

Leading Pharma Improves Business Reliability With Production-Ready Disaster Recovery Facility

Pharma Gains Business-Critical Production-Level Continuity With NETSCOUT Visibility and Always-On Monitoring

OVERVIEW

The Challenge

- Any pharma network downtime impacts customers and costs money
- DR lacked production-level service assurance visibility, increasing potential business service outage application impacts

The Solution

- nGeniusONE® Service Assurance platform
- NETSCOUT® Certified InfiniStreamNG™ Software Appliances
- NETSCOUT Certified Packet Flow Operating System (PFOS) Software

The Results

- Production-to-DR transition in minutes ensures pharma business delivery
- DR deployment timeline, flexibility, cost containment guidelines supported by NETSCOUT open compute platforms



Customer Profile

This U.S.-based pharmaceutical and healthcare company is growing both organically and through corporate acquisitions and strategic partnerships, enabling the business to deliver enhanced solutions for disease management, improved outcomes, and patient engagement, as well as traditional prescription fulfillment. This expanded services portfolio encompasses the efforts of 25,000+ employees and 60,000+ retail pharmacies.

In accompanying this business expansion, this pharma has embraced digital transformation to help reimagine how they deliver patient care and distribute life-saving medications to millions of North American customers. The company's digital application rollouts now enable many clients to take advantage of mobile and Web-based apps to price medications, refill scripts, and access personalized healthcare information.

Needing to support this business growth and digital transformation, in recent calendar years, the company's information technology (IT) leadership made strategic and tactical decisions to improve service delivery, including:

- Deploying open compute technology that offered increased network deployment flexibility and scalability, while reducing costs
- Establishing a Disaster Recovery (DR) configuration in a separate data center to support active failover from the Production environment
- Implementing NETSCOUT's nGeniusONE Service Assurance platform in their primary U.S. data center, which enhanced their Test & Development efficiencies, voice & video performance, and general-purpose IT troubleshooting

The Challenge

With this pharma annually processing more than 1 billion prescriptions at daily, weekly, and monthly intervals at retail pharmacies and via mail delivery, any extended downtime or application outage can translate into catastrophic circumstances for those patients depending on timely refills of life-saving medications.

With the Network Operations (NetOps) team already experiencing widespread success using NETSCOUT in the Production environment, deploying the nGeniusONE platform in the DR facility had been under discussion. However, other organizational priorities had precluded the IT team from installing nGeniusONE in a back-up system mirroring the production environment, and that was problematic. For example, if an individual pharma application failed in the production environment, there was no way to use nGeniusONE to monitor how that app was performing (if at all) in the Disaster Recovery environment, since the DR facility had yet to be instrumented with NETSCOUT data sources required for nGeniusONE analytics.

With an upcoming IT change management window involving NetOps conducting stress testing to measure Disaster Recovery architecture efficiency, NetOps wanted to capitalize on what they viewed as an opportunity to implement nGeniusONE in the DR environment to assess monitoring and visibility in the pharma's back-up system.

There were only 2-1/2 weeks remaining in the DR stress testing preparation phase, however. NetOps needed quick answers from their NETSCOUT business partners regarding the viability of deploying nGeniusONE during that critical timeline.

Solution in Action

The pharma now has the ability to fully transition, in real-time, pharma application performance analysis to their DR site in minutes, thanks in part to NETSCOUT's ability to implement a production-level nGeniusONE factoring the pharma's preferred open compute solutions, including:

- nGeniusONE performance analytics
- NETSCOUT Certified InfiniStreamNG Software Appliances, which use patented Adaptive Service Intelligence™ (ASI) to generate the NETSCOUT "Smart Data" required for nGeniusONE performance analytics
- NETSCOUT Packet Flow Operating System (PFOS) Software for certified 100G switches, which enables NetOps to aggregate, replicate, distribute, and manage the flows of traffic from the network to DR monitoring tools to improve performance of the downstream devices, while optimizing the flow of packets to ISNG appliances

The nGeniusONE solution operates at the Disaster Recovery site as an independent NETSCOUT installation, which enables NetOps to effectively transition applications from Production to DR. The NetOps team coordinates always-on monitoring in their DR environment, which enables them to:

- Assess ongoing DR environment readiness (e.g., monitoring load balancer and virtual platform performance)
- Triage any application, network, UC, or pharma business service issues occurring during failover/transition from the Production environment
- Monitor individual applications running in the DR environment as production-level troubleshooting occurs

The Results

In a business environment where minutes of downtime can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars and adversely impact the patients depending on continuous access to life-saving prescriptions, the pharma's NetOps team is now assuring that as-necessary Production-to-DR transitions occur seamlessly.

While NetOps knew the nGeniusONE technology was uniquely qualified to monitor both their Production and DR environments, they had to rely on the support of their NETSCOUT business partners to meet their 2-1/2-week deployment timeframe. In responding to this business requirement, their local NETSCOUT team quickly provided recommended-practices guidance showing an nGeniusONE architecture best-suited for the DR data center, as well as necessary deployment resources to assist the NetOps team.

As NETSCOUT becomes an ingrained element of the pharma's IT infrastructure, their DR environment is now fully instrumented should a catastrophic outage occur, with nGeniusONE providing the visibility required to track the failover process and success of applications coming back online. The NetOps team has increased the value of the pharma investment made with NETSCOUT by leveraging the already-familiar nGeniusONE solution for monitoring and analysis in the DR site.

LEARN MORE

For more information about NETSCOUT solutions for Digital Transformation in the Pharmaceutical Industry, please visit:

<https://www.netscout.com/solutions/digital-transformation-pharmaceutical>



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