NETSCOUT

Network Edge Monitoring at Retailer's New Facilities Assures Performance

Extends Value of Their Investments in nGeniusONE and NETSCOUT PSE

OVERVIEW

The Challenge

- Lacked visibility to assure quality digital experience for home-based employees and customers during pandemic
- Required proactive analysis and troubleshooting capabilities as they opened a new building and relocated a data center

The Solution

- nGeniusONE® Service Assurance platform
- InfiniStreamNG® certified 9800 and 6600 series software appliances
- nGenius® Packet Flow Operating System (PFOS) for Certified 5010 Series Packet Brokers
- NETSCOUT® Premium Services Engineer

The Results

- Extended value of investments in nGeniusONE to gain visibility into network edges at new office building and data center
- NETSCOUT PSE is helping ensure quality of employee and customer experience with omni-channel services

Customer Profile

This major U.S.-based retailer has made the Fortune Magazine 100 Best Companies to Work For list every year for more than a decade. Regardless of whether the 25,000 employees are based in the retail, wholesale, or financing divisions of their business, there is a strong appreciation for corporate values and work-life balance offered by the company. With locations in every state in the country, these dedicated employees support many thousands of customers every day, as they meet ever-growing revenue milestones in the multi-billions of dollars annually.

Their digital technology and services are a big part of this success. Customers check product availability through their website, tied to each store, which offers interactive chat as well. Once products are purchased, online payment is available as well as customer support via contact centers. Lengthy disruptions that impact these types of digital services are noticeable and detrimental to the retailer's business.

The Challenge

The transition to remote workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic presented the company with challenges in meeting customer service and revenue objectives. It also created a first-ever set of hurdles for the IT staff to resolve. They first needed to ensure access, availability, and consistency of performance for home-based employees using corporate applications in the data centers, cloud, and software-as-a-service vendor locations.

Two other major efforts were on the IT staff's plate during the pandemic. First, the IT organization was engaged in the opening of a major new facility requiring significant new resources. As if that weren't enough, they were notified by a landlord that they would need to move one of their data centers out of the current location and into another. With limited staff coming into the buildings, this was going to be no small feat.

Critical in retail management is the use of omni-channel strategies that interconnects stores, online web-based applications, mobile apps, and social media platforms to drive sales. Many customers, also home-bound during the pandemic, turned to online services and/or company contact centers when unable to visit stores. These multi-channel approaches are dependent on a complex mixture of front and back-end services to ensure that products are available and orders can be placed, processed, and delivered or made available for pickup in a local store in a timely fashion. Assuring quality performance as the use of these digital services were on the rise was also a priority.

The IT staff were all in agreement - for assuring quality of experience with the networks and applications used by employees and customers, they would need visibility to proactively monitor and analyze these services. Reducing mean time to detect, troubleshoot, and restore services (MTTR) to deliver quality performance would be key in minimizing employee productivity loss and customer service disruptions.

Solution in Action

Faced with these new challenges, the IT team turned to NETSCOUT, their service assurance partner, to devise a strategy to expand their current solution to incorporate additional areas of visibility that would help provide the consistency in performance, availability, and quality service delivery they required for both their employee and customer communities.

Key to the effectiveness of their existing nGeniusONE Service Assurance solution has been their NETSCOUT Premium Support Engineer (PSE). His dedicated management of the company's NETSCOUT deployment,

including configuring dashboards, workflows, alarms, scheduled reports, and ongoing consultation, has resulted in timely and successful triage and troubleshooting in the retailer's environment. nGeniusONE has provided real-time analysis of the retailer's omni channel deployment, including voice, video, and business data applications.

With the additional nGenius Packet Flow Operating System (PFOS) for Certified 5010 series packet brokers in the new building and relocated data center, the IT team is distributing packets from before- and-after the VPN concentrators on the wide area network (WAN) and Internet links at the data center and contact center to downstream devices. These include NETSCOUT InfiniStreamNG (ISNG) appliances and other tools. This network edge perspective is critical for capacity, security, performance, and availability analysis.

The team selected a combination of ISNG 9800 and 6600 series certified appliances for deployment at the data center and new office building, respectively, to fill the visibility gap at the network edges, and this Smart Edge Monitoring is providing real-time, packet-based analysis to track and trend traffic utilization, applications in use, bandwidth and VPN performance and capacity, application-specific metrics for troubleshooting, reporting, and performance analysis.

NETSCOUT's PSE has collaborated with the retailer's IT staff in analyzing both their Voice over IP (VoIP) media and Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) call set-up traffic to ensure quality engagements between their company representatives and their customers. The PSE is also monitoring for anomalies and network-based issues that could indicate potential emerging security threats.

The Results

At the start of this pandemic, this retailer saw their nGeniusONE solution and NETSCOUT PSE as strategic advantages to ensure quality employee digital experience as they transitioned from corporate locations to working from home. This immediately extended the value in that investment, as they needed to add visibility to successfully open a new building and move a data center between two states.

NETSCOUT Smart Edge Monitoring is helping this retailer ensure quality customer digital experience was evident in monitoring the omni-channel and contact center services to identify VoIP and SIP problems to reduce MTTR in troubleshooting root cause and rapidly restoring to high levels with minimal impact to their customer community. As a company that has a long-standing reputation for being a great place to work, this level of service assurance is really no surprise.

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For more information about NETSCOUT nGeniusONE solutions are helping retail organizations, please see retail page:

www.netscout.com/solutions/retail

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