

CASE STUDY: Solutia

SUMMARY

Industry

- Manufacturing

Challenge

- Centralize Exchange traffic without disrupting end users

Solution

- Riverbed Steelhead appliances

Benefits

- Enable centralized Exchange infrastructure
- Reduce IT management and bandwidth costs



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Riverbed Steelhead® Appliances Enable a Simpler, Centralized Messaging Architecture

Solutia (www.solutia.com) is a \$2.7 billion manufacturer of a wide range of chemicals, plastics, and nylons used in the automotive, electronic, glass, flooring, and other industries. Based in St. Louis, Missouri, the company has nearly 6,000 employees and operates 40 offices throughout North America.

Challenge: Consolidate Microsoft Exchange Servers

To simplify management and reduce costs, CIO Eric Nichols planned to consolidate Microsoft Exchange servers from ten of Solutia's remote sites. "We need to be as cost effective as possible in our various businesses," explained Nichols, "and simplifying IT by centralizing servers is one of the key tools at our disposal."

In preparation for the project, Nichols had his team upgrade their wide area network by adding ten T1 lines to ensure that their newly centralized Exchange servers would not cause disruptions to users in their distributed offices.

While planning the project, Nichols heard about Riverbed and arranged to hear a presentation on Steelhead appliances. What he heard impressed him.

"My IT director sat in on the presentation from Riverbed. His reaction was 'Wow, this is really a different way of tackling this problem'", said Nichols. "He was already familiar with data compression but didn't believe it would meet our needs. Riverbed offered a very different approach."

"We decided to deploy four additional Steelhead appliances and then went back to our carrier and canceled the ten incremental T1 lines we had added."

Solution: Steelhead Appliances

Nichols hoped that Steelhead appliances would allow him to eliminate some or even all of the incremental T1 lines. In addition, he might be in a better position to reap the rewards of a new centralized Exchange infrastructure.

Solutia tested the Steelhead appliances. "The first four Steelhead appliances arrived in four different sites on the same day," said Nichols. "They were unboxed, plugged in and running by noon at all four sites, and we saw an immediate drop in our Exchange WAN traffic. Once we had the appliances operating for a while, we decided to deploy four additional Steelhead appliances and then went back to our carrier and canceled the ten incremental T1 lines we had added as part of our Exchange deployment."

Benefits

By installing Riverbed's Steelhead appliances, Solutia was able to achieve their strategic IT goal of operating a simpler, centralized messaging architecture. The company has been able to rationalize some of their IT operations as well as staffing levels, and they plan to explore other ways to leverage the presence of the Steelhead appliances.

Since Steelhead appliances optimize all TCP traffic, Solutia is looking forward to taking advantage of the broad range of application optimizations that Riverbed's products offer.

About Riverbed

Riverbed Technology is the pioneer in wide area data services (WDS), a fast-growing product category that solves the problems of high latency and limited bandwidth that plague a wide variety of applications over distributed networks. Riverbed's Steelhead appliances provide the highest level of WAN performance at a lower cost, reducing WAN traffic by up to 95% and accelerating applications by up to 100 times. By providing optimizations that are orders of magnitude greater than what users experience today, Riverbed is changing the way people work – and enabling, for the first time, a truly distributed workforce. InfoWorld named Steelhead a "Product of the Year" for 2005 as the "Best WAN Accelerator." Steelhead appliances are available worldwide directly from Riverbed and through global partners, including HP.