

CASE STUDY



Imagine if your network worked faster, gave you greater control and increased resilience, yet cost you less? This is something that’s easily achievable using Q-Balancer from DeanSoft. As Accord Group, one of the highest volume advertising sales agencies in the UK has discovered.

Operating a critical network

Accord Group owns a number of advertising agencies and specialises in direct response advertising, especially classified print and online. Creating 300,000 adverts and turning over £150million in 2008, Accord Group is one of the UK’s most prominent advertising sales agencies.

Three hundred staff based at 14 UK regional offices work closely with the Group’s head office to design, create and supply adverts to the media on behalf of a wide variety of clients. With all information held centrally at Accord’s head office, the network is relied upon for user access to everything from email to bookings, workflows and design systems – every operation which makes the company function.

Executive Summary

Customer:	Accord Group Ltd
Organisation size:	14 Locations
Industry:	Advertising, private sector
Location:	UK-Wide

Challenge:

- Maintain existing MPLS network.
- Provide extra bandwidth and resilience.
- Link-in branch offices to head office

Solution:

- Two Q-Balancer 2820 appliances installed at head office in London.
- One Q-Balancer S420 appliance installed at every branch office.
- Implemented ADSL Bonding.

Q-Balancer

- Cost-effective alternative.
- Highly resilient and flexible.
- Full Unified Bandwidth Management.
- Simple drop-in deployment.
- Opportunity to trial.

Cutting costs, increasing performance

Since introducing Q-Balancer to their network, Accord Group has seen some dramatic changes to how their network operates. The solution has allowed them to replace the expensive MPLS connections between their remote offices, saving the company a staggering 60% of annual WAN costs, and giving them a high-speed, highly resilient system. Scot Ryan, Group IT Director explains, "Q-Balancer delivers a far more robust solution than we've ever had before, giving us significant bandwidth but also a substantial reduction in costs."

Plugs straight into your system

Inter-site collaboration supported by a resilient network is crucial for Accord. But, starting to feel uncomfortable with the cost and limited bandwidth their MPLS network was providing, Accord Group began to look at other ways that they could connect their offices. Accord decided to trial Q-Balancer at their head office and three remote sites for eight weeks. The trial was so successful, Scot and his colleagues decided to purchase the system.

" Q-Balancer was particularly attractive to us as you can just slot it into the system you already have without making any changes "

Scott Ryan, Group IT Director

Streamlining data traffic

Extra bandwidth, increased resilience

We worked closely with Scot and his team to plan and support Q-Balancer's implementation. "DeanSoft gave us the right solution as they understood exactly what we were trying to achieve," explains Scot. The first stage was to keep Accord's existing network in place and install additional connectivity. We then bonded the MPLS (private network) and the ADSL (public network) together, giving this crucial

ADSL (public network) together, giving this crucial network the increased resilience and extra bandwidth Scot requires – all managed via the Q-Balancer. A Q-Balancer S420 gives Accord multiple ISP ADSL connections at their remote sites, while two high-performance Q-Balancer 2820 units based at head office provide exceptional resilience.

Simple traffic prioritisation

One of the most important functions that Q-Balancer allows Accord to achieve is sending data via PIN Client (Citrix) technology. The ability to transfer adverts instantaneously using this technology is key to Accord's operation, and as such, it's vital that this low latency data travels quickly through the system.

Q-Balancer allows this traffic to take absolute priority, with Accord having precise control over its management. Scot explains, "All we had to do was create rules for our traffic, which means our most important data is prioritised onto its own connection – which works very well."

Scalable and future-proof

With complete control over the system, Accord also has the ability to easily add and remove bandwidth as requirements change, by simply plugging in or taking out internet lines. This freedom to operate the network as best suits the business makes this a future-proof solution – Scot is now considering using it to manage Accord's voice traffic too.

Scot is finding Q-Balancer is working well on Accord's busy network, as he concludes, "Aside from the cost, speed and resilience benefits, Q-Balancer is really straightforward and something which we can easily manage and understand ourselves – it does just what we want it to".

Find out how Q-Balancer could make your business data travel faster, more efficiently and reliably. Talk to one of our sales representatives on +44 0845 533 2210