

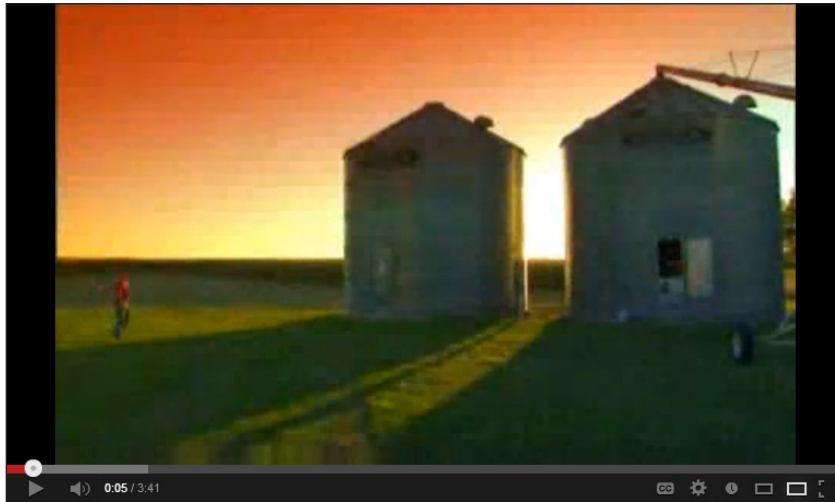
CHAPTER 15 MANAGING GLOBAL SYSTEMS

CASE 3

Monsanto Uses Cisco and Microsoft to Manage Globally



VIDEO
CASE



SUMMARY Monsanto deploys Cisco WAAS in branch offices to optimize Microsoft SharePoint performance. L=3:40.

URL <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63RZQ3frFgg>

CASE The Monsanto Company is an American multinational, agricultural biotechnology corporation. It is the world's leading producer of the herbicide Roundup. Monsanto is also by far the leading producer of genetically engineered (GE) seed, holding a 70 percent to 100 percent market share for various crops. Agracetus, owned by Monsanto, exclusively produces Roundup Ready soybean seed for the commercial market. In March 2005, it finalized the purchase of Seminis Inc, making it also the largest conventional seed company in the world. It has over 18,800 employees worldwide and had an annual revenue of USD \$11.9 billion reported for 2008.

As a truly global company with business partners around the world, it's critical for Monsanto to maintain superior technology and efficient collaboration between its employees and partners. To do this, Monsanto relies on collaboration between Microsoft and Cisco with a combination of Microsoft Office Share Point Server 2007 and Cisco WAAS WAN Acceleration.

Microsoft SharePoint products and technologies include browser-based collaboration and a document-management platform. These can be used to create Web sites that provide shared workspaces and the ability to store documents, as well as provide specialized appli-

cations like wikis and blogs. Users can manipulate proprietary controls or pieces of content called Web parts to create or modify sites. SharePoint is not intended to replace a full file server. Instead, it is targeted as a collaborative workspace, a tool for the management and automation of business processes, and a platform for social networking. Microsoft markets this as Collaboration, Processes, and People. SharePoint sites are actually ASP.NET 2.0 applications, which are served using IIS and use a SQL Server database as a data storage back end. All site content data is stored within a SQL Server database called WSS_Content.

Cisco's wide area application services (WAAS) is technology developed by Cisco Systems that optimizes the performance of any TCP-based application operating in a wide area network (WAN) environment while preserving and strengthening branch security. WAAS combines WAN optimization, acceleration of TCP-based applications, and Cisco's Wide Area File Services (WAFS) in a single appliance or blade. It is Cisco's attempt to keep WAN optimization residing firmly in the router, eliminating the need to deploy acceleration appliances throughout the infrastructure. The technology preserves TCP information within the network while offering the performance benefits that come along with using WAN optimization technology.

The SharePoint platform optimized with Cisco WAAS allowed the company to build its Monsanto Connection corporate portal. Monsanto Connection is a real-time news hub for the company that allows employees and partners fast and easy access to all the information they need. When testing the speed of the new portal, an Excel file that took 4.5 minutes to transfer before the upgrade took just 8 seconds afterwards.

VIDEO CASE QUESTIONS

1. How many Fortune 100 companies use Cisco WAAS services?
2. Why is it important to Monsanto that employees worldwide be able to use their Monsanto Connection portal with ease?
3. What is the role of SharePoint in the portal? What is the role of WAAS in the portal?
4. Find other companies that use SharePoint and Cisco WAAS services and briefly describe their experience with those systems.
5. For a company as large as Monsanto, why were Microsoft and Cisco attractive choices for their IT needs?

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