Whitlock Infrastructure Solutions

Partner Whitlock leverages Micro Focus® OpsBridge Ultimate to improve energy company's service performance.

Overview

Whitlock Infrastructure Solutions is an enterprise IT consulting company and Micro Focus Partner based in Durham, N.C. Its customer in this case was a large energy company.

Challenge

The energy company was launching an enterprise utility application as a primary customer facing business service. The application is complex and crosses private and public cloud environments, in a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) model. After experiencing go-live performance problems, the energy company struggled to understand root causes, and engaged Whitlock to help architect a solution.

> **"In this new world of Hybrid IT, when multiple applications roll up to a single business service with performance and customer satisfaction at stake, OpsBridge gives the dashboard view needed by both IT staff and executives."**

JEFF JAMIESON
Vice President of Sales and Marketing
Whitlock Infrastructure Solutions

"It's a very large and complex application that's on- and off-premises, with SaaS elements to it," says Jeff Jamieson, vice president of sales and marketing for Whitlock. "When there are performance issues, the root cause can be a needle in a haystack. So they reached out to us to see if there were ways to leverage their existing tools to do a deeper dive forensic analysis on where the performance issues really lie."

Solution

Whitlock started with a planning exercise to find out what kind of visibility the company needed and who consumed the information—from network operations specialists to business executives. From that, it architected a solution that used the energy company's existing tools more effectively, along with the analytics, integration and dashboarding capabilities of Micro Focus Operations Bridge (OpsBridge) Ultimate.

"That was the key missing piece—the needle in a haystack piece," Jamieson says. "First, we make sure we have the entire environment discovered, so we know what's there, how it's all interconnected, then layer on top of that real-time performance information about how users are experiencing the business service. The solution brings in rich information about the health of the infrastructure, and rolls that into a single-pane-of-glass view."

WHITLOCK

At a Glance

■ **Industry**
Software & Technology

■ **Location**
Durham, North Carolina

■ **Challenge**
Ensure high performance and availability of new Hybrid IT business service

■ **Products and Services**
Operations Bridge

■ **Results**
+ Provided a unified view of complex business service involving multiple applications and crossing public and on-premises cloud environments
+ Establish threshold alerts—i.e., <30 second web response
+ Accelerated root cause analysis and problem resolution
+ Enabled complex Hybrid IT business servic

Results

OpsBridge Suite provides automated Hybrid IT monitoring, event availability and performance management and Big Data Analytics for Autonomous Operations. It brings together powerful automated analytics across multiple sources, and offers well-defined workflows for automated remediation and dashboard visualizations to unify IT-to-business decision-making.

"Through OpsBridge, all of the discovery, monitoring, performance automation, and analytics combine into that consistent view. Subject-matter experts, consumers and business leaders can all go and get their perspective on what's happening to their key business service," Jamieson says.

Organizations often know they want dashboards, but not necessarily what they want reported on them, Jamieson says. Whitlock asks them how they'll use the dashboard, how users will do their jobs differently with the information presented. OpsBridge then enables Whitlock to create the right kind of dashboard for each user.

"There's the broad set of dashboards the network operations center will use on the spot to see an issue, communicate with the help desk, bring in subject-matter experts and get to root cause quickly," Jamieson says. "Then there's the dashboard the executive views at 8:00 in the morning on their mobile device, or when somebody calls them about a problem. We work with them to create the type of dashboard they are looking for."

The energy company runs synthetic transactions and monitors real user transactions for insight into the customer experience of the new business service. It set up the system to send an alert if users wait more than 30 seconds after clicking on the main webpage. This red alarm on the dashboard notifies staff of performance quality problems even when other tools indicate the website is running—since being up and fast are not the same thing. When problems—even outages—do occur, the integrated view simplifies prioritization, accelerates root cause analysis and remediation.

"One of the worst things is for a consumer to call a company's IT organization and say, 'Hey, the application isn't working'—and for the IT folks to say 'It isn't?' It's a completely different paradigm for how you interact with your customers—and their perception of the value you bring—to be aware of issues and what's causing them, and to fix them fast."

"Traditionally, application teams rolled out new applications and then called in the monitoring team after the fact," Jamieson says. That approach no longer works for today's Hybrid IT world, where a business service involves multiple applications, performs different types of monitoring, and crosses public and on-premises cloud environments. Planning for how the business service will be monitored must happen early, taking into account application complexity and dashboarding needs.

"A key lesson is that in this new world of Hybrid IT, understanding the health of a very complex and far-sweeping application can't be handled the way it used to be done. You're working in a real-time situation, where performance and customer satisfaction issues are at stake. What drives the solution for our customers—combining all of the tools together for a unified view is OpsBridge Ultimate."