

## WAN Optimization: Cisco with Akamai, versus Riverbed Technology

WAN link bandwidth is limited, and the interactive performance realized by users at remote sites and branch offices often suffers as a result.

Cisco has addressed this issue with a package of software enhancements called WAAS, for Wide Area Application Services. A comparable, competitive set of features is offered by Riverbed Technology. Both make use of techniques including caching and compression to deliver better WAN performance to remote sites.

Miercom was engaged to perform comparative testing of the relative effectiveness of both products.

### What Was Measured

Tests were devised and applied that exercised the competing products in two environments:

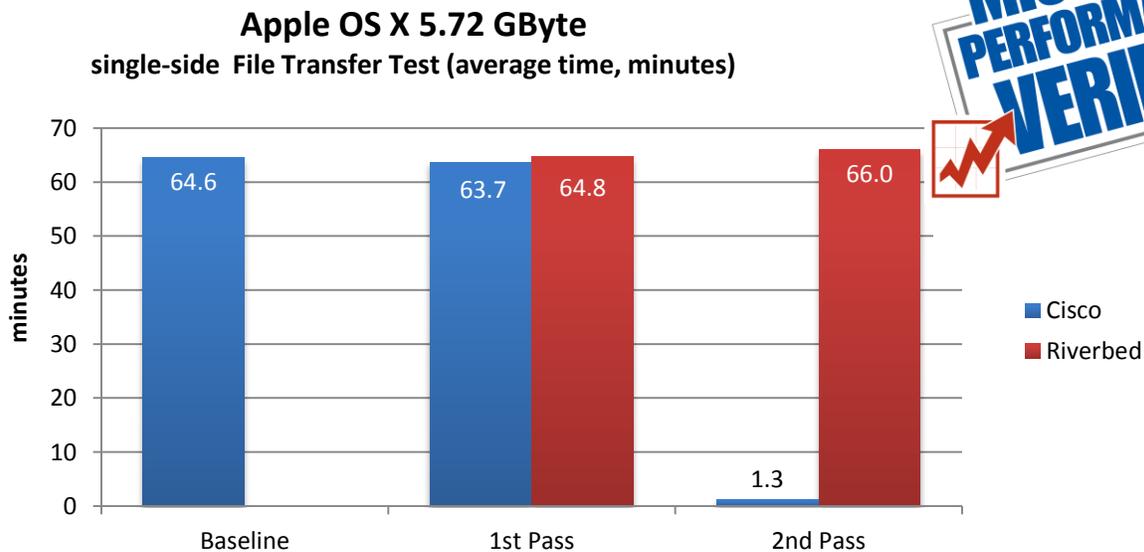
- a single-side topology – where an optimization node is deployed in a remote branch, and
- a dual-side environment, where nodes are deployed both in the central-site data center and at the remote branch.

Metrics used to compare performance included:

- Comparative load times for popular Websites.
- The ability to cache different file and data types, including large files, and cached-file persistence.
- The ability to optimize simultaneous file downloads.
- Support for live streaming and YouTube caching.

### Key Findings

- The Cisco solution caches larger file sizes than Riverbed.
- Cisco’s cached files survive a power reboot; Riverbed’s cache is lost with a reboot or restart.
- Cisco and Riverbed deliver comparable WAN-link optimization for multi-link, live-video streams.
- Cisco outperforms Riverbed in simultaneous file downloads.



*The “second pass” results, and subsequent test runs, clearly show that the Cisco solution caches the 5.72-Gbyte OS X file. The Riverbed CX770 does not cache this file, and all subsequent runs take as long as the first. It turns out that Riverbed does not cache large files – of about 2 GB and more.*

Copyright © Miercom 2016. For 28 years Miercom has been the world leader in independent security and performance testing. Miercom has published hundreds of network-product-comparison analyses that are free to consumers. Testing is based on a methodology that is jointly co-developed with the vendor. We’re Miercom, it’s what we do.



Scan to read the full report or visit [www.miercom.com/cisco](http://www.miercom.com/cisco)