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CACHEBOX enables Mexican firm to switch to low-cost ADSL

Grupo Alcione, a major distributor of electrical equipment in Mexico, planned to switch from MPLS to ADSL lines for network connectivity at each of its 15 sites.
Each site was connected via MPLS to the HQ in Cuernavaca, where a Squid box was used to provide centralised caching across the whole network.

While ADSL was significantly cheaper, the company was worried about losing control over its network in the process.

CHALLENGE

Switching from MPLS lines to ADSL meant saving costs at the expense of losing network control

Bandwidth savings were low with Squid, and users were experiencing slow browsing speeds

SOLUTION

CACHEBOX**050/100** deployed in each of the 15 sites

Easy migration of existing network configuration

BENEFIT

Maintained network control and still saved cost by switching to cheaper ADSL lines

20-30% bandwidth savings, happier users

About Grupo Alcione

Grupo Alcione is one of the leading distributors of electrical equipment in Mexico. With fifteen sites spread throughout the country, it is headquartered in Cuernavaca.

Maintaining control during network switch

The main concern for Grupo Alcione was that centralised caching would no longer be possible with ADSL lines. It previously used its Squid box to manage user access and didn't want to lose this capability.

"MPLS lines were expensive, but switching to cheaper ADSL meant that users across all our sites would now directly connect to the internet, and no longer pass through the cache at our HQ. We were at risk of losing control of a critical aspect of network administration," explained IT Infrastructure Manager at Grupo Alcione, Juan Hernandez.

"We knew we had to maintain that control. Among other things, we wanted to monitor HTTP traffic and limit access to websites such as Facebook and Megaupload.

Previously, this was managed by Squid, where each group was assigned a different access privilege. But setting up Squid on each of our sites with the new lines was a problem: we would have to spend 15 times the amount of overhead resources to maintain each box.

Juan described a further issue with the existing setup where Grupo Alcione hoped for improvement: "Squid wasn't delivering a lot of bandwidth saving. We have a total of 455 users across all Mexico who all complained about experiencing slow browsing speeds. "

Grupo Alcione needed a new caching solution that would continue to help them maintain network control, save bandwidth and benefit from cheaper transmission.

Easy migration, instant control

Grupo Alcione found that **CACHE**BOX offered the answer to these concerns. It deployed 15 **CACHE**BOX**050/100**s across each of the 15 sites, and bought 3 spare units.

"With **CACHE**BOX, the migration of our original Squid configuration was extremely easy and we were quickly able to retain all the settings we previously had assigned to the respective **CACHE**BOXes across all sites. On top of this the appliance makes the job of managing these sites easy," says Juan.

"We were at risk of losing control of a critical aspect of network administration."

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We've seen 20-30% bandwidth savings – that means we'll have the ability to expand the network as we add new site in future.

Result

CACHEBOX has performed well since deployment. Grupo Alcione has been able to take advantage of cheaper network transmission without compromising its control of the network. Bandwidth savings have been significant, consequently improving user browsing experience.

"We're very pleased with the performance of the units. We're able to use our **CACHE**BOXes to control content accessed by users and we've saved money by switching to ADSL."

"We've seen 20-30% bandwidth savings – that means we'll have the ability to expand the network as we add new sites in future."

"Moreover, the ability to automatically send anti-virus and software updates saves us a huge amount of administrative overhead and time. Managing such a large number of sites is no longer an issue."

"**CACHE**BOX has some really useful features, for instance the option to send logs to an external server means we can build and customise our own reports. All in all, it has proven to be a great asset for our day-to-day network tasks!"