
10 Steps to Better Application and Network Performance

If you work on a network operations team, you know how increasingly hard it is to understand and ensure application performance for your end-users.

You need visibility into areas where issues may occur—end-user devices, network, code, and infrastructure—in order to identify and diagnose problems quickly and minimize downtime. But it hasn't been easy to gain this

level of visibility without deploying additional packet capture devices, or remote site technicians. Blind spots are everywhere making it difficult to focus on monitoring the applications that matter most. And when nearly 50% of a network's traffic is web-based and it all looks the same to the network, identifying your important applications and staying ahead of their performance is more difficult than ever. That could mean inefficient troubleshooting, longer time to resolution, and an overall lack of application intelligence.

Who wants that?

No application is perfect, even with the most stringent instrumentation. But if you follow the ten steps below, your applications and underlying infrastructure can both be tuned for maximum performance:

1 Find problem sources

Voice, video, and social media traffic can slow down the network. But with a tool that provides performance metrics per application, location, and user, you can identify the source of any problem and drill down from Layer 7 application information all the way to low-level addresses and ports, with just a few simple clicks.

3 Reduce brownouts and downtime


When your critical network connections or business applications fail, every minute counts. IDC finds that organizations using Riverbed® SteelCentral™ network performance management software have 34% fewer downtime incidents per month, and the average incident duration is cut by 51%. This results in a measurable increase in end-user productivity.

2 Fix potential problems before they strike

Your solution should actively monitor and alert on meaningful changes in performance so that you can head off potential problems. The conundrum is, if you fix a problem before anyone actually notices it and calls the help desk to complain, was it actually ever really a problem?

4 Get proactive alerting and root-cause identification

With full visibility into your network and proactive, real-time problem alerts, you can deliver security to your organization as well as performance. Riverbed SteelCentral can detect threats or intrusions across the network, helping you achieve compliance with regulatory requirements and IT mandates. That means less resources are consumed, and both users and the bottom line are unaffected.



5 Map your transactions

A transaction map describes all the components used in delivering a specific transaction and is a fundamental template that is used to reach a more effective problem resolution and impact analysis. Because they reduce the sample of information to be analyzed, transaction maps are the cornerstones of an integrated monitoring strategy.

7 Understand the dynamic context of each business service

You should understand how a service is delivered across your dynamic infrastructure. Modeling a business service and mapping the components used in delivering it to end users is the basis for an accurate analysis of performance issues.

9 Cooperate with application support and development teams

Use comprehensive service dashboards that get everyone on the same page. From the CIO and IT management to application managers to the security and network teams, everyone with access to the same data can see a unified picture of the network and the applications and services on the network. That means less finger-pointing and quicker problem resolution. A common, integrated view of all component data is a key feature of a management solution.

6 Consolidate your tools

Manually aggregating data from multiple sources into a meaningful view of a business service is a resource-intensive, and wasteful exercise. A good network monitoring solution should simplify the number of tools you use to troubleshoot your network, and it should reduce the number of “dashboards” you have to view to get the right data from your network.

8 Simplify management

Your tool set should have broad domain monitoring capabilities that can be abstracted in a way that focuses on services (such as a CRM application). That way, it can model business services’ dependencies on the underlying infrastructure that is used to deliver each application. In turn, you get better cooperation across global teams, improved resource prioritization, and streamlined troubleshooting.

10 Plan for the future

The better the picture you have of what’s currently happening on your network, the better you’re going to be able to plan for future needs and expansions of the network. And you can also, more confidently, align your network and IT resources with your business’ priorities. Planning for a new service rollout, addressing new cloud and mobile apps, and data center consolidation projects are much easier and far less risky.

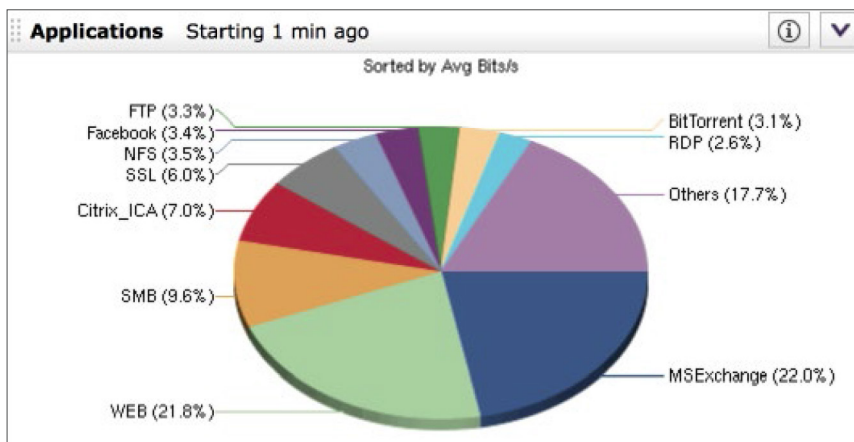


Figure 1

SteelCentral dashboards include everything you need to know from the highest level to the most granular detail with one-click drilldown for root cause and problem isolation. This chart illustrates deep application visibility so you can identify your top application traffic on a minute-by-minute basis.

About Riverbed

Riverbed, at more than \$1 billion in annual revenue, is the leader in application performance infrastructure, delivering the most complete platform for the hybrid enterprise to ensure applications perform as expected, data is always available when needed, and performance issues can be proactively detected and resolved before impacting business performance. Riverbed enables hybrid enterprises to transform application performance into a competitive advantage by maximizing employee productivity and leveraging IT to create new forms of operational agility. Riverbed’s 26,000+ customers include 97% of the *Fortune* 100 and 98% of the *Forbes* Global 100. Learn more at riverbed.com.

riverbed