



Energy enterprise removes local servers and centralizes its IT-systems without affecting employee productivity.

Kamstrup A/S wanted to centralize its IT-systems into a central data centre located in the Danish headquarter, and remove local servers from 15 branch offices in order to simplify the IT-infrastructure and reduce costs. The company also wanted to consolidate and centralize its data backup-system and locate it at the headquarters as well. The employees at Kamstrup use Microsoft SharePoint, Dynamics and Exchange for their daily tasks.

Challenge

Consolidation of IT- and backup-systems without affecting employee productivity.

Consolidation can bring many advantages, but the challenge is to reduce the IT-infrastructure, without affecting employee productivity. In many cases a move from a Local Area Network (LAN) to a Wide Area Network (WAN) may result in lower application performance and productivity, because of waiting time for access to files and data, and therefore it was important that the Kamstrup branch offices would not be affected negatively by the company's IT-consolidation plans.

Solution

The Riverbed Steelhead Solution makes it possible to consolidate IT- and data backup- systems. Kamstrup found, that a WAN optimization solution would make it possible to remove local servers and centralize IT-systems without affecting employee productivity, but the challenge to Kamstrup was to find the solution best suited to its needs. The company evaluated solutions from both Cisco and Riverbed. Jesper L. Hansen explains: *"We decided not to test a Cisco solution, since we considered it too complicated to install. We really needed which would be easy to install and administrate. Unlike Cisco's the Riverbed solution was ideally suited to our demands. It really was a "plug-and-play" solution."*

Advantages

IT and backup-systems centralized, employee productivity unaffected and bandwidth-usage reduced to 1/7. Kamstrup installed 17 Riverbed Steelhead units at its locations in Europe and Asia, and a Riverbed Management Console (CMC) in its data centre. *"Implementation has been a very easy and smooth process and even "non-it-staff" are capable of installing a Steelhead", says Jesper L. Hansen. "We also found, that maintaining Riverbed Steelheads using the CMC is easy".* After the installation of the Steelheads Kamstrup has been able to consolidate its IT-and data backup-systems for the data centre. The company already removed five local servers and has plans to remove even more servers as the consolidation project progresses. The time it takes to download files and applications has been improved by an average of 60%, and employees noticed this improvement. Jesper L. Hansen explains:

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"We have had positive feedback from our branch office employees, and we have had no complaints from users when we have removed the local servers. Since the beginning of the centralization project employees have noticed a reduction in the time it takes to access central applications such as Exchange, Dynamics and SharePoint." Migrating to a central system also resulted in significant cost-reductions to the company, since there is no longer a need for local administration and maintenance of servers. Recently Kamstrup opened two new sales offices in Europe and the Middle East. Previously each new office would have demanded at least one local server but instead Kamstrup installed Riverbed Steelheads in these two offices and in that way avoided spending on local servers. Kamstrup also has a data-backup system, which backs up files over the WAN which are then replicated. By centralizing this process the company no longer needs local employees to backup data as Jesper L. Hansen remarks: *"In Norway and Sweden we have local employees and an external company to run our backups. With Riverbed installed, the employees can concentrate on their "ordinary" jobs and not IT, and we have been able to terminate our contract with the external company. Riverbed made it possible for us to become more efficient, and achieve major cost reductions"*. The company also saw a reduction of bandwidth usage by to 1/7, which means that upgrading bandwidth, will not be necessary in the near future.

The Future

Kamstrup plans to remove all local servers from all sales offices starting with China offices, and as part of this policy the company wants to look into using the possibilities in the Riverbed Services Platform (RSP). RSP gives companies the possibility to run up to five applications in one virtual platform and consolidate branch offices further by removing the need for file/print and DNS and HTTP-servers.

Summary

Kamstrup wanted to centralize its IT and data backup systems in order to reduce costs and simplify its IT infrastructure. However, the company was worried that migrating from a decentralized to a centralized system might result in poor application performance for users trying to access data and files via the WAN. By choosing a Riverbed WAN optimization solution Kamstrup has been able to centralize its IT systems without affecting employee productivity, increase application performance speed by an average of 60%, reduced the number of local servers and have witnessed a reduction in bandwidth – usage to 1/7 and generally reduced their IT costs. Furthermore users have remarked, that after the centralization project they can access central applications much faster than before.

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Kamstrup A/S is a technology company headquartered in Denmark. The company produces system solutions for measuring energy consumption and has about 700 employees. The company's annual turnover is DKK 1 bn 134 mill. Euro

