



## Comment Article

### Infosecurity adviser - when is an appliance not an appliance?

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A few years ago Quocirca reviewed the deployment of Microsoft ISA server by The Kensington and Chelsea NHS Trust in all its remote surgeries and clinics. Microsoft was keen to promote the fact that ISA Server (ISA stands for Internet Security and Acceleration) had won over specialist appliance based offerings for network acceleration.

One of the main reasons that the Trust went the Microsoft route was the need to implement other services on the same device as the network acceleration software. Alongside ISA Server this included having a local copy of Microsoft Active Directory, the ability to store syslogs and to add security software at some stage. To implement this, the Trust's implementation partner, Hytec Information Security, package all the software on to a standard x86 based server running Windows Server 2003 and delivered it just like a pre-configured appliance to each remote location.

Were the same choice be being made today Hytec might be able to make do with a single

web acceleration appliance from the self proclaimed market leader – Riverbed.

Riverbed's network acceleration appliances, which it calls Steelheads, run its own proprietary operating system, RiOS. But, earlier in 2009 Riverbed added what it calls the "RiOS Server Platform" (RSP) to all its Steelhead appliances. RSP is VMware deployment on RiOS that enables Microsoft Windows Server 2003 or 2008 to be installed and run local services such as Active Directory. It costs extra to switch RSP on, but when done the Steelhead becomes more than an appliance – it's a server.

Quocirca believes that this a good move by Riverbed – it avoids getting caught up in a proprietary system that needs to be kept competitive against all the other vendors and allows customer to benefit from existing Microsoft skills to add functionality to their Steelheads. The move also opens up the unified services appliance market for Riverbed allowing it to extend its offering in all sorts of ways through OEM agreements with other software vendors.

## About Quocirca

Quocirca is a primary research and analysis company specialising in the business impact of information technology and communications (ITC). With world-wide, native language reach, Quocirca provides in-depth insights into the views of buyers and influencers in large, mid-sized and small organisations. Its analyst team is made up of real-world practitioners with first hand experience of ITC delivery who continuously research and track the industry and its real usage in the markets.

Through researching perceptions, Quocirca uncovers the real hurdles to technology adoption – the personal and political aspects of an organisation's environment and the pressures of the need for demonstrable business value in any implementation. This capability to uncover and report back on the end-user perceptions in the market enables Quocirca to advise on the realities of technology adoption, not the promises.

Quocirca research is always pragmatic, business orientated and conducted in the context of the bigger picture. ITC has the ability to transform businesses and the processes that drive them, but often fails to do so. Quocirca's mission is to help organisations improve their success rate in process enablement through better levels of understanding and the adoption of the correct technologies at the correct time.

Quocirca has a pro-active primary research programme, regularly surveying users, purchasers and resellers of ITC products and services on emerging, evolving and maturing technologies. Over time, Quocirca has built a picture of long term investment trends, providing invaluable information for the whole of the ITC community.

Quocirca works with global and local providers of ITC products and services to help them deliver on the promise that ITC holds for business. Quocirca's clients include Oracle, Microsoft, IBM, O2, T-Mobile, HP, Xerox, EMC, Symantec and Cisco, along with other large and medium sized vendors, service providers and more specialist firms.

Details of Quocirca's work and the services it offers can be found at  
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