



Thames Reach

Expander Precision speeds up remote access of centrally held files & eradicates interruptions to connectivity

Industry

A charitable organisation providing support services to homeless, vulnerable and isolated people in the London area.

Challenges

- » Frustrating delays for users when opening files from remote locations
- » Constant interruptions to connectivity
- » No visibility of network activity making problem identification impossible

Solution Provided

- » An EP600 appliance was installed at the East London Head Office whilst an EP60 was installed at each remote site
- » Flow Analysis allowed Thames Reach to easily identify problem areas in the flow of IP traffic
- » Traffic shaping and compression features were applied to eradicate IP bottlenecks and maximise Thames Reach's existing bandwidth investment

Benefits Delivered

- » Constant visibility of traffic behaviour put Thames Reach in control of network activity
- » None critical applications were de-prioritized in the flow of traffic which gave priority to more important applications
- » User experience when accessing centrally held files from remote locations was dramatically improved

Thames Reach is a London-based charitable organisation whose overall vision is to end street homelessness.

With a specialist focus on helping people with complex and multiple needs - including mental health issues and drug and alcohol problems.

The organisation employs over 370 staff members and around 75 volunteers who collectively provide support to more than 3,500 homeless, vulnerable or isolated people each year. Thames Reach helps these people to live in decent homes, build supportive relationships and lead fulfilling lives.

The Challenge:

To deliver LAN-like performance to users in remote offices

Like many organisations, Thames Reach had centralised their data files at their head office in East London. This allowed staff to access important files from any one of the geographically dispersed locations in and around the capital.

Multiple individuals quite often all needed access to the same files at different times, so central storage with one shared revision history suited Thames Reach's model.

But there was a problem...

Staff had reported frustrating delays and constant interruptions to connectivity when trying to open files from remote locations across the Wide Area Network (WAN). Thames Reach needed a solution that would deliver almost LAN-like (Local Area Network) performance to the remote sites, thus eradicating both the annoying delays and all of the associated user frustrations. They also needed to decrease the amount of bandwidth required by the main site in order to serve the remote locations with bandwidth.

The Benefits:**Slow File Access Eradicated & Continuity of Critical Services Maintained**

The EP600 at the head office combined with the EP60 appliances at the remote sites gave Thames Reach a solution that:

- » Monitors and views all IP traffic so the IT Administrator stays in control of network activity
- » Compresses non-critical applications to decrease bandwidth usage
- » Maximises the use of bandwidth for business critical purposes and de-prioritises that used for personal or peripheral activities
- » Enables constant, easy to understand reporting on all bandwidth usage

Conclusion:

Thames Reach could have increased bandwidth availability by either adding more links, or upgrading existing ones... at a high premium of course.

Instead, Thames Reach decided to choose the DBAM Systems Exbander Precision range and solve their network problems at a fraction of the cost.

The Solution:**Exbander Precision EP60 and EP600 Appliances**

Thames Reach chose DBAM's Exbander Precision range to address their network problems and opted to have an EP600 appliance installed at their head office in East London, whilst a number of EP60s were installed at multiple remote sites.

Phase 1 - Deployment of an EP600 at Thames Reach's London Head Office

Once the Exbander Precision EP600 appliance was installed at the East London head office, its easy-to-use Flow Analysis tools were used to monitor and analyze the traffic coming in and out of Thames Reach's multiple remote sites. The results of this analysis allowed the company's network administrators to identify that applications such as file-sharing, and web browsing.

Corrective action was urgently needed in order to improve the overall quality of service that users at remote sites were experiencing.

The results of the analysis suggested that by adopting compression and traffic shaping techniques, Thames Reach could smooth out the peaks in their traffic throughput that would otherwise threaten to disrupt the continuity of critical services to remote sites

Phase 2 - Deployment of an EP60 at each Remote Site

An Exbander Precision EP60 appliance was deployed to each remote site. Easy to install and set up right out of the box, the EP60s were ready to start work in the shortest time – great news for Thames Reach who avoided costly engineering installation and configuration resource.

Phase 3 - Traffic Shaping

The EP60's traffic shaping features were used to prioritize certain types of IP traffic over others in line with the applications that Thames Reach deemed most important. This ensured that mission critical applications were always given priority, thus maximising their speed and responsiveness.

Phase 4 - Data Compression

In addition to traffic shaping, the Exbander Precision range also boasts market leading data compression amongst its key benefits. Compression techniques were used across the multiple remote EP60s and the central EP600 device to decrease the amount of bandwidth required by services such as HTTP and printing.

By reducing the bandwidth being used by these applications, the data compression had effectively freed up precious bandwidth that could be deployed on other services. It was as if Thames Reach had increased their bandwidth capacity without the investment!