Global Crossing®
Think Ahead

Success Story

CHALLENGE

- Replace Frame Relay with MPLS
- Increase bandwidth
- Lower costs
- Integrate worldwide connectivity
- Engage Global Crossing service organization for smooth transition

SOLUTION

- Global Crossing MPLS solution delivers increased bandwidth and lower costs
- Competitive pricing
- Excellent support and service
- Global Crossing responsiveness and support team availability

RESULTS

- Dramatic increase in file transfer speeds and application acceleration
- Users notice improved performance
- VoIP service rolled-out worldwide
- Enhanced productivity across the enterprise

ticketmaster

Ticketmaster Increases Bandwidth and Lowers Costs While Preserving Peace of Mind with a Pure MPLS Network and Personalized Service from Global Crossing.

Ticketmaster is the world's leading ticketing company, providing ticket sales, ticket resale services, marketing and distribution of event tickets and information. They operate in 20 markets worldwide and facilitate ticket sales through www.ticketmaster.com, one of the largest e-commerce sites on the Internet. The company also maintains 6,500 retail outlets and a global network of call centers. Ticketmaster is headquartered in West Hollywood, California.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE:

Migrate from Frame Relay to MPLS IP-VPN without Disrupting Connectivity at European Telco Sites.

In order to increase bandwidth and lower costs, Ticketmaster wanted to migrate their corporate network infrastructure from Frame Relay to an MPLS (MultiProtocol Label Switching) IP VPN (Internet Protocol Virtual Private Network). Thirty corporate locations across the U.S. and several European locations – including Oslo, Norway; London, England; Manchester, England; Dublin, Ireland; Gothenburg, Sweden; Barcelona, Spain; and Amsterdam, Holland – would have to be upgraded.

Operations worldwide were growing, with Ticketmaster developing new businesses for ticket exchanges, ticket auctions, and special event and product merchandising. Over the years, their Frame Relay corporate network had become more expensive to maintain. As Telco providers sought to eliminate their Frame Relay business, companies like Ticketmaster experienced cost increases whenever they needed to improve bandwidth speeds. "It was cost prohibitive for us to bump up bandwidth speeds to more than a fractional T1," said Ian Charlton, Director of Networking and Telecommunications at Ticketmaster.

Ticketmaster needed to go beyond the Frame Relay limitations and implement a more advanced IP VPN built on a pure MPLS backbone with carrier-class quality and multiple classes of service. "Pure MPLS" is synonymous with "native MPLS," meaning MPLS is deployed directly over the DWDM layer 1 transport, without any layer 2 protocols (Frame/ATM) in between. This provides end-to-end flexibility, scalability and transparency across multiple MPLS interconnections.

It was also anticipated that the network migration would require a fair amount of hands on service.

"The project was a big deal for us, because no one on our team had much experience with the types of MPLS and IP-VPN solutions that Global Crossing and other providers were offering," said Charlton.

Personalized service considerations drive decision process

Several major telecom vendors presented solutions to Ticketmaster. The Ticketmaster team looked at capability, performance, support levels and pricing, and narrowed their decision down to a couple of vendors. They examined turnaround times, specific production

milestones and a number of other intangible factors.

Charlton worked with Global Crossing at CitySearch, a company subsequently acquired by Ticketmaster. "I knew that they were a smaller shop," he said, "but I always liked the fact that Global Crossing provides more personalized service so going into the decision process, I knew that Global Crossing would be a safe bet."

Global Crossing solution offers value, superior service and staff accessibility

Ticketmaster opted for the Global Crossing proposal. "The pricing was really competitive, and they presented the best offering in terms of support structure and value," said Charlton. "I also knew that Global Crossing support teams work really closely with customers. That was the main factor that drove us to choose Global Crossing."

The Ticketmaster Account Team, Cindy Jacobsen, Senior Customer Support Manager, Tyrone Emi, Senior Sales Engineer and Larry Orlov Senior Account Manager at Global Crossing, helped Charlton and Ticketmaster structure the migration plan and coordinated the process. "Everything was right on," said Charlton. "We enjoyed the team and the experience we had working with Global Crossing, and all the equipment worked with our environment."

"When you work with some of the other larger, hard-to-turn companies, it takes time to work through issues," continued Charlton. "You can't reach to the person you want to contact. You have to go through several layers to get to the right person and develop an understanding for the particular issue or situation at hand. But with Global Crossing it was very easy for us to reach out to any one of the Account Team members and have them gather the appropriate engineers or colleagues and come out to discuss the project. The whole team was extremely responsive."

The Global Crossing engineering team discussed architecture options, design improvements and efficiency enhancements to the network and service and support were available on a daily basis. Ticketmaster was able to leverage Global Crossing resources and expertise without additional cost. "That was important and added critical value to our overall relationship," said Charlton, "because, as I mentioned, we didn't have experience with MPLS."

Results: lower costs, increased bandwidth and more efficient employees

The Global Crossing MPLS solution delivered increased bandwidth and lower costs – precisely what Ticketmaster was looking for. "Our users can pull big files across the network much more quickly, and email and other applications are much faster," said Charlton.

Ticketmaster employees could tell the difference immediately. "These days, people know what broadband speeds are like, and they have a feel for bandwidth differences," said Charlton. "They can get T1 speeds at home, and if they're fractional at work and it's on a shared platform . . . that's noticeable." They now work much more efficiently with the improved bandwidth situation.

Ticketmaster also rolled out VoIP to many of their worldwide locations. Their employees can now dial five-digit numbers to access offices across the globe, improving convenience and productivity significantly.

Looking Forward

Ticketmaster intends to expand their MPLS network on both their internal and customer-facing production networks. They're also interested in exploring Global Crossing VoIP offerings and fixed mobile convergence solutions.

"Our relationship with Global Crossing will grow," said Charlton. "They provide the right level of resources, we're comfortable working with the support teams, and we like their 'comeback' story. They've got a great team and a great support environment, and they've done great things for us."

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Ian Charlton
Director of Networking and Telecommunications, Ticketmaster