between its two offices. They reported issues with duplicate data management, and increasing replication and backup time.

"Steelhead appliances dramatically accelerated SAP performance for our clients."

Solution: Wide-area Data Services

FIT's team of network consultants recalled the process of analyzing different wide-area data services (WDS) products to accelerate application performance. "In the evaluation period, we tested Cisco, Ipanema and F5. The bottom-line was to find a product that could overcome all the key factors that decelerate application performance over the WAN: high latency, limited bandwidth, 'busy' transport protocols, and even 'busier' applications. Careful research showed that for FIT's purpose, all of the alternatives to Riverbed had disadvantages compared to Riverbed's solution". Rüschen continued, "We came across Riverbed through a recommendation. We tested their products extensively, and found it performed very well in our live environment".

Citing few examples Rüschen said "One of our clients was unable to run SAP smoothly. Steelhead appliances dramatically accelerated SAP performance, and also allowed them to reduce bandwidth usage by 50%. In another instance, MX-TCP increased the data throughput by 4x, dramatically improving backup times."

"While developing a premium service was not primary goal of this project, it was a happy consequence. It's a total win-win situation for the business, the end users and the IT team alike"

The communications professionals from FIT noted, "Aside from greatly improved application performance, simplicity and ease-of-use were the key reasons that FIT chose Riverbed Steelhead appliances. The appliances were incredibly simple to install, and have exceeded our expectations in terms of both bandwidth efficiency and improvements. Moreover, Riverbed has great technical support – extremely knowledgeable and very responsive." They continued "Also, the Central Management

Console simplified the process of deploying, configuring and managing Steelhead appliances all through one Web-based interface." Rüschen remarked "Riverbed is truly the pioneer in the field of WDS."

Benefits: Better Client Service and a Premium Service Rollout for Clients

Enumerating the benefits of the Steelhead appliance deployment for to FIT and its clients, Rüschen said, "Riverbed provided a complete solution to FIT: reducing WAN traffic, ensuring high application performance, enabling successful site consolidation projects and ensuring effective data protection were all accomplished with Steelhead appliances. Based on Riverbed's WDS solution, FIT developed a new service model that not only solves multiple issues faced by the clients, but also provides superior performance." Rüschen said "While developing a premium service was not the primary goal of this project, it was

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SUMMARY

Freudenberg IT (FIT) is an IT service provider catering to a client base spread across the globe. FIT's most critical requirement is enabling its client community to make full use of their products. However, FIT's clients were encountering a wide range of issues like poor application performance, complicated data management and bandwidth congestion. FIT deployed Riverbed Steelhead appliances to solve these issues. Riverbed provided a comprehensive solution that enabled optimal bandwidth utilization and radically improved throughput, making the WAN perform like a LAN. Steelhead appliances also enabled successful IT consolidation for customers. The improvements in application performance, and resultant productivity benefits impressed the clients of FIT so much that FIT was able to offer a premium service based on Riverbed Steelhead appliances.

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FIT's team of network experts elaborated on the benefits that Steelhead appliances had on new services rollout and bandwidth utilization. "Riverbed allows us to deploy applications centrally, and enable them to be reliably used worldwide. FIT now finds it easier to control and report SLAs as well." Rüschen continued, "Riverbed simplified our IT administration and data management. With centralized infrastructure, FIT can offer even more services as a hosting provider. This is the key to FIT's strategy." He concluded, "Steelhead appliances are excellent. They offer simple, effective solutions to highly complicated problems. We started using it as a solution to our clients' problems, but it has helped us develop premium services for our clients. It is the ideal value-added service for our business."

"Our clients regularly encountered issues arising out of latency and bandwidth limitations. Without Riverbed we couldn't have met the performance requirements of our clients."

Success Stories: More than a few happy clients

The most valuable benefit that FIT experienced after implementing Riverbed Steelhead appliances is an extremely satisfied client base. Find out how a comprehensive WDS solution from Riverbed dramatically improved application performance for these FIT clients.

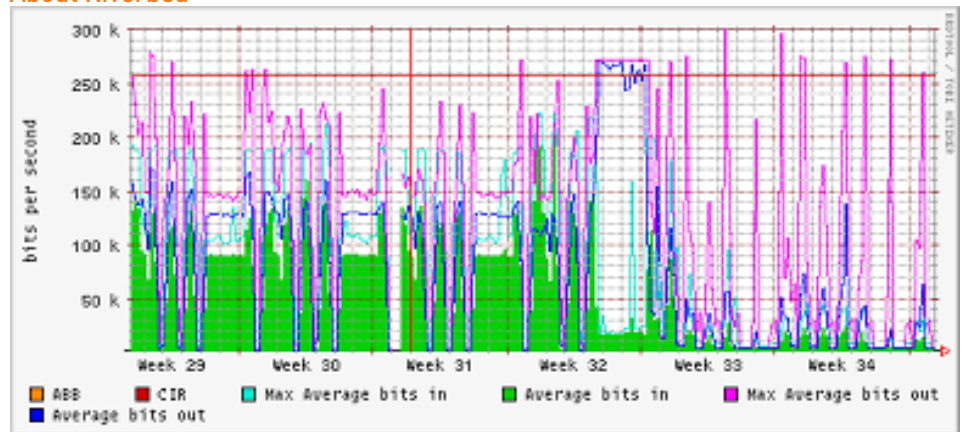
Merkel Freudenberg Fluidtechnik

Merkel Freudenberg Fluidtechnik manages two offices. Previously the company maintained two separate sets of servers and storage in order to ensure application performance. But, as a result of this design, they regularly suffered through slow replication and backup of their data. WAN-related performance issues were slowing important applications like SQL, MAPI, and Lotus Notes. FIT's WDS managed service solved long pending issues by providing application acceleration. FIT's WDS managed service improved performance enough that the client was able to consolidate their IT infrastructure, and simplify data management.

Brammer: A European added value technical distributor, and FIT's major SAP hosting client

Brammer manages more than 400 offices worldwide. Efficient data sharing and transfer is important for them as it is directly related to employee productivity. Their biggest challenge was SAP performance degradation over the WAN. Deployment of Steelhead appliances by FIT allowed them to consolidate servers and improve IT performance in remote offices. Rüschen noted "Many people just think about bandwidth savings. Riverbed proved to be much more than just bandwidth optimization. Riverbed dramatically accelerated the application while cutting bandwidth use by 50%. This resulted in a considerable throughput increase."

About Riverbed



The blue line represents the 'Average Bit Out'; and the green line represents 'Average Bit In'. Riverbed's Steelhead appliances were deployed by the end of week 32. Despite spikes in data requests (pink line) Steelhead appliances reduce the amount of data that was actually sent by 50% or more.

Riverbed Technology is the performance leader in wide-area data services (WDS) solutions for companies worldwide. By enabling application performance over the wide area network (WAN) that is orders of magnitude faster than what users experience today, Riverbed is changing the way people work, and enabling a distributed workforce that can collaborate as if they were local. Additional information about Riverbed (Nasdaq: RVBD) is available at www.riverbed.com.

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