



customer profile



# COX, CASTLE & NICHOLSON LLP OPTIMIZES CITRIX VDI AND REPLICATION WITH SILVER PEAK

*Law Firm Reduces IT Costs while Improving Application Delivery and Disaster Recovery Processes*

Cox, Castle & Nicholson LLP (“Cox, Castle”) is a real estate law firm representing organizations and individuals in all aspects of real estate, finance, and construction. The firm has more than 120 lawyers located in offices in Los Angeles, Irvine, and San Francisco, California, and is one of the largest real estate law firms in the United States.

Cox, Castle’s primary data center is located in Los Angeles, California, with corporate connectivity supported by a 45 megabit-per-second (Mbps) multiprotocol label switching (MPLS) wide area network (WAN). The Los Angeles data center supports two remote offices and a disaster recovery site. The remote office in San Francisco is supported by a 30 Mbps MPLS network connection, and the Irvine office is supported by a 20 Mbps MPLS connection. The law firm also replicates mission-critical data to its disaster recovery site in Las Vegas, Nevada over a 90 Mbps link.

To support remote employees and attorneys who augment their schedules by working at home, Cox, Castle provides Citrix virtual desktop (VDI) connectivity, affording more convenient and flexible work schedules. This has allowed attorneys to spend more quality time with family, and produce billable-hours from home during evening hours. Citrix VDI users access critical applications and data such as email, documents, databases, time & billing, and more.

## THE VDI AND DISASTER RECOVERY CHALLENGE

Cox, Castle needed to improve the user experience for remote offices that rely on bandwidth-intensive applications delivered

through the Citrix VDI implementation. Remote users require the same fast application interactions and access that users expect over the local area network (LAN) when working in the headquarters office. For the IT staff, it was a combination of gaining greater control over the Citrix VDI experience while also improving performance.

Closely aligned to improving VDI performance was also the need to improve connectivity to the disaster recovery site. The firm found itself continually adding bandwidth to try to keep up with growing replication demands, which took time to provision, added more costs, and still did not keep up with the data growth. Recovery point and recovery time objectives (RPO/RTO) were continually slipping. This prompted Cox, Castle to search for a better WAN optimization solution.

“It was like adding lanes to a freeway,” said Erica Greathouse, technology director at Cox, Castle. “You no sooner get it built than it fills to capacity, and you’re back to gridlock. That is exactly what we faced with our network. So, we turned to WAN optimization to leverage the bandwidth we already had. We needed to provide a more consistent user experience by improving our network connectivity in a way that was perceptible to our users.”

## THE SILVER PEAK SOLUTION

Cox, Castle was looking for a solution that would future-proof the network. The firm wanted a WAN optimizer that would automatically optimize any new applications deployed, and one that would scale to meet the growing traffic demands across a lower-cost MPLS network.

Customer: COX, CASTLE & NICHOLSON LLP



## Business Challenges

- Poor Citrix VDI performance over MPLS network
- Disaster recovery RPO/RTO slipping with data growth
- High costs incurred due to continually adding bandwidth

## Network Background

- 45 Mbps MPLS WAN to Los Angeles data center
- Remote sites connect via 20 & 30 Mbps MPLS WANs
- 90 Mbps MPLS WAN to Disaster Recovery site in Las Vegas
- Citrix VDI supports multiple business-critical applications

## Silver Peak Results

- Attorney productivity improved with Citrix VDI performance
- Replication processes accelerated 8X
- RPO/RTO easily achieved
- Zero new WAN investment in over three years

The firm replaced its out-dated WAN optimizers from another vendor with Silver Peak. Silver Peak emerged as the clear leader following a thorough evaluation of WAN optimization products. Silver Peak was selected because of the product's support for Citrix VDI and every other application—out of the box. Erica Greathouse and the IT team also quickly realized the advantages of Silver Peak's Virtual Acceleration Open Architecture (VXOA), which automatically learns the new traffic and self-tunes the optimization for all applications traversing the WAN, regardless of protocol, application or application version. "Silver Peak's VXOA has allowed us to not think about optimizing our environment—it just does it," added Greathouse.

Performance and scalability also bubbled to the top, and Silver Peak was again identified as the clear leader with the highest-capacity virtual and physical WAN optimizers. Silver Peak's data center class WAN optimization appliances were deployed at the Los Angeles data center, the remote offices and the disaster recovery site to improve the performance of the MPLSWAN between those locations. This has dramatically improved the efficiency and speed of Citrix traffic for remote users, as well as bandwidth-intensive proprietary applications, such as the firm's centralized litigation support database.

#### THE COST AND PERFORMANCE BENEFITS

Following the Silver Peak deployment, Cox, Castle saw an immediate improvement in application performance and attorney satisfaction. The IT team cited calls from attorneys commenting on the faster response times and application access when using Citrix VDI. Replication processes to the disaster recovery site were accelerated by more than

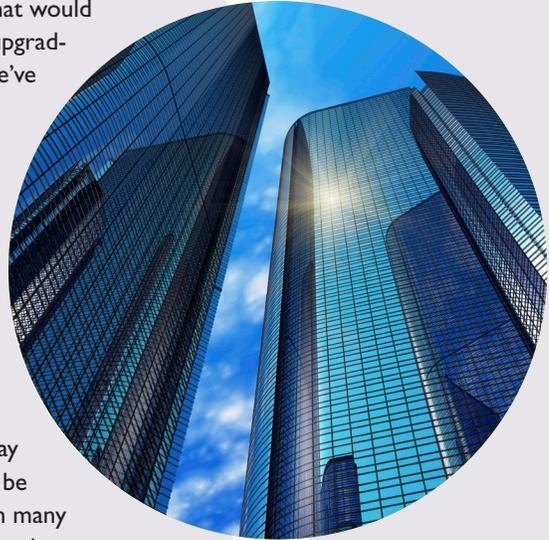
8x, allowing the firm to easily meet its RPO and RTO goals.

The firm is also saving money that would have otherwise been spent on upgrading the MPLS network. "Since we've been Silver Peak customers, we have not needed to add bandwidth," noted Greathouse. "That's never happened in our history."

Cox, Castle & Nicholson views Silver Peak as an insurance policy that will automatically take care of unanticipated future traffic demands and new applications. "I can't tell you today what our traffic demands might be tomorrow," says Greathouse. "In many ways our traffic is client-driven, and we don't always know ahead of time what they are going to ask us to do. It's not uncommon for us to get a call in the morning, requesting us to have the application in place by that afternoon. So, it's really important for us to have a WAN optimization solution that optimizes new traffic automatically. This is a huge advantage for us, particularly because we have an extremely lean IT staff. We simply don't have the luxury of making WAN optimization changes every time we add a new application."

Cox, Castle and Nicholson monitors network traffic using Silver Peak's Global Management System (GMS), which provides extensive visibility and reporting to help the IT team with bandwidth capacity management, network planning, auditing, troubleshooting, ROI analysis, and service level agreement (SLA) enforcement with their Internet service provider (ISP).

Virtualization is also very important to the firm, as most of the network infrastructure is either virtualized or in the process of



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becoming virtualized. This is important, not only because of the reliability it affords, but it also allows them to deploy “true” disaster recovery and disaster preparedness with a virtual image of every server replicated to the disaster recovery site. “Virtualization allows us to eliminate a single point-of-failure that could potentially devastate us, and Silver Peak’s virtual WAN optimization offerings could prove instrumental to our future virtual IT infrastructure strategy,” adds Greathouse.

#### SUMMARY

Since using Silver Peak WAN optimization, Cox, Castle has not added bandwidth to support the rapid growth of network traffic and new application deployments. Network connectivity supporting a distributed workforce in remote offices while optimizing the disaster recovery site is now fast and reliable. Silver Peak’s network-based approach to WAN optimization automatically supports all traffic and allows the IT staff to optimally deploy new applications across the wide area network.

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