

Major Retailer Relies On Net Optics' Spyke™ Solution to Monitor, Manage and Police Bandwidth at Remote Locations

Net Optics performance management technology enables a pre-validated Partner solution for this retailer: a fault-tolerant architecture that meets visibility challenges at remote locations while enabling bandwidth management and capacity planning

Spyke



Industry:
Retail

Objectives:

- Manage growing number of remote sites from a single location
- Gain ability to closely monitor, manage and secure bandwidth at remote locations
- Save costs by enabling non-specialist staff at remote sites to monitor for anomalies
- Identify users and applications causing high bandwidth utilization

Approach:

- Install Spyke appliance in the data center to monitor two main egress links connected to carrier MPLS cloud
- Support multiple Gigabit Ethernet throughput to the MPLS cloud on Ethernet connections
- Provide insight for Quality of Service (QoS) configurations and capacity planning

Technology Improvements:

- Gains dedicated visibility hardware at the data center
- Enables monitoring by groups of subnets or VLANs
- Monitors and retains information from every IP flow
- Generates status and reports for individual workstations and devices

Project Outcomes:

- Saved costs by lowering bandwidth usage
- Avoided need for on-site engineers since users need only minimal training to understand IP flow
- Acquired centralized visibility of all regional sites for effective management
- Positioned company for cost-efficient monitoring of new locations as it grows

The Company and the Challenge

For the last 80 years, this dominant retail chain has experienced rapid growth and success in the market, increasing its presence from multiple suburban outlets to nationwide coverage, with one or two outlets in most regional cities. As a self-professed early technology adopter, the customer recognized the need to address these geographical challenges by managing multiple remote sites from a single location. The Senior Network Analyst at the retailer's corporate headquarters summed up the challenge: "We needed a monitoring solution that would offer full visibility of our regional sites back to the main data center—as well as cost-efficiently enable our non-specialist staff at regional sites to monitor their network for anomalies."

In an environment where bandwidth costs are high, companies buy just enough to fulfill their basic needs. This strategy may cut costs, but it raises the additional need for close monitoring, managing, and policing of bandwidth being used by remote locations. Information about top talkers and top applications is critical to controlling bandwidth usage, as well as providing key insights for Quality of Service (QoS) configurations and capacity planning.

Simple monitoring of WAN links can trigger alarms during times of high bandwidth usage. However, once the over-utilized link is known, it becomes critical to identify the users and applications causing that high utilization.

Net Optics Spyke Provides the Ideal Solution for Dispersed Branch Sites

A crucial element in managing broadband expenditure for this customer was the need for visibility into its many remote branch locations which are geographically dispersed across the country. As a retail organization, the company had either limited or no technical expertise at these numerous remote sites.

The Net Optics Spyke solution enabled dedicated hardware to be deployed at the data center in order to provide visibility across the entire enterprise. Spyke architecture allows monitoring by groups of subnets or VLANs, so that all subnets or VLANs in each retail outlet can be grouped together for a coherent picture of all traffic traveling to or from the site.

Additionally, because Spyke monitors and retains information from every IP flow, status and reports can be generated for individual workstations and devices irrespective of geographic location. This Net Optics solution gave the retailer very robust troubleshooting tools with which to maintain the network. Because data from any remote location could be viewed remotely, the company did not need to physically send engineers to remote sites when handling network issues.

"We were amazed at how simple to implement and operate the Spyke solution was, and that's fortunate, because we cannot afford dedicated engineers at each retail outlet to perform troubleshooting. Spyke tells us everything we need to know about how our satellite stores are consuming bandwidth."

—Senior Network Designer,
Retailer Corporate
Headquarters

The Spyke appliance boasts inbuilt storage to record data flows and packet captures. Access to the unit is provided via a standard web interface for generating real time troubleshooting and capacity planning reports.

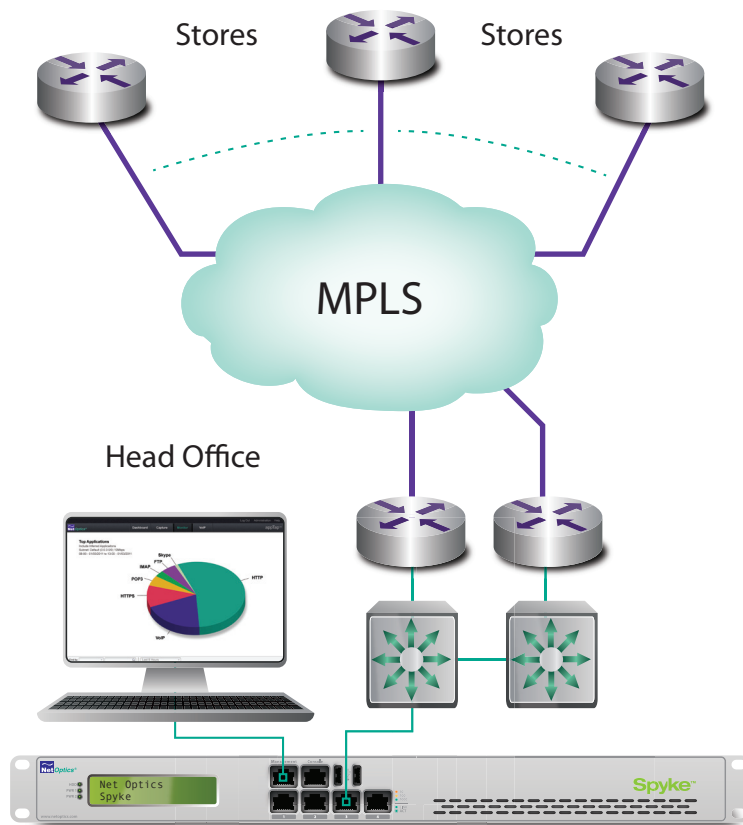
Why Spyke Outperformed the Competition

This customer had a pre-existing, pre-purchased, and very widely-known network monitoring solution which would have cost them little, if anything to deploy. However, this technology was excessively slow; plus its subnets demanded manual maintenance. Spyke's superior performance management technology—including its capability to perform automatic subnet synchronization—resolved this issue easily.

The retailer also wanted its remote sites, which had no trained network engineers, to be able to work with the product and enable network visibility where necessary. So this capability of the Spyke solution was also attractive to the customer.

Spyke's easy-to-use, web-based interface meant that users needed only minimal training in order to gain important information about the IP flow. This advantage was not offered by its competitors, whose interface made discovery of information almost impossible by all but a qualified network engineer.

Spyke leads the industry in turning complex data into accessible network information



This retailer's Spyke implementation showing how Spyke's performance management technology enables deployment of dedicated hardware at the data center for visibility across the entire enterprise. Groups of subnets or VLANs can be monitored in each retail outlet to provide a coherent picture at the head office of all traffic traveling to or from the site.

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