



HIGHWINDS

SERVICE PROVIDER

Highwinds Sails Ahead of Competition

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Challenge

Support rapid, global network growth while delivering quality services and protecting existing investments

Solution

- Brocade NetIron XMR Series Internet backbone routers
- Brocade BigIron RX Series Layer 2/3 Ethernet switches

Results

- Provided cost-efficient scalability by leveraging MPLS Fast ReRoute (FRR) technology
- Met customer demand for high service levels with improved network reliability
- Provided investment protection and support for future bandwidth needs with high-density 10 Gigabit Ethernet (GbE) and 100 GbE scalability
- Achieved a smooth deployment thanks to expert support

Highwinds®, which is trusted by top media, entertainment, and software companies to deliver content to millions of users around the world, has one of the largest and fastest-growing Content Delivery Networks (CDNs) on the planet.

The Highwinds System Suite™ is a complete offering of content delivery and cloud-based IP services, including CDN, IP transit, transport, peering, and colocation. Highwinds delivers the System Suite over its robust, reliable, and scalable networking infrastructure, called RollingThunder®. The RollingThunder network consists of multiple 10 Gigabit Ethernet (GbE) connections per Point of Presence (POP), with data centers located throughout the Americas and Europe.

BUILDING A NEW NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2007, when the company began to deploy a major networking infrastructure, it was in the enviable position of being essentially a greenfield environment. “We had no legacy infrastructure or long-haul

networks; what we did have was four business units that had a single point of presence,” says Michael Brownstein, Vice President of Network Services at Highwinds. “We conducted an open assessment of many different providers and looked at the cost, the features of the various platforms, and then decided what we wanted to use. Brocade provided us the most value for our port investment.”

After evaluating products from several leading network hardware vendors, Highwinds chose the Brocade® NetIron® XMR Series of Internet backbone routers for its 10 GbE network, which connected 12 U.S. and three European cities.

ENSURING A SUCCESSFUL GLOBAL NETWORK EXPANSION

Since 2007, Highwinds has experienced incredible success, and network traffic has increased exponentially. To keep pace with global bandwidth needs and to build in sufficient capacity to protect its investment, Highwinds upgraded its IP infrastructure

with additional Brocade network products. The NetIron XMR routers and Brocade BigIron® RX switches had proved their value by providing consistent reliability and advanced routing capabilities.

Today, Highwinds has approximately 30 NetIron XMR Internet backbone routers in operation, connecting 10 of the 18 cities that are part of the RollingThunder network, as well as additional Brocade routers that are helping to support Highwinds' network growth and global expansion. The network has expanded to 18 North American, two South American, and five European cities, many with multiple POPs in the metro environment.

Highwinds is leveraging the Brocade deployment in several new projects, including one at a major facility in Amsterdam that involves a dual NetIron XMR configuration. "We've recently deployed in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro," Brownstein says. "Today we are deploying additional content delivery and network POPs in new locations, as well as increasing redundancy at existing sites, within the United States and around the world."

MEETING CUSTOMER DEMANDS WITH EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

The built-in reliability of the Brocade platforms has delivered exceptional service to Highwinds' demanding customers. "We're judged by how the network performs—whether we can

provide uninterrupted service to our customers, and whether we can provide an acceptable level of network service for our product platform," Brownstein says. "I trust Brocade to ensure that the system stays up and that the services we provide to customers meet the most demanding standard."

Brownstein also appreciates that Brocade helps Highwinds promote a greener networking environment. The large data center in Amsterdam is already able to support more ports with less power than competitive offerings.

LOOKING AHEAD

Even with the upgraded network, Highwinds continues to see ever-greater demand for its CDN services. "Our CDN business is growing, and the nature of the business is very bursty traffic, so we need high-bandwidth overhead," explains Brownstein. "The increased CDN traffic—combined with demand for higher bandwidth on a port-by-port basis—will potentially drive us to convert to a 100 Gigabit Ethernet platform."

Looking ahead, Highwinds aims to become a true multiplatform service provider and offer Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS)-based virtual private line transport. "With these items in the future, as well as the ability to maintain the port densities and port costs we currently have, I see a long future between Highwinds and Brocade," says Brownstein.

For more information, visit www.brocade.com.

WHY BROCADE

"I trust Brocade to ensure that the system stays up and that the services we provide to customers are rock solid."

— Michael Brownstein, Vice President of Network Services at Highwinds

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