

NOTICE: New Product Names

The contents of this asset do not reflect our recent product name changes. Here are the new Riverbed® names:

Old Names	New Names
Steelhead	SteelHead™
RPM, OPNET, Cascade	SteelCentral™
Stingray	SteelApp™
Granite	SteelFusion™
Flyscript	SteelScript™
Whitewater	SteelStore™

IN BRIEF

Industry

- » Education

Challenges

- » Lack of application performance insight needed to defend the network against “the network is slow” complaints
- » Difficulty dealing with security and acceptable-use infringements
- » Too much time spent “fire fighting,” too little time available for strategic projects

Solution

- » An AppResponse Xpert appliance in the university data center
- » Extensive real-time and historical reporting of over 60 critical metrics
- » Easy drill-down to problem cause and responsible party
- » Reports network and application performance metrics in terms of business impact

Benefits

- » Quick diagnosis of security and acceptable-use issues
- » A faster and more efficient network team
- » Immediate awareness of performance degradation in critical applications
- » More time for strategic projects

Colgate University

Lucky Thirteen

The foundation of what would become Colgate University was established in 1817 by 13 men meeting in the frontier community of Hamilton, New York, with “13 dollars, 13 prayers, and 13 articles.” To this day, the Colgate community considers 13 a lucky number.

Today, Colgate University is a nationally recognized liberal arts college with some 2,750 undergraduates enrolled in 51 programs. The University offers an award-winning curriculum, off-campus study program leading to the bachelor of arts, and a small graduate program for the master of arts and the master of arts in teaching. Colgate also offers an off-campus study program and numerous research opportunities.

Challenge: The Challenge of Education

Like any educational institution, Colgate University is dependent on its network, which comprises hundreds of Cisco switches and routers, to support a wide range of applications and services. But, unlike his counterparts in the business world, Michael Evans, senior network and systems analyst in the university’s Network and Operations Department, faces not only the usual challenges of network and application management, but of doing so in an open environment.

“We can’t just lock down the network like a business could,” he says, “because open communication is the essence of education.” So, not only did he and the team face the daily challenge of defending the network against “the network is slow” claims, but they had to deal with a wide variety of security and acceptable-use challenges.

“As useful as they are for dealing with the network infrastructure itself,” he notes, “tools like CiscoWorks and Fluke analyzers really weren’t designed to give us the machine-by-machine application insight we needed to figure out what was really running on the network and what the effect on the users’ experience of core applications was.”

Solution: Real-Time Application Insight

To overcome these problems, Colgate installed an Riverbed® AppResponse Xpert® Appliance in the university data center. “The difference in visibility was dramatic,” reports Evans. “With [AppResponse Xpert] on the network, we suddenly could see any kind of traffic, whether we knew it was there or not, what ports were used, who was making connections...it felt almost like going from being blind to being able to see.”

“[AppResponse Xpert] saves us more time than any other management tool we use. It’s like having another person on staff.”

The new visibility that AppResponse Xpert gave the team delivered immediate results. “We were able to diagnose one major problem in less than an hour, where before it might have taken a day or more.” That, says Evans, is key to the ROI delivered by AppResponse Xpert. “Since we can solve problems so much faster, sometimes even before someone complains, we spend a lot less time troubleshooting and have more time left for strategic projects.”

In addition, Evans says that the historical data available from the appliance is valuable for trending, baselining, and capacity planning.

Benefits: Keeping Users Honest

Like all IT professionals at educational institutions, Evans spends more time than he'd like dealing with student infringements of acceptable-use guidelines. "It doesn't much matter whether they're malicious or just clueless," he says, "the impact on our team is pretty much the same." But AppResponse Xpert has eased that part of the job considerably.

"[AppResponse Xpert] makes it much easier to implement sensible firewall policies that protect the network without hampering student access to information and resources. Even more important, because it discovers any and all traffic on the network, and quickly pinpoints the source, we can easily detect malware like spam zombies or actual attacks and quickly deal with them."

He notes one case that was particularly dramatic; an important server that was responding at a snail's pace. "[AppResponse Xpert] immediately revealed what looked like a DOS attack; thousands of connections. But the port and source information also showed just as quickly that the origin was a university software developer working with a new application that had some design issues. We were able to clear it up very quickly. The clarity of [AppResponse Xpert] reports made it even easier, since we could show the developer and his manager exactly what was going on without being accusatory—it was there in full color, objective, not just a 'we say' which is more likely than not to make people defensive."

A Word to His Peers

Evans believes that AppResponse Xpert belongs in every educational IT manager's toolkit, especially given the budget limitations he and his peers face. "Get it. It saves more time than any other management tool we use. It's like having another person on staff."

About Riverbed

Riverbed delivers performance for the globally connected enterprise. With Riverbed, enterprises can successfully and intelligently implement strategic initiatives such as virtualization, consolidation, cloud computing, and disaster recovery without fear of compromising performance. By giving enterprises the platform they need to understand, optimize and consolidate their IT, Riverbed helps enterprises to build a fast, fluid and dynamic IT architecture that aligns with the business needs of the organization. Additional information about Riverbed (NASDAQ: RVBD) is available at www.riverbed.com.



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