



Tier 3 Customer MasterBrands Saves Money with WAN Optimization

\$1.2M in Annual Savings

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Senior Network Engineer – MBCI*



On January 25th Riverbed Technology announced that MasterBrand Cabinets, Inc. (MBCI), a leading kitchen and bath solutions provider, had deployed 28 Riverbed® Steelhead® appliances, and Steelhead Mobile client software, across its operations in the United States and Canada and to its developers in India. As a result of deploying a Tier3 Technologies wide area network (WAN) optimization solution, MBCI reduced data traffic by 82 percent and increased bandwidth capacity by four times – and in some cases by as much as six times during peak periods – in its private cloud environment. MBCI now provides employees with faster access to business-critical applications, enabling improved customer service. In addition, they avoided a bandwidth upgrade, as a result of its Riverbed deployment, that will save the company as much as \$1.2 million per year.

MBCI is a leading provider of kitchen and bath solutions in North America. The company has more than 30 locations in the United States and 20 in Canada. To reduce its IT costs, the company implemented a strategic initiative to consolidate its network, server and storage resources in what is now commonly known as a "private cloud." During its consolidation initiative, the company centralized and reduced its 65 physical servers to three physical servers.

The company knew it needed a reliable, high-performance IT infrastructure that would ensure high levels of productivity. MBCI needed a solution that provided employees – located in remote offices, mobile workers across the United States and developers from as far away as India – fast access to data and other

applications, including a centralized database for cabinets and parts SKUs, IBM Domino email, ERP and custom financial reporting applications.

"This is a fairly typical situation for our customers," according to Michael Paynter, CEO of Tier3 Technologies, **"they need LAN like performance across the WAN and they realize that just throwing bandwidth at the problem doesn't solve it."**

"We had two choices -- add more bandwidth or invest in WAN optimization," said Jadd Miller, senior network engineer at MBCI. "We chose the Riverbed WAN optimization solution as it gave us the most value out of our legacy systems, while drastically improving the performance across our WAN. Adding additional bandwidth would have been a partial remedy, since it did not address the latency issues caused by distance."

With the Riverbed WAN optimization solution, MBCI improved its customer order processing time, improved its reporting process, and increased employee productivity throughout the company. Previously, MBCI's reporting process spanned eight hours due to latency issues when multiple applications were accessed simultaneously. Now, the process to access and run reporting applications has been reduced to less than 30 minutes, allowing employees to complete reporting tasks much faster. Database applications that once required 20 minutes now load in a few seconds, adding to increased employee productivity. In addition, help desk calls regarding slow performance have been drastically reduced.



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"Riverbed is critical to the success of our company, and Steelhead appliances are now mandated in every new location we expand to," said Miller. "In a double blind test case, we turned off the Steelhead appliances to see if our employees would notice. We were inundated with calls within 10 minutes and had to turn the Steelhead appliances back on immediately."

As a result of its Riverbed deployment, MBCI has been able to avoid upgrading its bandwidth, which will save the company as much as \$1.2 million per year (based on adding four to six T1 lines at \$800 each per month, across 21 manufacturing sites). At the same time, MBCI has experienced an 82 percent reduction in data across the WAN and increased bandwidth capacity up to six times during peak data periods.

"We needed an easy-to-install and manage solution since we have limited IT resources, especially at our smaller locations," said Miller. "With many of our larger sites we have IT staff, but with some of the smaller remote sites it was such an easy process that we helped non-IT employees get the Steelhead appliances up and running in less than an hour by walking them through the install process over the phone."

Another benefit of the deployment was that the data reduction allowed MBCI to consider rolling out new applications and initiatives, which was not possible before due to the heavy bandwidth requirements. One initiative that is underway is adding a secondary disaster recovery site. Data replication over the WAN was not practical before as it impeded employee productivity. Now, the only obstacle in the way is picking a location.

"With Riverbed Steelhead appliances and Steelhead Mobile, we now have a solution that gives us more productive employees and the flexibility to scale, add new applications and build out a secondary disaster

recovery site that will help ensure business continuity," Miller added.

"Tier3 Technologies specializes in saving companies money while improving IT performance. The success at MBCI validates Tier3 Technologies' overall approach of 'end to end network & application performance'. Not only did they save money from day one by utilizing WAN Optimization and Server Consolidation – but they actually increased speed and performance," concluded Paynter.