

SFK Leblanc

The logo for SFK LEBLANC, featuring the letters 'SFK' in red, 'LEBLANC' in blue, and a stylized 'A' in red.

Riverbed and Rantek drive application optimisation on a global scale for Danish food industry specialist.

SFK LEBLANC is a supplier of production equipment and logistic solutions for the meat industry.

Originally a Danish business working for a cooperative of Danish pig farmers, SFK LEBLANC is now a multinational enterprise with offices in Denmark, Canada, The Netherlands, China, Russia, and Thailand. Riverbed® SteelHead™ enables the accelerated, secure and cost-efficient delivery of data and applications across any network – necessary for supporting global growth.

In July 2016, SFK LEBLANC was bought by Axcel, a Danish investment company. The deal was swiftly followed by acquisitions of three further slaughtering equipment specialists. Axcel's investment creates a global powerhouse made up of market leaders in meat production; SFK LEBLANC is the group's largest and most influential business.

In partnership with:

Rantek A/S
info@rantek.dk
www.rantek.dk

This marks a dramatic rise in fortunes for SFK. Since its foundation in 1931, SFK had been a largely Danish concern, focused on the slaughter of pigs. The purchase of Canada's GE LEBLANC started the global expansion. Operations in North America, Asia and across Europe followed.

“We want to develop the business, and IT can help give the group a competitive edge. With the Riverbed optimization solution, managed by Rantek, we're now in a position to focus on our long-time goals instead of being distracted by system operations.”

Jan Meltesen,
Group Information Technology Manager, SFK Leblanc

The company's IT infrastructure has not always kept pace with this change. Acquisition and expansion had left the business with an aging, disjointed estate. In recent years, even before the Axcel acquisition, the focus has been on building an infrastructure capable of supporting a global, consistent, high quality business.

Rather than purchase and maintain new hardware, SFK LEBLANC wanted to move to a virtual solution. This would reduce the strain on its internal IT resources while improving the performance of applications across all global locations.

"We use many systems amongst others, Microsoft Dynamics AX 2012, Outlook Exchange servers and Microsoft Dynamics CRM," says Jan Meltesen, Group Information Technology Manager, SFK LEBLANC. "But we're also very interested in being able to share our CAD systems, as design work in one market, on one product, might be useful elsewhere in the business. We want to encourage cooperation between the business units.

"Our approach to IT reflects the qualities we seek in our products. We're looking to be consistent, global and cost-efficient," Jan Meltesen continues.

SFK Leblanc relies on Riverbed SteelHead for the accelerated delivery of all applications across the network. The solution was designed and delivered by RanTek, a Danish IT service provider and long-term Riverbed partner. In addition, RanTek delivers a fully managed service, reducing the demands on the SFK team.

This service sees RanTek deploy a blackbox on the SFK network, monitoring the five SteelHeads. The blackbox collects performance data every five minutes, making automatic adjustments where possible and sending alerts when necessary. RanTek then sifts the data and, using its years of experience with Riverbed products, spots trends and uses the SteelHead appliances as a service to optimise performance. Most alerts are dealt with without needing to disturb SFK.

"We meet each quarter to review, and we have oversight on any changes," says Meltesen. "The RanTek service allows us to focus on improving our internal processes and work on higher-value IT projects. We don't need to divert IT resources on fixing issues."

"With the technology we use from Riverbed, these insights or design improvements need never be held locally. It encourages collaboration."

Jan Meltesen,
Group Information Technology Manager, SFK Leblanc



2.5 million mobile customers

In Brief

Challenges

- Improve network performance and lower cost
- Provide a platform for global growth across an integrated group of businesses
- Reduce the strain on internal IT resource

Solution

- Riverbed® SteelHead™ for optimised WAN performance
- Managed service from local Riverbed partner, Rantek
- Quarterly review and annual strategy day to help refine IT performance

Benefits

- Creates a flexible, secure and cost-efficient network capable of supporting global growth
- Consistent application performance raises user productivity across locations
- Frees internal resource to focus on high-value IT projects

Cost-efficiency, collaboration and simplicity

Meltesen says their Riverbed solution through RanTek has created a more efficient, connected and productive business: “As a result, it allows us to see and share global information on our global systems.”

He says data traffic is far more efficient, with around 80% now optimized by Riverbed. “We now only need one MPLS to China, because of the Chinese firewall. The rest is running on the VPN, which means we save money,” explains Meltesen.

“For instance,” he continues, “-this delivers a particular benefit around CAD projects. Riverbed’s WAN optimisation solution means designs can be sent between SFK global offices quickly and simply.”

The imperative for Axcel’s newly assembled group of specialists – working across pig, sheep, veal and cattle slaughterhouses – will be able to share global insight.

Some insight may be relevant only to one sector, others could benefit the group. “With the technology we use from Riverbed, these insights or design improvements need never be held locally. It encourages collaboration.”

Meltesen admits the RanTek managed service operates so smoothly he barely registers the work going on behind the scenes: “We don’t have to touch the Riverbed solution, but we’re kept informed. Besides the quarterly catch-ups we have an annual strategy day, and I find this most useful. We discuss with RanTek where we’re at, how we plan to grow and how they can support us. The conversation is geared around finding ways to improve our IT performance. We think of RanTek as a performance-focused partner.”

The business is now primed for the next stage of its growth.

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Riverbed – Empower the Experience

Riverbed is the only company with the collective richness of telemetry from network to app to end user that illuminates and then accelerates every interaction so that users get the flawless digital experience they expect across the entire digital ecosystem. Riverbed offers two industry-leading solution areas – Alluvio by Riverbed, an innovative and differentiated Unified Observability portfolio that unifies data, insights, and actions across IT, so customers can deliver seamless digital experiences; and Riverbed Acceleration, providing fast, agile, secure acceleration of any app over any network to users, whether mobile, remote, or on-prem. Together with our thousands of partners, and market-leading customers across the world, we empower every click, every digital experience. Learn more at riverbed.com.