

Improving Financial Technology Operations With NETSCOUT

European Bank Consolidates IT Tools and Enhances Data Center, Network, and Applications Visibility

OVERVIEW

The Challenge

- Internal bank merger introduced data center & IT consolidation needs, enterprise visibility requirements
- Expanded links to 40G, WAN monitoring gaps

The Solution

- nGeniusONE® Service Assurance platform
- NETSCOUT® Certified InfiniStreamNG® software appliances
- nGenius® Packet Flow Operating System software

The Results

- Standardized on single-vendor platform to improve visibility, reduce expenses
- Confidently advanced service assurance rollout and strategic IT planning initiatives



Customer Profile

This European bank is widely acknowledged as a global leader, overseeing a vast regional financial services network operating across the continent. Their financial products include savings and retirement, retail banking, asset management, and insurance offerings.

In response to customer requests for expanded remote banking transaction and customer service options, the information technology (IT) team escalated rollouts of digital financial applications and e-signature programs that helped attract nearly 500,000 new clients since start-of-year operations.

The bank's IT team years ago standardized their service assurance strategy on NETSCOUT's nGeniusONE platform and InfiniStreamNG (ISNG) appliances, also using nGenius NetFlow Collector technology for visibility into remote locations to supplement the smart data baseline used by nGeniusONE's performance analytics.

The Challenge

The bank had recently decided on an ambitious Strategic Plan for 2020-2022. The leadership team had commenced associated business technology review activities and soon determined organizational efficiencies would be better realized by merging two different organizational IT teams. While the bank's IT leadership team had historically relied on NETSCOUT technology, the merged IT organization instead had multi-vendor solutions with the following operational characteristics:

- Data sources nearing end-of-support were reportedly experiencing issues with processing network traffic in a manner that supported consistent application performance monitoring.
- The packet drops impacted the ability to accurately forward network packet data to downstream security monitoring tools, which affected the bank's cybersecurity posture.

Beyond this comparative technology review, the bank's leadership recognized they needed to develop plans for merging data center operations and clearly define IT teams' ownership areas. As part of that effort, leadership embraced opportunities to:

- Revisit current data center operations, application monitoring, and network management strategies, including how best to address visibility and monitoring gaps into wide area network (WAN) and Virtual Private Network (VPN) services, as well as the legacy applications perimeter.
- Re-examine vendor tool investments in terms of efficiencies and potential redundancies.
- Develop a Strategic Plan identifying how new information technology could be best utilized to support the bank's business growth.

Beyond merely introducing another technology vendor, leadership was convinced they needed a business partner offering innovative solution delivery approaches that would promote the bank's strategic IT planning today and for the future.

Solution in Action

In the course of conferring with bank leadership about service assurance solution rationalization activities, the IT team's daily nGeniusONE and ISNG technology users successfully championed a single-vendor NETSCOUT "smart data, smarter analytics" solution as that best-suited to address their near-term and strategic goals. This collaborative dialog convinced leadership to enhance their NETSCOUT footprint to include:

- Expanding nGeniusONE platform licensing, including extended Unified Communications (UC) analytics.
- Deploying additional software-based ISNG appliances to improve visibility where needed, factoring primary and secondary data center operations, as well as the WAN perimeter.

- Installing nGenius Packet Flow Operating System (PFOS) software for NETSCOUT Certified Packet Flow Switch (PFS) appliances at company data centers to replace legacy packet brokers. This software-based NETSCOUT PFS approach offered the IT team improved link aggregation, packet filtering, and packet delivery functionality to the Security's team's monitoring tools. This NETSCOUT approach also offered higher port density to better support the bank's expanding IT footprint.

By standardizing on NETSCOUT, the merged IT team was able to meet the near-term goals identified by leadership by advancing progress on strategic initiatives, including:

- Monitoring performance of critical business applications, using nGeniusONE's real-time analytics for single-pane views into application, network, and UC service delivery for customers and users.
- Improving visibility into WAN and Internet links, which enhanced IT's confidence in the protection of these network areas.
- Introducing visibility into, and monitoring of VPN and application use, which assured IT that remote bank employees had reliable access to the business services required for daily financial transaction activities.

With leadership invested in this project even after contract signing, they gained assurance they had made the right vendor partnership decision, with IT and NETSCOUT resources sharing nGeniusONE dashboard views customized for the same WAN, VPN, and application monitoring needs identified as critical improvement areas.

The Results

NETSCOUT's vendor commitment to the bank made a distinct impression on the leadership team, leading to the organizations partnering on a multi-year approach for expanding digital evolution to improve financial business service operations and rationalize IT toolsets. In an early phase of this plan, the IT team expanded monitoring of financial, marketing, and customer services applications, and then shared related nGeniusONE analytical reporting with those banking teams.

This monitoring expansion also equipped IT with the means to better assure performance of the digital applications being rolled out to the bank's expanding customer base.

For the bank's organizational buyer, NETSCOUT's solution reduced expenses by bringing software-based ISNG and PFS data sources to the bank rather than a hardware-based approach that "nicked-and-dimed" them for extended features. Relying on this single-vendor approach, the bank also realized IT goals for reduced vendor management churn.

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For more information about NETSCOUT solutions for assuring availability and performance in Retail Banking environments, visit:

<https://www.netscout.com/solutions/retail-banking>



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