When the applications an organization uses daily to conduct business are taxing the network to the point where users can't be fully productive - what can you do?

CASE STUDY

Oxfam America is an affiliate of Oxfam International, an international relief and development organization that creates lasting solutions to address poverty, hunger and injustice. They have ten offices globally, including four in the United States, and six located within South America, Africa and Cambodia. Oxfam's Boston office has approximately 150 of their 500 employees worldwide, and the facility takes on the majority of the organization's network needs.

Oxfam's Boston office had two bonded T1 connections that theoretically provided 3Mbps of up and down speeds. However, the actual performance was far less due to latency and congestion.

The nature of the organization's work involves utilizing web-based applications to deliver on-demand services (SaaS). Additionally, Oxfam America also does a lot of video conferencing and uses a variety of collaboration tools.

Unfortunately, their WAN was unable to handle all the traffic and heavy multi-media applications and its performance became intolerable.

"The applications we use for our daily business were taxing the network to the point where users were not able to be fully productive," said Mark Aherrera, IT Director, Oxfam America.

To remedy this, Oxfam America deployed two PowerLink WAN controllers in a high-availability configuration in their main office in Boston, as well as a second WAN connection using a cable circuit that provided 10Mbps upload and 50Mbps download speeds.

The results:

- Oxfam America got more bandwidth at less cost: The bonded T1s cost $2,000 per month, while the cost for the new cable circuit is only $300/month and provides greater bandwidth.

- Load balancing and link failover: Because the cable circuit has no service level agreement, PowerLink takes care of this reliability factor by automatically load balancing traffic between the bonded T1s and the cable circuit, providing link failover should either network connection have an outage.

- Oxfam America enjoys high performance across their applications thanks to more bandwidth, managed better, at a lower cost.

"Optimizing our WAN was a key priority for our organization. User productivity has dramatically improved, and the IT department is no longer getting complaints because users can't upload their video files and send and receive email."

"Our IT help desk now spends less time resolving problems, we don't have to spend time contracting service providers and vendors, and we don't need to replicate problems and rule out the router and other devices."