



Customer name
Sanitarium
Industry
Health foods, nutrition, manufacturing
Location
11 sites across Australia and New Zealand
Number of Employees:
1,700
Business challenge
Need to reduce costs, lower TCO across network
Need to consolidate server and data centre infrastructure
Need to increase performance and service levels to users
Network solution
Cisco Wide Area Application Services (WAAS) for remote application acceleration
Business results
Improved network performance and user experience at remote sites
Better TCO - lowered costs from reducing remote hardware and maintenance
Increased end user productivity and efficiency

Sanitarium deploys Cisco WAAS for its IT consolidation strategy

Cisco WAAS has been able to optimise application and file performance at remote sites, help centralise server and data centre infrastructure and allow for greater staff productivity and efficiency.

Business Challenge

Founded more than 100 years ago in 1898, Sanitarium today employs approximately 1,700 people across Australia and New Zealand and has an annual turnover of around A\$300 million. Sanitarium's Cooranbong manufacturing site in New South Wales, is one of the largest cereal production plants in the Southern Hemisphere. Currently there are 11 Sanitarium sites across Australia and New Zealand including production, warehouses, sales and distribution facilities. Sanitarium exports to over 30 locations worldwide - including the United Kingdom, Asia, the United States and the South Pacific.

Sanitarium recognised that reducing costs, consolidating infrastructure and increasing service levels to users was proving difficult with its existing frame relay network. The technology was aging, costly and limited in terms of bandwidth provision. Projects leading up to the deployment of centralised and optimised file and application services were implemented, directly supporting Sanitarium's strategy of centralised services and integrated IT across the organisation.

In 2005, Sanitarium embarked on a major communications infrastructure upgrade based on an Internet Protocol (IP) communications network from Cisco. Deploying IP Telephony, the company began to converge voice and data communications, creating a platform for a broader suite of Unified Communications solutions down the track.

Then in 2006 and early 2007, Sanitarium completely replaced its aging Frame Relay Network and upgraded to a Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) Wide Area Network (WAN). This had the dual benefit of increasing bandwidth performance with 512K to 2MB links between the company's 11 sites, as well as laying the foundation for the further consolidation and optimisation of network services.

In mid 2007, Sanitarium was ready for the next phase of its IT strategy – the introduction of Cisco Wide Area Application Services (WAAS) technology. This next step was needed as Sanitarium's applications were already starting to use too much of the newly available bandwidth provided by the MPLS network, and application performance optimisation would assist Sanitarium's strategy to make better use of the network, while providing users with higher service levels. There was also a parallel business driver to continue the centralised consolidation of server and data centre infrastructure.

Network Solution

Sanitarium began by running a pilot using Cisco's WAAS appliances in two of its major NSW sites – one in Cooranbong and the other in Sydney. Over an eight week pilot, Sanitarium experienced a significant reduction in network traffic, and a high rate of traffic optimisation and de-duplication.

For example, the traffic compression and local remote site caching ability of the WAAS solution meant that emailed files could be sent and received much faster. To test the solution, a 218MB file was sent from head office to the remote Cooranbong site. It took approximately 17 minutes to open the first time. When sent to different mailboxes at Cooranbong, the same file took only around two minutes the second and third time. This is due to the WAAS appliance's local data caching capability.

Following the pilot, Sanitarium deployed WAAS across a total of 11 sites over a three month period. Cisco Gold Partner, HP, was the systems integrator who worked closely with both Cisco and Sanitarium to implement the solution across the project. Sanitarium has a long term – six year plus – relationship with HP Services. HP acts as Sanitarium's trusted advisor, and very often independently recommends Cisco technology when assessing the right solutions for the project at hand. To date, these projects have included Cisco technology deployments covering IP communications, LAN, wireless, security and now WAAS solutions.

“We're very happy customers when it comes to Cisco, and WAAS is no exception. Cisco technology is secure and fully featured, and always responds to any of our additional requirements.”

Kevin Wallace, Infrastructure Services Manager, Sanitarium

Business Results

The deployment of Cisco WAAS technology across 11 Sanitarium sites in Australia and New Zealand has resulted in a broad spectrum of business benefits. To begin with, staff in remote sites have become more productive and efficient with use of their time due to the optimisation, acceleration and de-duplication of network traffic. Waiting long periods of time for data to transfer is now a thing of the past.

As Kevin Wallace, Sanitarium's Infrastructure Services Manager said, "For our users, network access has to be as quick, or quicker, than local services were. In that respect Cisco WAAS delivers. We're very happy customers when it comes to Cisco, and WAAS is no exception. Cisco technology is secure and fully featured, and scales well when additional requirements occur, as they inevitably do.

"Another excellent thing about Cisco WAAS is how it fits into our IT consolidation lower cost benefit plans. The solution allows us to extend our network, without having to continually replace the elements we've invested in," continued Dr Wallace.

From a consolidation point of view, Cisco WAAS has allowed Sanitarium to replace remote site file servers, software distribution and print servers, pulling them back into its centralised data centre. This saves costs and delivers a better TCO in terms of both lower physical server costs plus ongoing maintenance and operational costs.

Cisco WAAS was a good fit for Sanitarium. Not only does it offer the greatest security, ease of operation and highest potential TCO functionality of any solution on the market, it is also available as both a larger appliance and as a card module which simply slots into Cisco routers at remote sites. This meant Sanitarium could purchase appliances for bigger sites, and reduce time for deployment at remote sites by using the Cisco WAAS card, especially in smaller locations, where larger rack space is at a premium.

Finally, Cisco WAAS has enabled better compliance for Sanitarium. Important data can now be backed up centrally, as WAAS has reduced the need for remote sites to perform individual backups.

For next steps, Sanitarium is moving towards centralised collaborative workspaces for information and project management. Performance of web-based applications across Sanitarium's network is critical to using this technology and realising the business benefits of encouraging agility and innovation for knowledge workers across the organisation.

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Wide Area Application Services, go to:
www.cisco.com/go/waas

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