

SUMMARY

It's no secret that companies often look to cut IT budgets in times of economic difficulty. But as McKinsey Consulting recently reported, it doesn't make sense to do across the board IT budget cuts. Instead, the business should still make targeted investments that actually cut costs and prepare for the future. CIOs who take this advice to heart can present their board a strategy that delivers savings today and greater opportunity in the future. Why wait? Putting off the deployment of WAN optimization means savings and opportunity lost for the business.



10 reasons to deploy WAN optimization in an economic downturn

Here are 10 reasons to consider deploying WAN optimization now:

10. Cut costs today. WAN optimization has enabled customers to put off impending bandwidth upgrades for two years or more in some cases. In addition, some companies have been able to decommission existing circuits because of throughput gains. Customers have also been able to avoid router upgrades, enable greater consolidation, and avoid server refreshes. This frees up budget for the bottom line and for other critical projects.

9. Realize the ROI of other investments you've already made. WAN optimization acts like a multiplier to the investments you are making in other projects. Initiatives as diverse as CRM, ERP, disaster recovery, communications platforms, and more benefit from greater performance and less need for distributed IT infrastructure. WAN optimization makes these new projects perform better over the WAN, accelerates user adoption, and costs less to implement.

8. Make virtualization more successful. Virtualization is often considered a key cost-savings strategy, but one critical area is often overlooked. If you're consolidating servers out of a branch office and virtualizing them into the data center, end-user performance problems could kill your project. WAN optimization enables LAN-like performance over the WAN, allowing branch users to still have the required application performance.

7. Balance workload – without relocation of workers. Typically big projects rely on staff at the project location, but leverage some to little staff elsewhere. But with WAN optimization, much of the work can be done remotely, where the staff is located today. Even challenging design tasks requiring significant collaboration can be handled remotely. This eliminates significant cost in travel such as flights, hotels, and transport. In addition, all of this travel time is freed up for staff to actually work on the project without tearing them away from their personal lives.

6. Help company morale. No one likes to hit their head against a brick wall. In down economies, employees still want to work hard but application performance often seems like a barrier to them. This can cause workers to be less productive and therefore less satisfied with their jobs. By using WAN optimization to accelerate the performance of applications, IT managers can eliminate a key barrier to enabling productive, happy workers.

Alstom Power saved about \$3 Million dollars over three years by avoiding server refreshes and bandwidth upgrades. WAN optimization made this possible – with a low 6-month payback period.

The US Defense Contracts Management Agency (DCMA) cut 18 data centers down to 2 using Riverbed WAN optimization.

5. Reduce IT support costs. In a recent Forrester survey, the majority of IT managers reported that application performance was the main user complaint. By simply accelerating the performance of applications over the WAN, IT can simultaneously reduce the strain on support staff and improve productivity.

4. Use mobility as a cost-savings strategy. Mobility is often considered a way to make employees more productive and get them closer to the customer. But it can also be a cost-savings strategy. Using WAN optimization software for mobile users allows them to be connected to the enterprise as if they were working in an office. With that level of performance, users can work from the home more frequently and reduce the burden on companies in terms of branch office operating costs and real estate investments.

3. Enable more productive outsourcing. Outsourcing only really works when the remote staff (often located in far-off parts of the world) can access information and data as if they were local. With WAN optimization, organizations can enable just that. In addition, they won't get stuck with requirements to buy large, expensive international links or set up remote infrastructure on the outsourcers' premises.

One of the world's largest banks eliminated tape backup in their branches and moved to network-based backup – without impacting other operations – by using WAN optimization.

2. Make data protection faster and cheaper.

In good times or bad times, data protection is a necessity. Many businesses simply throw more bandwidth at data protection in the hopes that they can replicate and restore an ever-increasing amount of data in an ever-shrinking backup window. Organizations that use WAN optimization often see that they can accelerate their disaster recovery operations while cutting bandwidth needs at the same time.

1. Prepare the business for the future. WAN optimization allows businesses to cut costs now without sacrificing the future. Because WAN optimization is an enabling technology across the complete enterprise, a small investment now can prepare the business to grow rapidly when the time is right. New IT projects can be deployed faster and with better performance across the WAN. This enables the IT department to be more responsive to business needs in good times or bad.

Want to learn more about WAN optimization? Contact Riverbed, the market leader, for more information on the products and solutions that are right for you. Thousands of companies around the world already use Riverbed to achieve cost savings and enable strategic advantage over the competition. Visit www.riverbed.com for more information.

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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