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DC Energy powers its ability to crunch data with database performance insights

DC Energy is an investor and trader in the commodity markets. In these markets with large intrinsic risks and growing uncertainties, DC Energy is firmly anchored to market fundamentals. With a deep bench of talented and creative professionals, DC Energy uses rigorous analytical methods to manage its investments.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

DC Energy is a trader in the commodities markets and relies heavily on MySQL. Since trading is time-sensitive, database management and minimal system downtime is a high priority. Prior to deploying SolarWinds® Database Performance Monitor (DPM), DC Energy used query logs and custom tools, scripts, and metrics to find and resolve problems. Internal tools did not provide a way to quickly review and assess the enormous amount of data available and gaining insight into performance was time-consuming.

In addition, the internal tools did not provide a visual view of performance, which prevented the sharing of server and query behavior. DC Energy wanted to optimize MySQL performance and concluded it needed to buy, not build, a tool capable of providing rapid and deep insight into database performance across DC Energy.

SOLUTION

In March 2013, DC Energy began running Database Performance Monitor on its systems. The increased level of insight had an immediate impact. When there's replication lag or excessive load, DPM is the first line of defense. DC Energy can quickly see the queries running often or consuming resources and compare them over time. The practical, responsive UI makes it simple to transition between views, segment important data, and share the findings.

Not only is the information granular, it's valuable and digestible. In one instance, after installing DPM, DC Energy became aware of previously invisible micro- stalls, where MySQL servers would hang for up to 10 seconds. Internal tools were unable to pinpoint the cause of the micro-stalls, but with DPM, it was immediately obvious the TRUNCATE queries were consuming resources. The issue was resolved quickly and easily, preventing future micro-stalls.

dcenergy

Location: District of Columbia

Year Founded: 2002

Employees: 50 – 100

IT Environment: Ubuntu, MySQL 5.5, PHP, R, Python, ZFS, in-house NoSQL system

" [DPM] has an intuitive interface, and it's clearly built by a team who understands monitoring because it only shows us what we need to know. It doesn't overwhelm us with a lot of information we don't want. Everything I want is accessible, and I'm not bogged down by extraneous information. "

— Joe Kelly
Associate, DC Energy

Since installing Database Performance Monitor, DC Energy can diagnose problems in minutes, instead of the 30 minutes to one hour it previously took. Even more valuable, DPM has enabled DC Energy to see and resolve minor slowdowns and performance hiccups, preventing downtime before it happens. Because DC Energy analysts depend on quick response times for trading, the database performance improvements have helped them perform with increased efficiency.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Only data that matters is shown

- High-resolution data exposes previously invisible micro-stalls

- Problem resolution is reduced from up to an hour to minutes

- Minimal downtime boosts overall performance

- Interface is easy to use and share

ABOUT SOLARWINDS

SolarWinds (NYSE:SWI) is a leading provider of powerful and affordable IT infrastructure management software. Our products give organizations worldwide, regardless of type, size, or IT infrastructure complexity, the power to monitor and manage the performance of their IT environments, whether on-prem, in the cloud, or in hybrid models. We continuously engage with all types of technology professionals—IT operations professionals, DevOps professionals, and managed service providers (MSPs)—to understand the challenges they face maintaining high-performing and highly available IT infrastructures. The insights we gain from engaging with them, in places like our THWACK online community, allow us to build products that solve well-understood IT management challenges in ways that technology professionals want them solved. This focus on the user and commitment to excellence in end-to-end hybrid IT performance management has established SolarWinds as a worldwide leader in network management software and MSP solutions. Learn more today at www.solarwinds.com.