Post Office Delivers Quality User Experience with Visibility at Remote Offices

Slashes Troubleshooting Time to Resolve Application Performance Issues

OVERVIEW

The Challenge

- Business-critical application performance degradations impacted the delivery of valued postal services
- Limited remote visibility created a series of perpetual "troublemaker sites" with recurring performance issues

The Solution

- nGeniusONE® solution
- InfiniStreamNG® appliances
- nGenius® Edge Sensor Appliances

The Results

- Unique combination of packet-based performance monitoring and synthetic testing helped IT assure performance and UX quality at remote sites
- Dramatic reduction in MTTR and streamlined troubleshooting process

Customer Profile

This government postal service supports hundreds of branch locations and distribution centers, and is trusted with delivery services to and from thousands of citizens across the country. From dropoff to delivery, the IT team needed a proactive and packet-based approach to ensure uptime and reliability at each step of the postal service.

As a longtime NETSCOUT® customer, this post office leverages nGenius® Enterprise Performance Management solutions to monitor network and application performance across their infrastructure, and recognized a need to expand beyond the core to extend NETSCOUT observability out to remote edges to improve troubleshooting.

The Challenge

Like any other organization, this postal service relies on business-critical applications to carry out daily operations. With hundreds of local branch offices and regional distribution centers to manage, digital communications had become plagued by latency, TCP connectivity issues, and quality degradations with their Unified Communication and Collaboration (UC&C) applications like Microsoft Teams. Visibility gaps in their environment made troubleshooting difficult, resulting in repeat offender "troublemaker sites" that threatened business continuity. Performance issues with business-critical software in the data center was also causing delays with critical services like accessing shipping information quickly or calculating the cost to mail packages in post offices. Determining accountability became a persistent issue, with the IT team spending much of their time dealing with unproductive, time-consuming, finger-pointing between third parties, WAN vendors, internet providers, and more to identify the culprit of poor performance.

The IT team was an early adopter of NETSCOUT's synthetic testing capabilities to proactively identify performance issues and get ahead of problems in the early stages. However, when they would pull reports the next day and analyze the synthetic test results, they did not have the packet-level data to troubleshoot the issues effectively. They were left waiting for the problem to recur, which delayed problem resolution and negatively affecting their employee and constituent user experience (UX) in the meantime.

Solution in Action

Using several components of the nGenius Enterprise Performance Management solution, the IT team for this national post office extended visibility to several critical areas of their infrastructure to improve the troubleshooting process:

- **InfiniStreamNG (ISNG) appliances:** Assessing network and application performance in the private data center and the fabric of their Cisco ACI environment, as well as with business-critical services like Microsoft Teams for UCaaS amongst employees.
- **nGenius Edge Sensor appliances:** Uniquely combining network analysis and packet-based monitoring with synthetic testing capabilities to gain performance user experience visibility at the business edge in both distribution centers and branch offices.
- **nGeniusONE solution:** Monitoring cloud access to support performance of business-critical services and workloads.

By including nGenius Edge Sensor appliances in addition to ISNG appliances and the nGeniusONE solution, the post office was equipped to rapidly address performance issues using the combined power of packet-level insights and business transaction testing (BTT). Remote site observability helped the IT team swiftly gather evidence needed to pinpoint the true root cause of performance issues, in turn dramatically reducing mean time to repair (MTTR) and resolving problems before user experience quality issues could impact constituents or employees.

The Results

With a robust combination of NETSCOUT solutions instrumented strategically throughout their environment, this government postal service gained end-through-end remote observability to support each essential business edge. Shaving even a few minutes off their troubleshooting time has a significant impact on the postal service, ensuring packages are shipped and received in a timely manner. Using nGenius Enterprise Performance Management to increase remote observability at its branch offices and distribution centers, this postal service has been able make the following progress at each "troublemaker site":

- **Reduce MTTR:** NETSCOUT's patented Adaptive Service Intelligence® (ASI) technology and packet-based insights are critical to providing the evidence needed to pinpoint the root cause of performance issues and slash troubleshooting time. By determining accountability and requesting resolution of issues quickly, the IT team can reduce MTTR significantly.
- **Maximize operational efficiency:** Restoring performance quickly can help bolster business continuity, making the entire ecosystem for the postal service more efficient. Uptime at each step of daily operations – from receivables to shipping to delivery – is crucial to an efficient postal process that ensures mail is funneled through the right steps at the right time.
- **Protect revenue:** Network and application performance downtime means that constituents might bring their business elsewhere, searching for a quick and convenient service to stamp their mail, weigh, and ship off their packages as quickly as possible. This lost business has negative impacts on revenue, in addition to the operational delays at the back end that result in missed Service Level Agreement (SLA) timelines and detrimental hits to the bottom line. Slow or unresponsive network and application performance also leaves postal workers unable to do their jobs, and this disrupted employee productivity directly impacts revenue.
- **Assure user experience quality:** Using synthetic testing to proactively monitor user experience quality, the IT team can get ahead of performance disruptions even before they impact constituents or even employees using critical UC&C applications like Microsoft Teams. By combining these insights with Deep Packet Inspection (DPI) at scale, they can work quickly to drill down into packet-based information to restore services.

By combining the power of nGeniusONE, ISNG appliances, and nGenius Edge Sensor appliances, this postal service extended the scope of remote visibility to include branch offices and distribution centers that are vital to operations. NETSCOUT has been instrumental in accelerating and streamlining the troubleshooting process to assure the timely delivery of valued postal services.

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