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Kevin Denney,
Corporate IT Manager,
Neogen

Neogen boosts WAN throughput by six times with Citrix Branch Repeater

Founded in 1982, Neogen Corporation (NASDAQ: NEOG) is a leading global provider and one-stop shop for products dedicated to food and animal safety. Neogen has grown to more than 500 employees in multiple U.S. locations, as well as offices in Mexico, Scotland, China and Germany.

Neogen’s Food Safety division develops and markets dehydrated culture media and rapid diagnostic test kits to detect food-borne bacteria, spoilage organisms, mycotoxins, food allergens, genetic modifications, drug residues, plant diseases and sanitation concerns. The Animal Safety division offers a complete line of diagnostics, veterinary instruments and pharmaceuticals, nutritional supplements, disinfectants and rodenticides.

Neogen is working aggressively toward its goal of becoming the dominant provider of products dedicated to food and animal safety by using an approach focused in four areas: higher sales from existing products, introduction of new products, expansion of international markets and acquisitions and strategic alliances.

The challenge – Keeping applications running at the speed of business

Neogen’s business operations across all its U.S. and international locations rely heavily on the Microsoft® Dynamics SL ERP solution that is delivered from corporate headquarters in Lansing, Michigan, using Citrix® XenApp™, Advanced Edition. Delivering Dynamics SL virtually from a central location using XenApp was the most cost-effective way to implement the application.

Neogen’s sales, accounting and finance employees regularly use the ERP system to ensure that sales orders are properly and promptly entered for timely revenue recognition. While application performance was outstanding for users at its headquarters, Neogen’s employees working in remote locations faced delays and application timeouts during the sales and order entry process. These delays had an impact on shipping, delivery and, ultimately, customer satisfaction. Additionally, Neogen’s limited IT staff was spending a significant amount of time fielding support calls and troubleshooting the performance issues.



Key benefits

- Accelerated XenApp performance by 400 percent at branch offices
- Reduced IT help desk calls by 15 percent
- Raised throughput on existing bandwidth by six times
- Achieved 35 percent savings in operational expenses for WAN services

Applications delivered

- Microsoft Dynamics SL ERP solution

Networking environment

- Citrix XenApp, Advanced Edition running on one HP ProLiant server
- Citrix Branch Repeater solution (four 8520 appliances)
- Microsoft Windows Server® 2003

Neogen turned its focus to the network where the IT team was seeing upwards of 80 percent utilization on WAN circuits. Despite the fact that XenApp only uses a small amount of bandwidth per session, its performance can suffer when competing with other bandwidth-hungry applications on the network. The company looked into doubling the bandwidth on its MPLS WAN. However, this would have required spending about \$10,000 more annually due to the additional bandwidth charges and leasing of new networking equipment to support this higher capacity.

Implementing a Citrix Branch Repeater solution

To address these challenges, Neogen looked at a number of leading branch optimization solutions and selected the Citrix® Branch Repeater™ solution because of its unique ability to accelerate and optimize XenApp. Neogen deployed a Citrix Repeater™ appliance at the corporate headquarters and Branch Repeater appliances at three locations—two in Lexington, Kentucky and one in Randolph, Wisconsin.

Neogen's corporate IT manager, Kevin Denney, was impressed with how easy it was to set up and install each appliance, a key requirement given the distance between Neogen's corporate headquarters and its branch offices. Within a matter of minutes each appliance was up and running. Because Branch Repeater is fully transparent, Neogen did not need to make any changes to its existing networking equipment or firewalls. Beyond accelerating XenApp applications, Neogen took advantage of the Quality of Service (QoS) capabilities offered by Branch Repeater to better align bandwidth utilization with business priorities.

Faster order processing means higher customer satisfaction

Almost immediately, users started noticing a dramatic improvement in application response times. In one case, a report that previously took more than three minutes to generate and print completed in only 11 seconds.

“Neogen's rapid growth has required us to quickly provide high performance application delivery to users all over the world. This put tremendous pressure on our network infrastructure and applications. With Branch Repeater and XenApp, Neogen employees in remote locations can access critical business applications up to four times faster, which has significantly improved our customer support and helped to increase sales velocity,” said Denney.

Beyond accelerating the ERP system delivered with XenApp, the Branch Repeater solution is increasing the performance of other applications operating across the WAN. In particular, the company has seen six times faster performance for its data protection solution from Double-Take Software. This has shortened backup windows, allowing the IT team to run this software continuously instead of only at night.

Saving IT time and lowering expenses

With users experiencing fast application performance, life is easier for Neogen's IT staff. There are fewer user complaints about the ERP application's performance and the total volume of support calls has been reduced by 10 to 15 percent.

By avoiding the expensive network upgrade to double bandwidth, Neogen is realizing a 35 percent savings in telecom spending. With Branch Repeater, Neogen is actually seeing six times more throughput across the WAN, effectively turning a 3 Mbps connection into a 18 Mbps connection.

Future plans

Moving forward, Neogen is considering Branch Repeater appliances for one or more of its international locations.



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About the Citrix solution

Citrix XenApp, a member of the Citrix Delivery Center™ product family, is the industry's de facto standard for delivering Windows®-based applications with the best performance, security and cost savings. XenApp is the most complete application virtualization system available. Citrix Branch Repeater is a branch optimization solution that accelerates application delivery to globally distributed users while dramatically reducing bandwidth costs and simplifying branch infrastructure. Branch Repeater solutions reduce IT costs and increase user productivity by simplifying branch start-up and management, improving network utilization and providing high definition experience to users..

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