

Achieving Successful Cloud Migrations With NETSCOUT

Retail Banking Leader Refactors Applications With NETSCOUT Visibility Before, During, and After Migration

OVERVIEW

The Challenge

- “Cloud ready” project involved refactoring applications from mainframe to virtualized servers for staging
- Inability to visualize or monitor existing apps prompted high-profile delays for Network Operations team

The Solution

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

The Results

- Organizational readiness for successful application refactoring needed for cloud migration
- Real-time monitoring of expanding business services improved customer service delivery and transaction processing reliability



Customer Profile

This leading bank maintains a significant branch office and ATM footprint across the Midwest, operating a number of commercial offices in U.S. financial hubs.

Their service line includes personal and business banking, checking, mortgages, loans, investing, and credit card offerings. The bank has long-used online banking, a 24/7 contact center, and a user-friendly mobile application to complement branch office and ATM services available to customers.

In addition, the bank's leadership embraced financial technology transformation, moving forward with projects that include automating order-to-cash and treasury management business functions, as well electronic invoicing and virtual card processing.

The bank is a proponent of proactive monitoring and service assurance. As a long-time NETSCOUT customer, they are using nGenius technology to visualize and manage bandwidth utilization on wide area network (WAN) links.

The Challenge

Like many of today's U.S. financial institutions, this bank's information technology (IT) team continued to run some of their customer-facing and back office applications in a mainframe environment. Banks continue to favor this traditional approach, which emphasizes the long-standing security and performance provided by mainframe platforms. However, increasing operating expenses (OpEx) involved with this approach were becoming too high to ignore.

Well aware of the OpEx reduction opportunities and technical performance efficiencies offered by potentially refactoring existing applications from the current environment to run on today's cloud platforms, IT leadership committed to getting the organization “cloud ready.”

That meant refactoring existing applications from the mainframe and migrating them to an on-premises, virtualized, data center environment. This process involved Web-tiered, middleware, and multi-tier technologies that would function as production staging to monitor and stabilize these apps prior to an eventual cloud migration.

During this process, the collective Network Operations (NetOps) team overseeing the project hit a roadblock: there were visibility issues into performance of existing mainframe applications that their open source and vendor app monitoring tools could not troubleshoot. That was problematic, since performance baselining in a production or staging environments is critical to cloud migration success for any organization. As the mainframe application continued to support reliable delivery of back office and customer-facing services, NetOps recognized it would be beneficial to be able to visualize and assure their performance, as well.

When it came to assessing ownership of the cloud readiness project, bank leadership in essence told the NetOps team, "You're going to be responsible for how this thing runs." That prompted NetOps and their IT Operations and Applications counterparts to collectively identify a solution that would provide the visibility and real-time monitoring they lacked.

Solution in Action

Based on their earlier analysis of NETSCOUT's advanced approach to providing cloud migration success and smart visibility across all service borders, bank leadership accepted the collective IT teams' recommendation to update their nGenius installation with additional smart analytics and smart data solutions.

With the nGeniusONE Service Assurance platform, IT gained a vendor-agnostic, real-time monitoring solution for application and network monitoring – whether those services were running on the mainframe, in the data center, or in a future cloud environment.

NETSCOUT Certified InfiniStreamNG (ISNG) software appliances were deployed in primary and secondary data center locations to visualize the virtualized, multi-layer, multi-level network and application environment being staged for application refactoring. By extending NETSCOUT instrumentation beyond the WAN to factor DMZ and firewall operations, IT addressed their immediate application monitoring needs and gained new intelligence into how SIP Trunking environments were performing in support of the Voice over IP environment, as well as Salesforce customer relationship management operations status.

nGenius Packet Flow Operating System (PFOS) software for NETSCOUT Certified Packet Flow Switch (PFS) appliances was installed at company data centers to provide advanced packet broker functionality for the bank's network environment. The software-based ISNG and PFS appliances enabled IT to use virtual interfaces to cost-effectively extend visibility into numerous, different physical interfaces in the multi-layer, multi-level data center environment for use by nGeniusONE's real-time monitoring.

The NETSCOUT Visibility as a Service (VaaS) team provided remote deployment services critical to successfully installing nGeniusONE, ISNG, and PFOS technology during the COVID-19 pandemic. With on-site IT resource limitations in place, NETSCOUT VaaS experts initially provided critical deployment assistance over VPN and Zoom conferencing. Next, NETSCOUT VaaS helped quickly operationalize the nGeniusONE platform across IT operations by:

- Remotely customizing service dashboard and monitor views that enabled IT resources to visualize application performance in real time from both the mainframe and throughout the virtualized data center environment
- Providing online training and recommended-practices guidance for service definition and monitoring in the current-day banking environment

- Quickly deploying NETSCOUT technology and configuring nGeniusONE service dashboard and monitor views necessary for real-time monitoring of the bank's transforming application service environment

The Results

Leadership's decision to approach application refactoring in a deliberate manner was validated by NetOps leading a cross-operational IT collaboration effort to cost-effectively expand visibility across both the mainframe and virtualized data center environments using NETSCOUT technology and NETSCOUT VaaS resources – all in a very challenging remote workforce model.

Overall, the bank benefitted from the before, during, and after application monitoring that proved critical to reliable business service delivery throughout the cloud ready project. By bringing application performance to a "steady state" in advance of cloud migration, the bank was also assured of uninterrupted customer service delivery and reliable financial transaction processing throughout this project.

The bank also realized enhanced return on investment by using nGeniusONE for real-time monitoring of VoIP and Salesforce environments not initially identified in the scope of the cloud migration effort.

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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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