

IN BRIEF

Industry

- » Professional Services (Legal)

Challenges

- » Enable better client service with a centralised practice management system
- » Ease inter-office collaboration among lawyers and practice groups
- » Consolidate IT infrastructure while improving the user experience
- » Limit WAN and server expenditures

Solution

- » Deployment of four Steelhead appliances: one at the head office and one at each of three branch offices

Benefits

- » Real-time, accelerated access to a centrally deployed Pilgrim practice management system enables lawyers to collaborate more easily and respond to clients faster
- » Centralised remote file servers
- » £85,000 in annual bandwidth expenses avoided with one-off Steelhead appliance purchase



Tilly Bailey & Irvine

Riverbed® Steelhead® Appliances Enable Law Firm to Consolidate its IT Infrastructure and Improve Inter-Office Collaboration

Tilly Bailey & Irvine (www.tbilaw.co.uk) has been practising law for more than 160 years. The firm employs 180 people across its four offices on Teesside in the north of England. A full service high street legal practice, Tilly Bailey & Irvine covers all areas of the law – from probate to conveyancing, family law, e-commerce, and intellectual property.

Tilly Bailey & Irvine prides itself on a friendly and open approach to client relationships and seeks to provide peace of mind at all times. Always putting the best interest of the client first, the practice stands by long-standing relationships and personalised service.

Challenge: Consolidating IT Infrastructure while Minimising Bandwidth Requirements and Optimising Application Performance

To ensure consistent, manageable and practical client service across the organisation, Tilly Bailey & Irvine wanted to consolidate its IT infrastructure. The firm's goals were three-fold: (1) enable better client service by providing high-productivity technology to all lawyers and staff, (2) ease inter-office collaboration by centralising data, and (3) reduce the cost and management headache associated with remote infrastructure.

Because of the firm's growing reliance on their wide area network (WAN), Tilly Bailey & Irvine also aimed to upgrade its network connectivity. Before deploying Riverbed Steelhead appliances, the firm was considering a 10-fold increase in bandwidth expenditures to each office.

“It couldn't have been simpler – the Steelhead appliance really is a plug and play device with no complex installation.”

The firm knew that migrating localised servers back to the corporate data centre within the head office in Hartlepool would produce some dramatic challenges. Ray Skinner, Head of IT for Tilly Bailey & Irvine, recalled, “We knew

that consolidating remote office IT would produce benefits for both lawyers and my IT staff. Lawyers would have access to more data, and my team would be able to manage the infrastructure much more effectively. But consolidation also creates challenges. Consolidation can severely degrade application performance over the WAN, it can cause a tremendous increase in bandwidth expenditures, and the consolidation process can severely disrupt day-to-day operations.”

Solution: Steelhead Appliances Overcome Network Limitations

Skinner evaluated the Riverbed Steelhead appliance, and decided that it had the capabilities that would help Tilly Bailey & Irvine overcome the challenges of consolidation. So before consolidating servers, Skinner also oversaw the installation of the Steelhead appliances in each office.

“It couldn't have been simpler – the Steelhead appliance really is a plug and play device with no complex installation,” says Ray. “It took less than a day to install an appliance in every office – and most of that time was taken up travelling from one site to the next.”

The switchover was seamless, with users actually observing faster access to applications.

Ray and his team of three then seamlessly migrated local servers from each of the firm's offices. They were also able to decommission each of the SnapMirror® servers used for local backup, switching to 1 terabyte NAS (network area storage) in a separate and secure location in Hartlepool.

Benefits: Accelerated Applications and Simpler IT Management

Installation of Steelhead appliances in each office enabled Tilly Bailey & Irvine to quickly and simply consolidate IT infrastructure and in turn install the Pilgrim Practice Management System with all applications experiencing LAN-like performance over its WAN. By overcoming the limitations of a wide area network, the new systems have also made it simpler and easier for colleagues from the firm's different offices to work in collaboration.

By eliminating time spent on administrative tasks, the system has freed up time for lawyers and their staff to concentrate on their core, billable legal work.

The practice management system, which includes case management, document management and accounting functions, is helping to revolutionise the firm's day-to day operations. By eliminating time spent on administrative tasks, the system has freed up time for lawyers and their staff to concentrate on their core, billable legal work. It will also enhance customer service: for example the conveyancing department

will be able to send text messages direct to customer mobile phones to inform them of key events in the house purchase process, such as completion of local searches or exchange of contracts.

The switchover was seamless, with users actually observing faster access to applications. Employees also quickly began to notice the way in which Steelhead appliances overcome problems caused by latency.

"With Riverbed we no longer get Microsoft Outlook error messages because the client is unable to connect with the server before it times out," says Ray. "We just don't see that at all now."

Ray and his team also found that centralising IT infrastructure has helped to reduce dramatically the amount of time they spend on support activities at each of the firm's four offices.

The practice was also able to make an estimated savings of £85,000 per year by using 2MB links between each branch and head office, as opposed to the 10MB lines it would otherwise have required.

The practice was also able to make an estimated savings of £85,000 per year in bandwidth expenses.

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



2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009



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Tilly Bailey & Irvine wanted to implement a centralised Pilgrim practice management system that would enable lawyers to collaborate more easily and respond to clients faster. The firm's IT infrastructure was distributed, with localised servers and backup in each office.

Deploying Steelhead appliances at each office simultaneously enabled IT infrastructure consolidation and higher application performance. Lawyers and staff in remote offices actually found that key applications such as email performed better after the Steelhead deployment, eliminating frustrating and costly activities.

The centralised Pilgrim software implementation was highly successful, enabling Tilly Bailey & Irvine to provide clients with even better service across the organisation.