

# CASE STUDY: Psomas

## SUMMARY

### Industry

- Engineering

### Challenges

- Enable work-sharing and collaboration across the WAN
- Centralize and consolidate servers into the data center
- Enhance network to support steady company expansion

### Solution

- A Steelhead appliance deployed in each existing office
- A Steelhead appliance in each future branch office

### Benefits

- \$1,000,000 saved annually by reclaiming ¼ hour per engineer, daily
- Data and servers centralized, improving data freshness and decreasing maintenance costs
- Serverless remote office is a reality
- 2005 Network World Renovator Awards finalist

PSOMAS



## Riverbed Steelhead® Appliances Save Engineering Firm More than \$1M per Year

### Background

Psomas ([www.psomas.com](http://www.psomas.com)) is a leading consulting engineering firm offering services for private and government agencies in water resources, planning and entitlements, land surveying, and mapping. Psomas is also well-regarded in construction management, environmental, geographic information systems, and land development engineering.

Psomas has achieved an award-winning reputation for innovation, creativity, and cutting-edge technical expertise, and is ranked nationally as one of Engineering News Record's Top Engineering Firms. The cornerstone of Psomas's business approach is to focus on clients' long-term needs, and guide strategic growth to meet those needs. Their professional staff is at the forefront of technology, focusing on the technologies that support clients' success.

Founded in 1946 by George Psomas, the company has grown into a full-service consulting firm with more than 600 employees. Psomas is headquartered in Los Angeles, with 14 offices throughout California, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado.

### Challenge: Sharing Work Across Offices in a High-Growth Environment

As a high-growth firm, Psomas needed to optimize its wide area network (WAN) to accommodate a changing set of demands from its employees. "The problem was three fold," said Erik Durand, Director of Information Technology at Psomas. "We needed to overcome

**"We needed to have a system where all users could have access to the freshest data, and didn't have to worry about whether or not they had the right version of the file."**

frustrating delays that were hindering inter-office project collaboration and work sharing, avoid mishaps with miscommunication across our offices, and at the same time deploy technology that could keep up with our pace of growth."

Psomas regularly uses 300-500 MB AutoCAD and Bentley MicroStation CAD files, and must share those files among offices.

"File sharing was a real challenge. Our files were so large that it wasn't feasible to send them back and forth during the day with changes." Durand recalled, "Offices would keep their own copy of the file to work with, but that led to multiple copies of the same file that were out of sync. We needed to have a system where all users could have access to the freshest data, and didn't have to worry about whether or not they had the right version of the file."

In addition, Psomas has been experiencing 20% year-over-year growth, putting a priority on sharing work with new offices. But each new office added a significant strain on its existing network infrastructure. "Bringing new offices online was a significant hurdle. We needed to do it fast and effectively. At the same time we needed to have a system where we could enable new offices to be productive immediately, by off-loading work from other offices until the new office was generating its own business. Yet each additional office requires significant IT management."

**"When we tried using Steelhead appliances, the results were dramatic. Transfers for an edited file took about 2 minutes – the same amount of time that it takes us to access the file on a LAN."**

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### OVERVIEW

Psomas needed to optimize its WAN to enable work-sharing and collaboration among its branch offices, and reduce the strain of rolling out new offices.

After deploying Steelhead appliances, Psomas employees can quickly and easily collaborate on large (500 MB) CAD files over the WAN.

In addition, Steelhead appliances enabled Psomas to consolidate existing servers and realize the benefits of the serverless remote office – reduced infrastructure costs and streamlined IT maintenance and upgrade tasks.

The productivity gains provided by Steelhead appliances save Psomas more than \$1 million dollars per year.

### Solution: Steelhead Appliances Provide LAN-like Transfer Speeds on the WAN

After considering bandwidth upgrades and point products, Durand decided to go with the Riverbed Steelhead solution. Durand noted that the decision was based on his actual test results.

“When we tried file sharing using Steelhead appliances, the results were dramatic. Transfers for a completely new 325 MB file, which were unfeasible before, took just over 14 minutes with a Steelhead appliance. Transfers for an edited file took about 2 minutes – the same amount of time that it takes us to access the file on a LAN.”

Following these results, Durand decided to deploy Steelhead appliances in all offices.

### Benefits: Steelhead Appliances Enable Work-Sharing and Server Consolidation

Psomas has seen impressive results from deploying Steelhead appliances. “With Riverbed Steelhead appliances deployed throughout our network, our employees can now share work and leverage resources across offices. Employees can now quickly download shared files and upload changes, and collaborate effectively.”

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Durand noted huge productivity gains. “Estimating just ¼ billable hour saved per employee per day, Psomas has saved more than one million dollars this year with the

Riverbed Steelhead solution. When you add in the fact that new offices can immediately be productive by taking on tasks from other offices, the value of this product is staggering.” Busier offices can off-load work to other offices, and new offices can take on tasks from established offices until they generate their own workload.

Steelhead appliances have significantly changed the way Durand’s team manages IT infrastructure, as well. “As an added benefit, we were able to consolidate our file servers because accessing the information is so much more efficient. With centralized resources, we can spend a lot less time and money on basic IT tasks like server maintenance and upgrades.”

**“Estimating just ¼ billable hour saved per employee per day, Psomas has saved more than one million dollars this year with the Riverbed Steelhead solution.”**

As a result of these successes, Psomas earned a top spot in the 2005 Network World Renovator Awards competition, designed to recognize companies that make exceptional network upgrades.

### The Serverless Remote Office

With Steelhead appliances, Durand found that he could roll out new offices with dramatically less IT infrastructure. “Steelhead appliances allow our remote offices to be serverless. This added benefit means that network rollout or expenses no longer slow down corporate growth. Without Steelhead appliances, this simply wouldn’t be possible for us to accomplish.”

### About Riverbed

Riverbed Technology is the pioneer in wide area data services (WDS), a fast-growing product category that solves the problems of high latency and limited bandwidth that plague a wide variety of applications over distributed networks. Riverbed’s Steelhead appliances provide the highest level of WAN performance at a lower cost, reducing WAN traffic by up to 95% and accelerating applications by up to 100 times.

By providing optimizations that are orders of magnitude greater than what users experience today, Riverbed is changing the way people work – and enabling, for the first time, a truly distributed workforce. InfoWorld named Steelhead a “Product of the Year” for 2005 as the “Best WAN Accelerator.” Steelhead appliances are available worldwide directly from Riverbed and through global partners, including HP.



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