NETSCOUT

Assuring End-to-End Visibility and Real-Time Analysis of Teams, Webex, and Zoom

Leading Financial Manages Converging UCaaS Technology Transformation With NETSCOUT

HIGHLIGHTS

The Challenge

- Assuring customer, user experience on new UC&C services during COVID-19 business transformation
- Multi-platform approach to supporting employee-preferred UC&C technologies

The Solution

- nGeniusONE® Service Assurance platform
- InfiniStreamNG® smart visibility sources

The Results

- Assured high-quality UC&C user experience, regardless of work location or technology
- Uninterrupted customer service delivery on transformed voice and video platforms

Customer Profile

This company has provided financial services guidance that has been trusted by institutional and individual investors for more than 100 years.

During the global hybrid workforce transition, the company has continued to enhance its financial reach through both strategic acquisitions and organic growth.

The company's information technology (IT) leadership has adopted Agile Project Management practices for their infrastructure and operations. In supporting activities related to those ongoing efforts, IT Network, Voice, and Security teams have partnered with NETSCOUT® to provide end-to-end visibility and real-time monitoring of their network and applications to support high-level user experience for employees and customers alike.

The Challenge

As fate would have it, one of the company's strategic Unified Communications & Collaboration (UC&C) technology decisions coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic's arrival. The Voice Team was tasked with overseeing a business-critical transition from Cisco Call Manager directly to a Microsoft Teams Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) solution that would be used for their soft phone and voice & video conference services. The importance of this rollout was heightened by employees' readiness to leverage the expanded MS Teams video conferencing, chat, voice, and other collaboration tools to replace the face-to-face meetings they used to have with clients and colleagues.

As a result of these factors, the Voice Team coordinated an internal pilot based in one company data center. The Voice Team knew they would be required to provide executive-level reporting and analysis to successfully advance a larger-scale Teams rollout, and that meant adding new visibility points and UCaaS Monitoring workflows to assess performance improvements or degradations.

As the company's open-ended hybrid workforce transition continued, the Voice Team had also encouraged multi-vendor UCaaS technology use on employee-preferred platforms, including Cisco Webex and Zoom, in addition to Teams. While this approach offered employees the flexibility of using their own go-to UCaaS platforms or those preferred by clients, it also added further complexity to the Voice Team's UC&C visualization and real-time monitoring efforts. In order to assure voice and video performance across these collective UCaaS solutions, baseline UC Quality of Service (QoS) markings were required for:

- Assuring access and reliability provided by Teams, Webex, and Zoom for all external and internal communications.
- Differentiating vendor-specific UCaaS performance issues.
- Providing continued visualization into service dependencies involved in the communications path, including performance of session border controller (SBC) and MS Teams Express Route call flows used for ensuring precedence, and VoIP gateways — all of which were still essential to overall UC&C quality for employees, users, and clients.
- Monitoring UC&C end-user experience regardless of location, including headquarters, business hubs, remote sites, or WFH environments, including for those employees transitioning between corporate and home offices in a single day.

When issues did occur in external communications, the Voice Team's ability to quicky troubleshoot and restore UC&C services was of even greater importance, with the company's business now dependent of high-quality customer exhanges over voice, videoconference, and chat.

Solution in Action

The Voice Team collaborated with their IT Operations colleagues to take advantage of the already-deployed NETSCOUT service assurance solution to address their collective UC&C technology requirements. With NETSCOUT InfiniStreamNG (ISNG) smart visibility data sources instrumented across company-owned and Equinix Co-located (Co-lo) data centers, the collective IT organization accessed real-time nGeniusONE UC analytics into service quality and user experience across all platforms. NETSCOUT smart data generated from the company's network packet traffic by patented Adaptive Service Intelligence® (ASI) was used to source nGeniusONE UC analytics into Teams, Webex, and Zoom performance.

In collaboration with NETSCOUT, the collective IT Operations team visualized the network path of MS Teams UCaaS communications, through Microsoft Azure Cloud to employees and customers – regardless of path (including company data center, Equinix Co-lo, MS Express Route, or via the Internet for home offices) or user location (e.g., HQ, branch office, WFH). Using the same NETSCOUT data sources and analytics, the Voice Team similarly assured UC&C quality being delivered by Webex and Zoom. Regardless of UC&C technology in use, nGeniusONE alerted IT Operations when performance bottlenecks occurred along the communications path, often even before user experience was degraded.

In addition to visualizing the communications paths in this complex environment, nGeniusONE offered UC&C metrics into session tracking, call set-up information, round-trip times, video and audio latency, QoS tags, industry-standard voice quality measures (i.e., Mean Opinion Scores), and performance by location information to help IT Operations' efforts to investigate and isolate potential issues. The Voice Team derived additional value from nGeniusONE's ability to provide single-call analytics that included the call path used for an individual UC&C transaction.

The Results

During their multi-phase, hybrid workforce transition, the IT Operations team quickly and suddenly realized the expanded role UC&C solutions would play in how the company conducted business with customers and within their own enterprise operations.

By using their existing NETSCOUT footprint, the Voice Team successfully managed these multi-UC&C rollouts without adverse interruption to customer-facing service delivery or end-user experience. This not only maintained their clients' impressions of the company's consistent dedication to outstanding service, but it also had the effect of protecting customer loyalty and revenue in the process. Internally, this project elevated the profile of NETSCOUT technology in the perspective of the company's executive team, while simultaneously extending the value of the existing investments, which supported all the new UCaaS solutions without requiring costly upgrades or add-ons.

When customer service is the foundation of your success, quality communications are essential!

LEARN MORE

For more information about NETSCOUT solutions for assuring availability and performance in financial services networks, visit:

https://www.netscout.com/solutions/banking

NETSCOUT®