Nationwide Mutual

A+ rated financial and insurance services firm pursues IT Simplification with Micro Focus® Server Automation as a foundational solution for cloud initiative.

Overview

Nationwide, a Fortune 100 company based in Columbus, Ohio, is one of the largest and strongest diversified insurance and financial services organizations in the United States, and is rated A+ by both A.M. Best and Standard & Poor's. The Nationwide Family of Companies includes dozens of companies in both property and casualty, and financial services.

Challenge

The Platform Engineering Team is responsible for ensuring all server builds are standard, repeatable, meet security and configuration policies, and have correct monitoring and management software on them. Nationwide uses thousands of servers supporting approximately 2,000 applications—for everything from actuarial data analytics and web services to Geographic Information Systems mapping to identifying policyholders impacted by hurricanes. Many of these applications run on Microsoft Windows or Linux platforms.

Nationwide must deliver applications faster than it traditionally has to competitively meet changing customer demands. To this end and also to reduce costs, the company has undertaken an IT Simplification initiative. One area in need of streamlining was server provisioning and maintenance.

Nationwide had separate teams and tools for building Windows and Linux servers, with no synergy across teams. Configuration drift and maintenance posed challenges in the company's data centers. Nationwide for years had used Insight Rapid Deployment software. That tool was reaching end of life and could not deploy to the HPE ProLiant Gen9 servers (mainly DL 460s) that Nationwide is implementing. The Nationwide team had an immediate need to replace this software with a solution that also served IT Simplification goals. They also knew that a Nationwide cloud initiative was coming down the road, and aimed to create a foundational solution for that as well.

Solution

Nationwide utilized Server Automation (SA), Operations Orchestration (OO), and Cloud Service Automation (CSA) to accelerate competitive time to market, increase efficiency and improve agility.

Nationwide engaged Software Services to assist with solution architecture and implementation of SA to implement more functionality across more technology towers than Nationwide's previous solution. Nationwide used Software Education Services to train core members of its platform engineering, run support and provisioning teams. Nationwide

At a Glance

■ **Industry**

Insurance and Financial Services

■ **Location**

Columbus, Ohio with offices nationwide

■ **Challenge**

LPursue IT Simplification initiative in server provisioning and maintenance

■ **Products and Services**

Server Automation
Operations Orchestration
Cloud Service Automation
Software Services

■ **Results**

+ Provides "single pane of glass" provisioning for Microsoft Windows, Linux, Java Hosting and VMware ESX teams
+ Maintains approximately 10,000 total servers; deploys approximately 1,800 new servers a year
+ Hosts approximately 2,000 applications, in-house developed and packaged
+ Enables cost avoidance of over four additional staffing hires

also plans to use the Adoption Readiness Tool (ART) for OO and CSA training. Software Services is now assisting with the implementation of the Nationwide cloud. Nationwide uses Premier Support, and meets with its Technical Account Manager (TAM) weekly for expert guidance from someone who brings in-depth knowledge of their environment. Micro Focus is a strategic supplier for Nationwide and has been a key partner in their Simplification effort.

Results

Using this software, Nationwide realized the following benefits:

- Provides "single pane of glass" provisioning for Microsoft Windows, Linux, Java Hosting and VMware ESX teams—eliminates platform-engineering silos, increases IT efficiency and agility, moves from three tools to one(Server Automation)

- Enables cost avoidance of over four additional staffing hires

- Pursues IT Simplification and cloud initiatives to streamline processes, reduce costs and speed results—providing IT solutions to internal customers faster

  – Deploys approximately 1,800 new servers a year—ensuring builds are standard, repeatable, secure and monitored

  – Maintains approximately 10,000 current total servers—half Microsoft Windows, half Linux (ProLiant platform)

  – Hosts approximately 2,000 applications, in-house developed and packaged

- Server Automation establishes technology foundation for cloud initiative leveraging Operations Orchestration and Cloud Service Automation. Targets for cloud initiative:

  – Reduce 10-day SLA to deliver a server down to less than one day

  – Provide enterprise level automation capabilities to all of the technology towers within Nationwide

Nationwide originally selected SA for Windows-server deployment, but found it effective for Linux and Java Hosting as well. Now the company is integrating SA with OO and CSA for its cloud initiative. OO/CSA will reduce the provisioning team's 10-day SLA down to hours, empowering solutions engineers to deliver servers to their customers in less than one day.

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