NETSCOUT®

AON's Successful Journey to Global Network Visibility

NETSCOUT nGeniusONE and nGeniusPULSE Deliver Global Dashboards

OVERVIEW

The Challenge

- Monitoring sprawl with a need to get a global view of network and collaboration services
- Inconsistent view of Aon's UCC platform health

The Solution

- nGeniusONE® Service Assurance platform
- Certified InfiniStreamNG® Software Appliance and 5010 Packet Flow Switch
- nGeniusPULSE® with hardware and virtual nPoints

The Results

- One monitoring fabric across network, UCC and security with global dashboards
- Improved visibility and collaboration among IT teams, leading to higher availability

AON
Empower Results®

Customer Profile

Aon is a leading global professional services firm providing a broad range of risk, retirement and health solutions. Their 50,000 colleagues in 120 countries empower results for clients by using proprietary data and analytics to deliver insights that reduce volatility and improve performance. The company has grown through strong organic growth and acquisitions.

Their technology organization has built regional network performance hubs, which are aggregation points for colleagues, clients and partners to access business applications and resources. Network, application, and communication performance must be consistent and seamless to provide the quality of service their clients expect.

The Challenge

The Aon United transformation was launched to enable the firm to bring a unified set of capabilities to their clients, while enabling Aon colleagues to collaborate more effectively. Within Aon Technology, this initiative meant an emphasis on data center optimization, network and UCC transformation, application rationalization, and strategic vendor management. With over 400 acquisitions, technology faced significant sprawl across their estate. Technology drove consolidation and standardization to provide a consistent experience for colleagues and clients.

One challenge they also faced was monitoring sprawl with multiple tools and no single platform for global visibility, analysis, and reporting. The next step in their journey was to have a more effective way to monitor and triage their services across the multiple global network performance hubs to which all offices connect. When it came down to the most important goals, the VP of Core Infrastructure Services simply wanted to answer some basic questions: "What is the health of my network?", "How can we solve issues faster?", "What level of performance are we delivering to our colleagues, partners and clients?"

As the organization embarked on their UCC transformation, they needed to ensure that as they standardized and simplified their communications and collaboration platforms, that they could provide a view of performance, utilization and capacity as they moved from the legacy sprawl to the future state platforms. This would enable them to provide immediate feedback to their colleagues and business leaders on the value of the transformation, by providing tangible metrics. The ability to have end to end visibility would enable the operations team to pinpoint the cause of incidents quickly and enable faster restoration of services.

Solution in Action

The Core Infrastructure Services team selected NETSCOUT® service assurance solutions to standardize on one network, application, and security monitoring fabric across their global environment. AON selected the NETSCOUT suite of solutions to provide an all-in set of capabilities: nGeniusONE and InfinistreamNG (ISNG) appliances for packet-based monitoring, powered by NETSCOUT's patented Adaptive Service Intelligence™ (ASI) technology, combined with nGeniusPULSE active (or synthetic) testing. Together, the NETSCOUT solutions deliver consolidated, contextual, global dashboards for a consistent view of network, application, and UCC status and performance.

As AON has updated several elements throughout their infrastructure, they deployed software-based solutions whenever possible, and the NETSCOUT solution is no exception. They selected the commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) ISNG software, for cost effective and seamless views across the network. They also chose to deploy the COTS nGenius 5010 Packet Flow Switch (PFS), a Packet Flow Operating System Software solution that optimizes the flow of packets from the network to the ISNGs in the regional hubs. The company selected nGeniusPULSE with SNMP testing of infrastructure to isolate issues to the component level.

nGeniusPULSE also performs automatic synthetic tests 24/7, even when no one is on the system, to reveal emerging issues often before users start their workday. If there is an issue, the IT team receives alerts and can use the contextual workflows in nGeniusONE to quickly triage the problem.

With NETSCOUT's global visibility, users have been able to build consolidated dashboard views that enable users in WAN, UC&C, infrastructure services, etc., to visualize environment performance and gain a quick understanding of network and application performance.

The Results

AON uses the NETSCOUT solutions worldwide to get consistent visibility and workflows. The global dashboards are used at all levels in IT; from Executives, to Managers, Engineers and Technicians, improving collaboration among IT teams. With everyone using the same real-time views, metrics and reports, IT personnel save time and more quickly identify the root cause of problems. Troubleshooting starts immediately and issues are resolved faster, reducing impact on colleagues and clients. The high-level dashboards with a simple, but complete view of network infrastructure and application health enable better decision making and planning based on the evidence from their own application and network environment. Additionally, contributing to this complete view of the infrastructure, NETSCOUT was able to consolidate 5 disparate tools to a single platform.

For the move to a new cloud-based VoIP service, AON used NETSCOUT dashboards and grids to monitor and verify communication systems availability before, during, and after the migration. Any issues with VoIP call quality were quickly resolved as the IT team identified QoS mismatch issues in the voice architecture. VoIP testing also revealed that the consistent delays experienced in one area were caused by mis-routing calls to areas outside the region.

With the new visibility, the routing was changed to improve access times. Offering a complete view of service enablers, packet drops, DNS, and Microsoft Office 365 child applications, issues are also quickly discovered and resolved.

With nGeniusPULSE deployed across critical locations in North America, Latin America, EMEA and APAC, hosted applications and SaaS applications alike are proactively monitored for performance issues with synthetic testing. Critical UC&C services like WebEx, are constantly monitored with proactive tests to ensure performance and validate issues prior to users self-reporting. This data paired with nGeniusONE packet visibility has been instrumental in identifying the problem domain, whether internal or owned by the ISP or OEM.

For AON, the journey to maximizing network visibility and leveraging the data provided from the NETSCOUT solutions is an ongoing endeavor. They will use the combination of real-time packet analysis and synthetic testing from NETSCOUT to better understand and manage collaboration solutions, optimize bandwidth usage, and measure application performance. With real-time data and consistent global visibility, AON will continue to be proactive and ensure high availability and quality of service to their clients and colleagues.

LEARN MORE

For more information about NETSCOUT solutions visit:

https://www.netscout.com/solutions/unified-communications-monitoring

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