

County Government IT Team Improves Custom Application Performance and Benefits Delivery

NETSCOUT Solution Provides Visibility into a Key Case Management Application, Improving Agency Performance for Recipients

OVERVIEW

Business Challenge

- New custom application for case management and benefits eligibility experienced performance issues in supporting service delivery to County benefits recipients
- Commercial application developer/hosting provider identified County Wide Area Network (WAN) performance as the culprit
- Multiple County agencies sought timely resolution in order to ensure case management and welfare benefits service delivery



NETSCOUT Solution

- nGeniusONE® platform
- InfiniStream®, with NETSCOUT® Adaptive Service Intelligence™ (ASI) technology
- nGenius® 3900 series packet flow switch and Network TAPs
- Remote Site Engineer for ongoing nGeniusONE Service Dashboard customization for Application Performance Management consulting services

Business Value

- NETSCOUT solution equips County Case Managers to successfully deliver benefits to recipients, with full access to necessary custom application performance
- County IT teams better view application performance and network traffic between multiple data centers, enabling better pinpointing and resolution of issues
- County leverages vendor-neutral nGeniusONE performance analytics to better manage commercial provider's custom application performance

Customer Profile

This dedicated Information Technology (IT) Agency provides a wide-ranging solution portfolio to a number of County departments, with service offerings that include data center operations, network/cloud services, as well as telecommunications, video, and email/desktop support options.

In availing these solutions across the County, the IT Agency uses an “opt-in” model that enables government departments to select certain service support offerings that best suit their IT technology needs. In such a manner, County departments like social services, courts, and sheriff's departments can employ a hybrid public/private IT service balance, also using commercial providers to deliver such services as custom application development or data center hosting.

Business Challenge

The IT Agency manages the Wide Area Network (WAN) infrastructure for a large County Department of Social Services (DSS) organization tasked with delivering benefits assistance to residents. In addition to leveraging the IT Agency to manage its WAN infrastructure, DSS uses a commercial provider to both deliver certain data center hosting services and provide custom application development and operations consulting. Under one such contract, the commercial provider developed a custom application used by DSS to establish new cases, manage cases, and deliver critical welfare benefits to residents.

Given the criticality of such programs, it was imperative that the custom application operate as designed for the DSS managers and case workers processing benefits cases for recipients. Systemic delays in processing welfare benefits delivery represent more than IT headaches – they may cause families in need to unnecessarily “go without.”

After initial deployment, the custom application began experiencing performance problems that could not be resolved by DSS or the commercial provider tasked with both developing the custom application and managing DSS's data center location. As part of its troubleshooting, the commercial provider identified the County WAN managed by the IT Agency as the culprit of the application performance issues. Subsequent to the commercial provider's articulated findings, the IT Agency and DSS commenced an inter-organizational collaboration effort to identify the cause of the custom application performance issue.

NETSCOUT Solution

As a long-standing customer, the County IT Agency relies heavily on NETSCOUT solutions to help monitor their infrastructure, including the WAN supporting the DSS.

In initial discussions with DSS, the IT Agency described its experience using NETSCOUT nGeniusONE Service Assurance performance analytics and the InfiniStream platform with Adaptive Service Intelligence technology (ASI), which proactively collects, organizes, and analyzes traffic data to provide rich information about the performance of business services and applications.

Through demonstrations and success stories from the IT Agency, the DSS Chief Information Officer (CIO) was convinced that NETSCOUT could solve the custom application performance problems.

The IT Agency subsequently turned to NETSCOUT regarding using nGeniusONE to troubleshoot the custom application performance issues on behalf of DSS.

NETSCOUT Solution in Action

The NETSCOUT Account Team worked closely with both the County IT Agency and DSS to architect a Service Assurance solution that would allow the IT Agency to assist with the custom application's performance troubleshooting. NETSCOUT factored all points of network demarcation, including the DSS data center and other regional offices. In supporting the project, NETSCOUT InfiniStream appliances were installed at the DSS data center to extend visibility into network and application performance.

By customizing an nGeniusONE Service Dashboard view built specifically for the IT Agency by its contracted NETSCOUT Remote Support Engineer (RSE), NETSCOUT was able to demonstrate that packets were successfully traveling from the County WAN to the DSS data center. After working through associated political circumstances, the IT Agency then began monitoring the DSS data center location.

Once customized to monitor the DSS data center, the real-time nGeniusONE Service Dashboard application performance view revealed custom application data was "leaving but not coming back," which may have corresponded to application scripting or application traffic flow issues. By contextually drilling down from a Service Dashboard view, the nGeniusONE Service Dependency Mapping feature visualized the current state of the service and application environment by automatically discovering and mapping the client-server relationships.

As part of the project, an nGenius 3900 Series Packet Flow Switch was installed by the IT Agency to provide enhanced visibility into network and application traffic on ports attached to nGenius InfiniStream appliances and other tools.

Business Value

Once NETSCOUT's findings were eventually presented to the commercial provider's senior technologists and application systems resources, they began addressing problems with the custom application. As a result, the custom application now performs as designed to benefit both DSS program recipients and case workers processing eligibility claims.

Despite the commercial provider's claims that its existing Component Management solution and other tools were sufficient to manage application performance, the IT Agency further realized its return on investment with the nGeniusONE Service Assurance solution, as the Agency's ability to use nGeniusONE to validate its County WAN performance improved its standing with DSS. In addition, the DSS CIO was able to communicate nGeniusONE's vendor-agnostic application performance analysis in sufficient detail to prompt the commercial provider to update its application.



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