

Assuring Government Relief Assistance With NETSCOUT Smart Edge Visibility

Providing Reliable Access to Contact Center and Website Resources for Financial Benefits Programs

OVERVIEW

The Challenge

- Unreliable Contact Center and website performance for state residents seeking pandemic-related assistance
- Blind spots across multi-tier service delivery edges impaired IT troubleshooting

The Solution

- nGeniusONE® Service Assurance platform
- NETSCOUT® InfiniStreamNG® smart visibility appliances
- nGenius® Visibility as a Service

The Results

- Restored reliability to State Contact Center and Web resources supporting residents' claims for assistance
- Quicker IT troubleshooting for State and managed hosting provider tasked with assuring government service performance



Customer Profile

Many government agencies have provided unprecedented support to their constituents during the pandemic. More than ever, these agencies have depended on reliably performing Unified Communications & Collaboration (UC&C) and Web platforms to deliver the State-level healthcare and unemployment assistance they have been tasked with coordinating.

This state agency's mission focus involves providing emergency management services to residents in this U.S. region. For an organization experienced in working alongside FEMA in coordinating emergency service delivery in the aftermath of weather-related events, the pandemic represented a different class of disaster relief that needed to be managed.

The Challenge

With a substantial population of residents temporarily unemployed, this agency became the public face of this State government's pandemic relief efforts. The agency's own work-from-home (WFH) employee transition had impacted how they delivered benefits, moving from a traditional mix of Contact Center, Web, and in-person coverage to a model almost entirely dependent on performance of their digital, Web, and Cisco UC&C platforms. That meant when residents and business-owners made calls to the agency's Contact Center, for example, they were accessing a modern-day UC&C environment, whose multi-tier infrastructure involved numerous vendors and technology solution providers, including:

- Data center services and business technologies operating in their selected vendor's managed hosting facilities.
- Network connections provided by that same managed hosting partner.
- Cisco UC&C technology, including a Voice over IP (VoIP) software application loaded on operators' desktops to provision telephone services required for everyday call center coverage, regardless of the agency employee's location.

- Virtual Private Network (VPN) services supporting WFH employees involved multiple vendors, which added complexity.

So, when the IT operations team began seeing service tickets regarding sporadic Contact Center call drops happening after those same callers had already waited on hold for 90 minutes (in effect requiring some residents to “start over at the back of the line”), both the agency’s IT operations team and managed hosting provider lacked service edge visibility required for effective troubleshooting and resolution.

With these Contact Center issues occurring, residents alternately used the agency’s website to access State assistance. Except, that website also offered unreliable performance, with high traffic volumes reportedly “flooding” the agency’s Web service infrastructure and causing the site to crash. Even when the Web service performed as designed, residents and business owners who had already registered with the State agency would regularly report “record not found” messages. Based on related analytics IT operations could access from existing tools, these issues impacted 15% of their website traffic.

With the agency and managed hosting provider collaboratively committed to resolving these issues, there was consensus that service edge visibility improvements would be required for assuring performance across this multi-tier environment.

Solution in Action

The State agency and managed hosting provider addressed these benefits delivery interruptions by collaboratively identifying NETSCOUT as the vendor best-suited to provide service edge visibility and real-time performance analytics across this multi-vendor, multi-tier environment. While both the State and managed hosting provider had their own, earlier productive business partnerships with NETSCOUT to reference, the nGenius Visibility as a Service (nVaas) program offered a consultative approach

that helped resolve both business operations and technology performance issues that had surfaced, a solution element lacking in other vendor offerings.

With nVaas subject matter experts guiding the State and managed hosting provider personnel involved in this project, the following NETSCOUT solution elements were deployed:

- nGeniusONE Service Assurance platform, which was implemented to provide the agency’s IT Operations team with real-time service dashboard and monitor views and analysis to identify and resolve Contact Center, website, and data center application performance shortcomings.
- InfiniStreamNG (ISNG) smart visibility appliances were installed to close blind spots at the network edges, as well as the data center and cloud service edges. The ISNGs generate NETSCOUT smart data in real-time from network packet traffic traversing between the managed hosting environment and the agency’s own IT operations.

The nVaas team collaborated with both organizations to customize nGeniusONE Service Dashboard views that provided single-pane-of-glass snapshots required to identify and resolve the following Issues:

- Website network performance, which provided the agency with evidence showing that residents could successfully complete file claims as needed.
- UC&C Contact Center technology performance, with real-time monitoring of the agency’s call systems, including the Cisco VoIP soft phone application, with nGeniusONE UC analytics that provided intelligence into quality of service (QoS), jitter, dropped packets, and SIP issues adversely impacting voice performance.
- VPN performance and bandwidth utilization, with analytics identifying service access and performance for WFH agency employees.

The Results

Vendor technology coordination was essential for advancements in visibility and troubleshooting needed across this multi-tier service delivery environment. For both the State agency and managed hosting provider, the nVaas consultative approach provided a vendor-neutral ideology that was used to address issues which touched both business operations and technology performance considerations, which advanced aspirational goals for clear service ownership and reduced finger-pointing.

The most obvious benefit of transforming agency Contact Center and website performance in this manner was the improved government response provided to residents and business owners desperately in need of financial assistance and healthcare guidance.

For the State agency, there were benefits associated in restoring public confidence in their pandemic assistance capabilities. The IT team similarly regained credibility in the eyes of agency leadership, who had seen the fallout associated with adverse news and social media coverage.

For the managed hosting provider, there was an added incentive to identify root cause as quickly as possible in manner compliant with their Service Level Agreement (SLA) and provide evidence that managed hosting operations were not the root cause of performance issues. Longer-term, maintaining the State as a satisfied customer provided revenue protection, as well.

LEARN MORE

For more information about NETSCOUT service edge visibility solutions for State & Local Government agencies, visit:

<https://www.netscout.com/solutions/government/state-local>



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