

Assuring Quality Client Engagements With UC&C Visibility Protects Revenue

NETSCOUT Helps Sustain Transformed Financial Service Delivery to Millions of Customers and Prospects

OVERVIEW

The Challenge

- Blind spots into virtual voice traffic across Avaya gateways hindered proactive UC performance monitoring supporting WFH and Contact Center agents
- High-quality UC support required for engaging millions of potential new clients across voice and video consultations

The Solution

- nGeniusONE® Service Assurance platform
- NETSCOUT® Certified InfiniStreamNG® software appliances
- nGenius® Packet Flow Operating System software for Certified PFS 7000 series appliances

The Results

- Avoided productivity-impacting, revenue-impacting impairments in customer- and prospect-facing WFH and Call Center voice services
- Cost-contained, single-vendor solution leveraged previously deployed nGeniusONE platform and field-proven ISNG appliance technology



Customer Profile

This U.S. company has long used a personalized approach to delivering financial services consulting to millions of individual investors, and that commitment has helped sustain decades of business growth. The company's investment products include mutual funds, stocks, bonds, and certificates of deposit. The company's Web-based services and Contact Center resources support investor needs for remote account management activities.

For years, Network Operations (NetOps) has coordinated successful troubleshooting in their core backbone environment by optimizing the smart analytics and packet-based smart data provided by their NETSCOUT solution.

The Challenge

For financial services leaders like this company, one unexpected development that surfaced across the pandemic was heightened consumer awareness about the need for improved investment planning. That left this company with the enviable business issue of engaging in introductory-level consultations with millions of potential investors. Accompanying this potential business boom was a technology challenge that captured the focus of the Executive Team:

How do we maintain our commitment to a five-star customer experience when these initial consultations occur remotely rather than in person at our remote offices?

As a result, the Executive Team engaged Unified Communications (UC) leadership to upgrade their Avaya gateways supporting voice and video communications and move them to a VMware NSX-T environment. Upon full transition, the solution would be installed on the core network backbone and involved consolidated Avaya call managers and gateways in company data centers. This digital transformation would offer increased voice network agility and scalability capabilities, reduced CapEx and OpEx, and lower IT overhead.

In a related effort, the UC Team began assessing vendor tools capable of providing real-time views into, and quality assessments of the voice communications traffic traversing their environment. As they narrowed their selection to a vendor specializing in voice monitoring, the latter stages of their assessment revealed shortcomings in that tool's ability to visualize voice performance metrics in the Avaya virtual gateway environment, as well as provide the scalability to support the large-scale deployment that would be required by the UC Team. These gaps alarmed the UC Team leaders who would be responsible for managing the transition and assuring ongoing voice quality for the financial advisors and Call Center Agents (CCAs) providing first-line, "face of the business" communications to potential new clients and high-worth individual investors.

At a decision-making impasse, UC Team leaders consulted their IT Operations counterparts to determine whether there were already in-use vendor solutions that could provide vendor-agnostic visibility and monitoring of Avaya voice services running on VMware NSX-T.

Solution in Action

As a result of their cross-IT communications, NETSCOUT emerged as the business and technology partner best-equipped to incrementally provide service edge visibility and real-time analysis to assure successful deployment and operations for Avaya voice and video gateways moved to VMware NSX-T. The NETSCOUT solution included:

- An already-installed nGeniusONE Service Assurance platform with advanced, vendor-neutral analysis for voice and video
- NETSCOUT Certified InfiniStreamNG (ISNG) appliances deployed in the company's primary and secondary data centers, which were also equipped to provide the vast network packet storage required to support the UC Team's long-term forensic analysis

- nGenius Packet Flow Operating System (PFOS) software for Certified PFS 7100 series appliances acquire, filter, and forward packets from the company's network links to ISNG appliances, as well as downstream third-party monitoring and security tools.

For the UC team, a significant element in closing blind spots in their Avaya virtual gateway environment was delivered through NETSCOUT account management guidance that involved using ERSPAN to take copies of network packet traffic from virtual and physical network segments through the newly deployed PFOS packet broker solution and forwarding conditioned network traffic to ISNG appliances. Following NETSCOUT-recommended practices for copying virtual and physical network packets to ISNG appliances, the UC Team subsequently accessed nGeniusONE single-pane performance snapshots into voice performance quality before, during, and after Avaya virtual gateway migration activities. As a result, the UC Team was able to provide nGeniusONE analytics and reporting that were crucial in assuring the Executive Team of this IT project's success.

In addition to using NETSCOUT as part of this overall migration, the UC team has assured ongoing high-quality performance for WFH users, CCAs, and the company's clients by accessing nGeniusONE Service Dashboard and Service Monitor real-time performance snapshots into this multi-tier environment, including hop-by-hop views that are critical to efficient troubleshooting activities.

nGeniusONE has provided voice quality key performance indicators that the UC Team has used for improved voice and Unified Communications real-time monitoring and troubleshooting, including quality of service metrics — including packet loss, mean opinion scores & degradation, jitter, round-trip delays, low and high voice levels, echo loss — as well as contextual session and forensic analysis drill-downs and ongoing trend reporting.

The Results

Perhaps the real measure of an IT project's success like this one is positively contributing to business efficiencies and financial operations success. During the pandemic period, the company has been able to maintain quality customer engagement using their recently transformed UC&C environment. This made it possible, in part, to report quarterly double-digit increases in assets under management as assessed in year-over-year performance.

By moving beyond nGeniusONE's use solely in post-incident troubleshooting efficiencies, the UC Team has assured high-quality voice performance across their transformed Avaya voice environment by adopting a proactive monitoring approach that promotes uninterrupted business delivery to clients, whether company services are being delivered by WFH employees or CCAs. A further return on investment has been realized by the UC Team's ability to use nGeniusONE metrics into call set-up, teardown, and quality, using traffic traversing in and out of the Avaya gateways.

These metrics assisted efforts to identify true root cause of voice-related performance problems, whether in the new Avaya system, UC&C ecosystem, or elsewhere in the voice communications path.

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For more information about NETSCOUT Financial Services solutions, visit:

www.netscout.com/solutions/capital-markets



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