CASE STUDY

Insurer's Branch Office of the Future Updates Validated with NETSCOUT

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NETSCOUT®

The Challenge ⌄

Highlights

The Challenge

- High-visibility branch office transformation project

- Technical upgrades cannot impact transaction processing or 99.999% SLA target

- IT required to present executive-level evidence quantifying project success

The Solution

- nGenius® PULSE Server with Hardware and Virtual nPoints

The Results

- Secured executive-level confidence in branch office upgrade project with objective analysis and views from nGeniusPULSE

- Increased network flexibility, improved insurance application performance

- Extended value of investments with nGeniusONE® and increased infrastructure health monitoring at the branches

Customer Profile

With a history spanning nearly 75 years, this U.S.-based Insurer offers diverse insurance options for commercial and personal customers. In recent years, the Insurer has grown organically and through acquisition and, as a result, the company now operates hundreds of branch offices across the globe.

In supporting this organizational expansion, the Insurer is digitally transforming their business services to improve customer support, enhance employee efficiency, and foster continued financial success. With one recent project, the Insurer completed technology refreshes at U.S. data center locations to improve custom application performance, harden external security, and prepare for virtualized platform rollouts. The parent company is a long-time NETSCOUT® customer and uses the next-generation nGeniusONE Service Assurance platform and NETSCOUT smart data to meet these digital transformation challenges.

The Challenge

With branch office performance critical to their business operations, the Insurer continues to improve the technology infrastructure supporting these remote sites, including a second-phase "branch office of the future" initiative. With this project, IT was updating network and technology infrastructure at many branch office locations, including more than 20 remote facilities. With branch office business operations clearly linked to revenue growth and customer service, network uptime is critical and even short-term downtime is very visible and costly. For that reason, branch office technology changes needed to support the company's Service Level Agreement (SLA) target of 99.999% uptime.

In addition to network uptime, the branch office upgrades needed to result in improved application performance across the Insurer's business services, Unified Communications (UC), and custom applications environments.

Given the financial investment in this project's success, one major challenge facing IT was showing the project was "worth it." With project funding at stake, the executive team wanted statistics and all-in-one reports demonstrating these infrastructure technology changes were providing the promised branch office improvements. IT's attempt to use another vendor's Cloud-based Wi-Fi solution to provide required infrastucture monitoring information did not yield this necessary data.

In satisfying executive team concerns, IT realized they needed a solution presenting before-and-after views documenting how the network and applications environments in each of 20 branch offices were improving as a result of the project.

Solution in Action

The Insurer selected the NETSCOUT nGeniusPULSE solution to provide required infrastructure health monitoring for the branch office technology upgrade performance. A key factor in the careful selection of nGeniusPULSE was its ability to deliver executive-level mandated reporting on branch office performance before and after upgrades in a single view that would provide quick and easy validation of the success of the changes.

The NETSCOUT solution configuration includes an nGeniusPULSE Server appliance operating in the Insurer's data center environment, as well as active agents (called "nPoints") to synthetically and concurrently test applications from the branch offices.

The Insurer deployed the nGeniusPULSE solution with a mix of nGeniusPULSE Hardware and Virtual nPoints in remote office locations at one major campus. Thirty days prior to project rollout, the IT team enabled nGeniusPULSE's custom test scripting abilities to monitor performance of select "golden transactions" whose processing times never change in the Insurer's branch office environment. In this manner, the IT team tracked transaction performance in the weeks preceding and immediately following the "go-live" date. As a condition of sale, the executive team identified a requirement that nGeniusPULSE present before-and-after performance metrics in a single view that also incorporated metrics and corresponding bar charts. By using nGeniusPULSE views that showed golden transaction processing improving a result of the technology updates, IT now had the branch office report format required by the executive team.

The IT team is also taking advantage of the nGeniusPULSE remote office Web testing feature to monitor internal and/or external applications, such as intranets, portals, or Software-as-a-Service applications. With these nGeniusPULSE test results, IT can see network response time, as well as possible client, application, or server delays. IT work cycles are reduced with the NETSCOUT solution, with nGeniusPULSE tests running routinely and automatically at desired intervals from each designated remote office location, with results presented on nGeniusPULSE dashboards.

In this manner, IT can now use nGeniusPULSE to support their SLA uptime targets, with the NETSCOUT solution measuring service levels from anywhere users are located, with views showing which branch office location or business service may be experiencing performance and availability issues.

The Results

The IT team realized a big win by using nGeniusPULSE to validate branch office performance improvements with company executives, using a next-generation infrastructure monitoring solution provided by their trusted business partner, NETSCOUT.

With executives signing off on this second-phase technology refresh, IT can continue to budget and execute branch office updates in a phased sequence that leads to successful implementations, improved performance, and no adverse impact to the employees processing import insurance business.

nGeniusPULSE provides a vendor-agnostic infrastructure monitoring solution the Insurer can use for future technology initiatives. For example, the Insurer can realize future return on investment by using nGeniusPULSE to validate planned wireless network changes in branch offices.

Nearer-term, those Insurer IT resources already using NETSCOUT solutions to enhance application and network performance across their enterprise can now employ nGeniusPULSE infrastructure monitoring as part of their extended workflow. When a problem is identified by nGeniusONE and isolated as a potential infrastructure element, IT can drill down directly from the nGeniusONE console to the underlying infrastructure, visualize the problem, and assign appropriate resources to resolve the issue. This process reduces mean-time-to-repair and optimizes IT cycles.

The Insurer also recognizes the value of using a single vendor to meet their digital business service requirements, with the organization benefiting from product integration, research & development innovations, reduced operating expenses, and multi-product customer support delivered by NETSCOUT.

Insurance

Providing Visibility Without Borders to manage digital transformations and monitor service delivery to customers, insurers, and agents.

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