



ENABLE THE NETWORK. POWER THE USER.



Expand Galvanises WAN Performance & Application Acceleration Improvements at Macsteel

Profile

The Macsteel Service Centres SA Group is Southern Africa's leading merchandiser and distributor of steel and value added steel products, with sales in excess of a million tons per annum. The company operates a strategic network of 60 service centres and branches employing over of 4,500 people serving the entire Southern African region.

Macsteel Service Centres SA forms an integral component of the global Macsteel Holdings Group, which operates in 39 countries worldwide.

The Challenges

Users across Macsteel's 60 sites had been experiencing a greatly increased dependency for real-time information, causing IT managers to become concerned about the growing problem of supporting its distributed infrastructure. Application responsiveness and traffic delays were in danger of harming business operations, but the high cost of upgrading WAN bandwidth was found to be prohibitive. This led Macsteel to examine possible solutions.

Macsteel were particularly conscious of the need to establish a solution that would ensure its successful migration to web-based Oracle applications. The success of this initiative would be compromised by application performance on the heavily congested low bandwidth WAN links. The chosen solution would have to further ensure high performance levels, without upgrading the connections between each branch.

"Expand technology has been key in helping Macsteel to keep network costs down and users more productive."

Lance Joseph, Network Manager
Macsteel Service Centres SA

Applications

Oracle, Citrix

In Summary

- >> Prevented the need for expensive bandwidth upgrades
- >> Safeguarded real-time online information availability across 60 site WAN
- >> Assured reliable, high performance migration to web-applications
- >> Enabled growing application and user base to capitalise on available WAN bandwidth
- >> Established a safe, cost-effective path for implementing future IT initiatives

The Solution

Macsteel chose to implement the Expand Compass platform to improve IT performance. Once deployed, its integrated WAN optimisation technology was instrumental in compressing traffic flows across the WAN thereby saving the costs of forklift bandwidth upgrades and enhancing the performance of the network.

With consultation and advice from Dimension Data, a local Expand partner, Macsteel saw that the acceleration and optimisation capabilities of its actively deployed Compass platform, rather than any competing technologies, were the answer to its web-application migration challenge.

The Results

Lance Joseph is Network Manager at Macsteel Service Centres, and has been extremely impressed with the success of the deployment. "We have experienced huge benefits in terms of performance with the Expand platform, seeing a drastic improvement in application acceleration – up to 600% - and increased network capacity of over 400% which gives us scope for increased productivity and competitiveness."

As well as moving forward with a reliable, high performance platform for its business critical web-based Oracle applications, Macsteel is currently implementing a server based computing project and rolling out Citrix to all its users. Using Expand's integrated QoS functionality, Macsteel has been able to set different priorities for separate applications, thereby ensuring its Citrix and non-Citrix business critical applications are protected from congestion leading to improved performance.

"Expand technology has been key in helping Macsteel to keep network costs down and users more productive," concluded Joseph. "Its ability to support different corporate IT projects ensures that as we grow as a business and implement further IT initiatives, Expand will be there to support us and realize the potential of our investments."

Technical overview

- >> Deployed 6940s, 6910s, 4820s & 1820s
- >> Deployed ExpandView to centrally manage, configure and report on applications
- >> Used Citrix 'acceleration plug-in' to further enhance Citrix & Telnet performance
- >> Integrated into HP Openview & Cisco IPM management environments
- >> Average of 600% traffic performance improvement with peaks of up to 1200%

Our Customers



Web links

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