

RAYONIER ADVANCED MATERIALS, INC.

RAYONIER ADVANCED MATERIALS TAKES “RIVERBED-FIRST” APPROACH TO THE CLOUD TO IMPROVE APPLICATION DELIVERY AND CUT COSTS

IN BRIEF

Industry

Manufacturing

Challenges

- Design location-independent computing infrastructure for new company
- Ensure excellent performance of centralized applications while holding down bandwidth costs

Solution

- “Riverbed-first” strategy drove public cloud approach and choice of cloud service provider
- SteelHead CX solutions in all corporate sites, a disaster recovery facility, and Peak 10 data center

Benefits

- Improved user experience with 12 – 18x faster performance for key applications
- Eliminated performance degradation by consolidating 230 distributed servers in eight data centers to 15 virtual servers in two data centers
- Reduced network costs by one-third to one-quarter
- Return on SteelHead investment was achieved in less than one year

Rayonier Advanced Materials Inc., is a newly-formed company, recently spun off from international forest products company, Rayonier. Rayonier Advanced Materials is the world’s leading producer of high-value specialty cellulose fibers valued for their unique optical, thickening and strengthening properties.

CHALLENGE: DESIGN AN IT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR A NEW COMPANY

At the time of the divestiture of Rayonier Advanced Materials, Rayonier was a very satisfied Riverbed customer. The company had installed 20 Riverbed® SteelHead™ solutions approximately seven years earlier to support the consolidation of what had been a highly distributed IT infrastructure.

“Before we implemented Riverbed solutions, we needed to deploy servers globally in order to deliver the performance that our end users needed,” explains Adam Rasner, the company’s director of corporate networking at the time.

Using Riverbed SteelHead application acceleration and VMware virtualization, Rasner consolidated 230 distributed servers spread across eight data centers into a private cloud environment consisting of just 15 virtualized servers in two data centers. These two data centers had to deliver applications to many more locations over far greater distances than before, but with SteelHead, users experienced 12 – 18x faster performances with many of the centralized applications. The company saw a return on its Riverbed investment in less than one year.

When Rayonier decided to spin off Rayonier Advanced Materials, Rayonier’s director of IT operations, David Nettles, was given the task of creating a new, separate IT environment for the new company. He had already done a cost comparison of three options – buying and managing a private cloud infrastructure (as the parent company, Rayonier, was then doing), outsourcing the entire operation to a third party, and managing a virtualized environment hosted by a public cloud services provider. Nettles determined that a public cloud solution made the most financial sense.

“The Rayonier road map is eventually to get rid of on-premises equipment,” says Nettles. “The divestiture helped accelerate that for Rayonier Advanced Materials, which will have basically everything in the [public] cloud.”



SOLUTION: STEELHEAD APPLIANCES IN PEAK 10 DATA CENTER AND ALL CORPORATE SITES

A key requirement in choosing the cloud vendor was finding one that would allow Rayonier Advanced Materials to continue benefitting from SteelHead WAN optimization, as it had been doing as a Rayonier division prior to the divestiture.

“In setting up the Rayonier Advanced Materials environment, we knew we couldn’t do without SteelHead appliances,” says Nettles. “Bandwidth is very expensive in some of the places we operate, two to three times as much as it would be in a big city. Without SteelHead, we’d end up with extremely high network costs. So one of our concerns in picking a cloud provider was that we could install our SteelHead appliances there.”

Nettles didn’t bother looking at competing WAN optimization solutions. “I’m familiar with Riverbed’s competitors, but I didn’t look at them because our experience with the existing SteelHead appliances is so positive,” he explains. “This product goes in and does what it’s supposed to do. It would be a hard sell to get us off the most successful piece of technology that we’ve put in place in 14 years.”

Nettles chose Peak 10 as the company’s cloud vendor and installed two SteelHead™ CX 1555 deployments in Peak 10’s Louisville, Kentucky data center. All of Rayonier Advanced Materials’ own facilities (headquarters, two manufacturing sites, and sales offices in London and Tokyo) and its disaster recovery facility are equipped with SteelHead implementations as well.

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David Nettles, Rayonier’s director of IT operations

BENEFITS: HIGH-PERFORMANCE, LOW-COST APPLICATION DELIVERY FROM THE CLOUD

Rayonier Advanced Materials delivers 200 applications from the Peak 10 data center to approximately 1,200 users. Among the applications are the two most critical to the company, Avantis enterprise asset management solution and the Great Plains enterprise resource planning system.

End users are happy with the performance of these applications, according to Nettles, who is happy with how cost-effectively he can make this happen. “We’re getting 75-80% deduplication from the SteelHead appliances, which means we get three to four times more network capacity than we’re paying for,” he says. “With SteelHead appliances, we can have great application performance with lower-cost connections.”

Rayonier adopted a location-independent computing strategy years ago, in large part because the company’s foresters needed to be able to go from office to office and still have access to all of their applications. Nettles sees the Riverbed SteelHead solution as a critical component of location independence and cloud strategy. “We have a ‘Riverbed-first’ strategy that lets us deliver applications to anyone, anywhere without running into network problems. To me it’s a no-brainer. I don’t understand why everyone doesn’t use SteelHead,” he concludes.

SUMMARY

When long-time Riverbed customer Rayonier spun off Rayonier Advanced Materials, there was no question that the new company's IT environment would include SteelHead WAN optimization technology. SteelHead appliances had been critical to the success of the parent company's data center consolidation strategy, guaranteeing users' satisfaction with the performance of centralized applications delivered over the WAN.

Rayonier Advanced Materials adopted a "Riverbed-first" strategy when it came to designing its computing infrastructure. Unlike the parent company, which operates its own data center, Rayonier Advanced Materials' IT environment is hosted in the public cloud. The IT manager chose Peak 10 as the cloud vendor in part because

he could install SteelHead appliances there. Rayonier Advanced Materials' end users get LAN-like application performance from the Peak 10 Louisville data center, with network costs one-third to one-quarter what they would be without SteelHead.

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David Nettles, Rayonier's director of IT operations

ABOUT RIVERBED

Riverbed Technology, Inc., at more than \$1 billion in annual revenue, is the leader in Application Performance Infrastructure, delivering the most complete platform for location-independent computing. Location-independent computing turns location and distance into a competitive advantage by allowing IT to have the flexibility to host applications and data in the most optimal locations while ensuring applications perform as expected, data is always available when needed, and performance issues are detected and fixed before end users notice. Riverbed's 25,000+ customers include 97% of the *Fortune* 100 and 96% of the *Forbes* Global 100. Learn more at www.riverbed.com.