
Riverside Company



Riverside

Proactive VoIP Monitoring Improves Performance of Business-Critical Voice Communications

The Riverside Company is a global private equity firm focused on acquiring growing businesses valued at up to \$250 million (€200 million in Europe). Since its founding in 1988, Riverside has invested in more than 330 transactions. The firm's international portfolio includes more than 70 companies.

Challenge: Find tools to proactively manage business-critical VoIP system

Riverside's professionals are dependent on their phones and video conferences as they buy, sell, and manage companies. Stalin Guilamo, manager of network and telephony operations at Riverside, has the job of making sure the company's voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) system supports their work by performing well at all times.

When Guilamo started working at Riverside, he took over the management of two Cisco CallManager clusters, one in North America and one in Europe, and a CallManager Xpress cluster in Asia (which he plans to transition to CallManager). Satisfaction with the VoIP system was low. "The company runs a survey twice a year, and on a scale of one to 10, satisfaction with the voice system was a five or a six," he recalls. "We had to wait for users to contact the help desk when they had a problem with a phone."

Guilamo also wanted the ability to remotely investigate a phone and understand what the user was experiencing.

Rather than waiting to hear from a user about a problem, we're able to send an email out and say, 'We know this is going on and we're working on it,' which helps the IT department be seen as proactive."

Stalin Guilamo
Manager of Network and Telephony Operations
Riverside Company

In Brief

Challenges

- Ensure availability of business-critical voice and video conferencing systems
- Improve user satisfaction with VoIP phones

Solution

- SteelCentral™ UCExpert

Benefits

- Satisfaction with VoIP system rose from a rating of 5 to 9 (on a scale of 1 to 10)
- Alerts arrive a few minutes before users report problems
- Resolution time cut by 75%
- VoIP-related calls to help desk down 35% to 40%
- Faster rollouts of new VoIP applications; fewer problems when new apps go into production

Solution: Remote access and scripting capabilities in unified communications

Guilamo tested solutions from Cisco as well as unified communications (UC) and VoIP management solutions from Riverbed Technology and NetIQ in a lab environment. He chose Riverbed® SteelCentral™ UCExpert—a complete solution for managing UC deployments and ongoing operations—mainly because it offered the ability to assess a user’s problem remotely, allowing for troubleshooting, problem replication and resolution.

“With Remote Hands we can go to a phone and duplicate the issue and see it on the screen,” Guilamo says.

“This saves a tremendous amount of time for both the support engineer and end user, and also lets us do after-hours troubleshooting.”

Another feature that appealed to Guilamo was the ability to automate much of UCExpert’s functionality. “What attracted me was the ability to create scripts to test the system,” he explains. “I don’t have to physically dial 10 to 20 numbers. I can just create a script and run it.” He has created scripts to test primary rate interfaces (PRIs) and long distance calls.

Benefits: VoIP-related calls to help desk down 35-40%; resolution time down 75%; user satisfaction is high

The performance monitoring functionality in UCExpert has enabled Guilamo to shift from reactive to proactive VoIP support. “We get an alert two to five minutes before anyone reports an issue, so we already have a sense of where to go to address it,” Guilamo says.

As a result, Riverside has seen a 35% to 40% reduction in VoIP-related calls to the help desk since the introduction of SteelCentral UCExpert. And when there is an issue, it is resolved in about 25% of the time it used to take previously. “Compared to having to talk to the user and get information from them about the problem, we already know where to look,” Guilamo says.

The information Guilamo gets from UCExpert has helped change the way the IT department is perceived. “Rather than waiting to hear from a user about a problem, we’re able to send an email out and say, ‘We know this is going on and we’re working on it,’” Guilamo explains. “This helps the IT department be seen as proactive.”

SteelCentral UCExpert has also improved user satisfaction with the VoIP system. According to user surveys, satisfaction with the VoIP system is now at nine (on the one-to-10 scale).

Guilamo is also finding UCExpert to be very helpful to him in resource planning and for rolling out new voice-related functionality. In some cases, it has helped him launch the new applications in only a week, instead of the two-week timeframe it would have taken without this solution. But the more important benefit, he says, is that there are fewer issues once the applications go into production. “We’re not running into as many issues due to poor planning or not realizing the impact on the resources,” he says. “With UCExpert, we can create scripts to simulate resource utilization and better test out the environment.”

Summary

Riverside’s employees depend on phone calls and videoconferences as they buy, sell, and manage other companies. To address user dissatisfaction with the performance of its VoIP system, the company needed a more proactive way to monitor its CallManager and CallManager Xpress clusters. And it needed virtual access to users’ phones so that the IT department could resolve issues faster and ultimately improve user satisfaction with VoIP system.

Riverside chose Riverbed SteelCentral UCExpert because it delivers alerts two to five minutes before users report problems, reducing VoIP-related calls to the help desk by 35% to 40%. Problems can be resolved in about 25% of the time required previously. Since deployment, user satisfaction with the VoIP system has leaped forward. The company has also improved resource planning and speed the delivery of new VoIP applications.

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.

The Riverbed logo consists of the word "riverbed" in a lowercase, bold, orange sans-serif font.