

Source Interlink cuts cost, increases performance and future proofs communication needs between facilities with an IP-based network and carrier services from CDW.

Source Interlink Companies

Source Interlink is a leading integrated media, publishing, merchandising and distribution company. With more than 6,000 employees, the firm's corporate offices are located in Bonita Springs, Fla. with other locations in Ann Arbor, Mich., Boston, Chicago, Detroit, El Segundo, Irvine and San Clemente, Calif., New York City and Tampa, Fla.

Source Interlink has two primary business divisions. These include the largest multimedia enthusiast company – one of the largest sales, services and logistics providers for magazines and books in the U.S. The firm's distribution division offers display manufacturing, retail rebate services and an international distribution unit.

The Challenge:

Improve communication between company facilities using a legacy IP-based and MPLS network offering little failover and redundancy capabilities

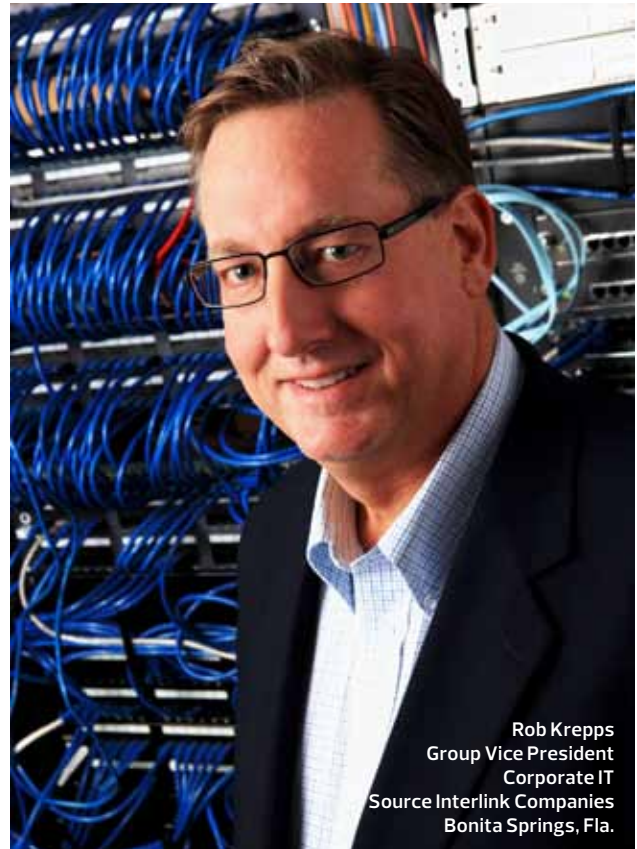
Faced with a growing number of distribution centers, an aging legacy communication network and an expiring service contract, IT decision-makers at Source Interlink were interested in a WAN upgrade.

The firm had been using a legacy "cross-breed" network consisting of MPLS and Internet-based circuits. The network was considered not sufficiently flexible, continuous and dependable for meeting communication requirements.

"One of the things that we needed to plan for was improving network performance and better access between our facilities," says Rob Krepps, Source Interlink group vice president, corporate IT. "We also wanted to get better control over voice and data expenditures."

Improving communication network resiliency and survivability were also important to the firm. "In addition, we needed to replace some aging network telephony hardware and our existing service provider contract was expiring," Krepps adds.

Along with the planned upgrade to its communication network, the company decided to look for alternatives to its legacy voice and data carrier. At this point, Source Interlink called on the CDW Telecom Services team to assist with sourcing and implementing of a more nimble network and cost-effective service provider.



Rob Krepps
Group Vice President
Corporate IT
Source Interlink Companies
Bonita Springs, Fla.

Highlights

Customer challenge:

- Gain better control over voice and data expenditures
- Garner a more resilient, survivable and dependable network
- Replace aging telephony network hardware
- Contract with a new vendor for enhanced carrier services

Solutions/benefits:

- Better control of voice and data expenditures
- Self-managed, high-end IP-based network between locations improves TCO
- Better redundancy and survivability via IP backup connections or dual-homed circuits to each location
- Contract with Level 3 Communications cuts cost and eliminates "last-mile" issues

The Solution:

Migrate to a high-end, IP-based communication network with backup connections to each location and service from Level 3 Communications

CDW suggested that Source Interlink implement a TDM-based WAN over a high-end IP-based network. This technology offers cost advantages along with simplicity of deployment and savings on infrastructure.

In addition, IP backup connections to its 58 company locations meant that if the firm had any issues with the TDM technology, the network could failover to broadband, cable or DSL services – thereby meeting higher availability and redundancy goals.

For corporate office locations, CDW recommended that Source Interlink add redundancy via a dual-homed circuit(s), provisioned and routed to different Points-of-Presence (POPs) on the service provider's backbone. With this configuration, an Ethernet circuit serves as the primary route and the secondary route is provisioned as a TDM circuit, thereby creating transparency.

With access to over 50 major voice and data service providers in the telecom marketplace, CDW provided Source Interlink with a non-bias IT consultant vendor overview per the original RFP specs. The analysis identified the pros and cons of nine enterprise service providers along with a detailed pricing matrix.

After evaluation, Level 3 Communications was selected due to network diversity and cost-savings compared to Source Interlink's legacy carrier. Along with quality of service, Level 3 was awarded the contract based on its ability to dual home and set up dual IP networks where needed.

"Level 3 Communications also had the highest penetration of fiber direct into our facilities," Krepps adds. "This allowed us to eliminate any 'last-mile' issues that may be present."

The Results:

Incremental cost savings along with a more robust and efficient communication network offering additional redundancy, survivability and business continuity

By deploying a high-end, IP-based communication network with backup connections to each location, coupled with service from Level 3 Communications, Source Interlink gleaned a number of important benefits including:

- Better control of voice and data expenditures resulting in cost savings in a number of areas
- A self-managed, high-end IP-based network between locations offering improved TCO
- Better redundancy, survivability and business continuity via IP backup connections or dual-homed circuits to each location

CDW Telecom Services

CDW is one of the largest telecom agents in the country, supporting hundreds of customers over the past decade. We work with over 50 unique carriers and over 600 collocation facilities who offer a variety of telecommunication-related services including WAN, Internet, voice and hosting.

As an \$8 billion company, coupled with the volume of telecom services we source for our customers, CDW is uniquely positioned to leverage and investigate the market on behalf of your business. CDW does not resell any service offerings. Rather we act as an agent with the ability to provide multiple partner options as well as aggressive price points and enhanced support to your organization.

Our in-depth understanding of the marketplace helps customers reduce costs, increase productivity and be a leader on the forefront of technology.

Areas of Focus:

- **DATA:** Metro and long-haul transit, MPLS, IP VPN, VPLS, VPWS, IP, CDN, dark fiber, Point-to-Point TDM, etc.
- **VOICE APPLICATIONS:** SIP, PRI, POTS, audio conferencing, enhanced voice services, hosted PBX/VoIP, etc.
- **HOSTING SERVICES:** Cloud computing, hosted e-mail exchange, managed collocation, hosted voice solutions, etc.

Benefits of Using CDW's Telecom Services:

- Multiple carrier designs and pricing
- Dedicated carrier resources – CDW has a dedicated person(s) from each carrier onsite for all levels of support – pre- and post- installation
- CDW voice and data spend contributes to customer's overall CDW spend
- CDW customers save an average of 22 percent off their existing contracts

- Contract with Level 3 Communications for elimination of "last mile" issues plus Gigabit Ethernet local loops to 95 percent of locations and fiber into two data centers

"Many of our operations are 24x7 with very short shift times for distributing product," Krepps adds. "We may literally have less than 24 hours from the time a publication is received to when it has to be on the retailers' display racks. This requires highly effective communication."

Contact your CDW account manager today to see what we can do for your telecom environment.