

SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC

Leading Energy Management Company Lights Up Productivity Across Branch Network Using Expand Accelerators



IN SUMMARY

- Congestion and latency issues across the WAN have been resolved, improving network performance.
- Increased speed when accessing business critical applications for all employees including remote offices.
- Fast, reliable, secure remote access to business information over the WAN.

TECHNICAL OVERVIEW

- QoS techniques have prioritised server based applications to prevent congestion and increase acceleration to overcome latency issues.
- Compression technology has improved performance of Lotus Notes.

PROFILE

Schneider Electric is a world leader in Electrical Distribution and Automation & Control systems, offering comprehensive energy management solutions in nearly 200 countries across the globe. With 120,000 employees worldwide, Schneider Electric is striving to help individuals and organisations make the most of their energy.

THE CHALLENGES

Growing organically and through an aggressive acquisition strategy, Schneider Electric SA has a large and expanding workforce dispersed across South Africa. Having previously consolidated all its servers at its headquarters in Johannesburg, Schneider's branch office users (regardless of role or geographic location) now have to access all business critical applications over the Wide Area Network (WAN) via Johannesburg.

As a result, 40% of all traffic generated from Schneider's branch offices now have to traverse the WAN, contending with high levels of latency and congestion. As the organisation's business critical applications and its users grew further apart, Schneider's branch office employees were consistently facing delays on the network and this was seriously impacting productivity and efficiency.

Willem Kuypers, IT director, Schneider Electrics SA, explains, "It was clear the latency and congestion issues experienced over the WAN needed to be addressed. In particular, Lotus Notes was very bandwidth intensive and was causing communications to be slow and cumbersome." Striving to help its customers maximise their energy usage, Schneider looked to apply the same ethos to its own business operations, particularly its WAN.

Kuypers continues, "With the cost of bandwidth upgrades so prohibitive in South Africa, we looked for a far more cost-effective solution that would enable us to maximise our existing assets to improve our network performance, and critically, help to increase productivity across the organisation."

“With Expand we have a business solution that is enabling the workforce to remain efficient and help us remain competitive in the marketplace.”

Willem Kuypers, IT Director, Schneider Electric SA

APPLICATION

- Lotus Notes

THE SOLUTION

Looking to acceleration and optimisation technology, Schneider initially evaluated WAN optimisation vendor Packeteer. During testing, it became clear that Packeteer lacked the compression capability required to successfully improve network performance and the IT team quickly turned to Expand Networks for its integrated QoS and compression techniques.

Instead of focussing on just WAN management, the Expand compression technology focuses on application performance, using low latency, lossless techniques that work on all and any application.

“There are a number of vendor solutions in the market but during testing it was only the integrated technologies of Expand that could address our particular bandwidth and application requirements,” observed Kuypers.

With the help of technology partner, Dimension Data, Schneider deployed Expand’s acceleration technology across its vast branch office environment, which had an immediate impact on application performance.

THE RESULTS

By implementing Expand’s application acceleration technology, congestion and latency issues over the WAN have been significantly reduced with the problematic Lotus Notes performance considerably accelerated and overall network throughput significantly increased.

With Expand in place, QoS techniques immediately prioritised the server-based applications, ensuring they were supported by the requisite bandwidth and protected from congestion with acceleration techniques used to overcome latency.

Schneider’s employees are now experiencing new levels of network speed with its branch offices no longer restricted by delays in accessing applications over the WAN.

“Fast, reliable and secure remote access is now guaranteed across the board, thereby improving remote office user productivity and removing the cost of consistently upgrading WAN links,” said Kuypers.

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