

SolarWinds-as-a-Service Spreads Throughout Organisation and Beyond

Customer

A leading provider of IT services in the UK offers a truly integrated suite of IT services to assist in the planning, design, deployment, and support of IT environments to meet each client's business needs.

Challenge: Finding a Tool

The company recently merged its smaller internal units to form a larger, cohesive organization. The IT staff used a variety of monitoring tools with no uniformity or holistic view of the infrastructure. To combat this issue, a few members of the IT organisation put together a technical strategy team for the new unit and began evaluating various tools that could solve this problem. During the six-month evaluation period, the team looked at various tools and sought a solution that not only fit their needs, but could also be sold to customers.

"We evaluated practically every tool available that fit our requirements of a solution that was cost-effective, easy to stand up and maintain, and had great features," said the Technical Strategy Manager.

Solution: A Holistic and Integrated Suite of IT Management Products

After much debate and discussion, they chose the full SolarWinds® suite of products as the primary solution for their internal use, managed services, and managed computing platforms.

"When we discussed options, large corporate suites and many other products were considered. The selection team all agreed that SolarWinds was the right product to move us forward because it is intuitive, feature rich, and easy to integrate with the other tools. We already had a vast amount of SolarWinds knowledge from using the software in our service desk, and our technical staff liked SolarWinds technology."

The team also found that SolarWinds products have strong features that match those of much larger enterprise solutions while being intuitive, easy to install and learn, and quick to start monitoring an environment compared to the six to eight months that it takes to just design and implement enterprise solutions such as IBM® and EMC®.

"SolarWinds was also an ideal choice for us as it was extremely cost-effective and commercially attractive from a financial, operational, and technical point of view. Some of the enterprise solutions require an army of people to constantly feed and water them even once they are up and running, but SolarWinds comes with a range of fully integrated modules that just simply work."

The technical strategy team worked with a team from SolarWinds to pull together a high-level design before engaging with technical staff to turn that into a low-level operational design.

Network Configuration Manager / Network Performance Monitor

The whole series of SolarWinds service provided an objective standard for CITIC CPC's application of ISO 27001 and ISO 20000. A certification could only be obtained when network information security, service performance and change processing comply with 99.99% or more of the standard. Daniel Kwong recommended SolarWinds' Network Configuration Manager (NCM mainly because its service supports the large amount of hardware and software network devices and applications to meet the demand of different clients' devices. A unified interface can monitor and manage up to 6000 clients' network.

He indicated that among the SolarWinds service, NCM and NPM are the most frequently used. NCM helped the support team to unravel the problems through a simple and visualized network diagram and monitor a huge network easily. It is crucial for enhancing the SLA service level of CITIC CPC. Meanwhile, NPM can find out the network performance, for example, whether a staff used a large amount of broadband and caused disconnection. Daniel Kwong said that there was once a client's network device connection error. By using the SolarWinds NCM to compare the client's settings and network traffic, they discovered that the client was not being attacked, but the client's technician has input a wrong command setting for the network device.

Results: IT Management that Works Hard

When they first installed SolarWinds, the business unit had only 15 customers. Today, the unit boasts 250 customers and uses SolarWinds as the key monitoring solution for all of them. The business unit has a multi-shared SolarWinds platform in its data centre, which runs a combination of different installations. The company delivers both dedicated SolarWinds operations that the IT team designs and implements in the customer's data centre and also supports monitoring-as-a-service on a multi-shared platform that is run by the company's service desk. Customers using both options get a single-pane-of-glass view and alerts from SolarWinds products, allowing them to more proactively run their environments.

Additionally, a number of the company's other departments did not originally install SolarWinds when they chose this solution; however, some of them have now asked to be switched to a SolarWinds platform to monitor their own infrastructure.

"Many of our internal business units that initially decided to use large enterprise tools to monitor their environment quickly found them to be inflexible and extremely difficult to deploy and integrate. Some of the business units now have a dedicated suite of SolarWinds products while others have opted to have our team manage their alerts and use 'SolarWinds-as-a-service,' as it has become known."

Once SolarWinds spread throughout many of the internal departments, it became clear to everyone involved that it transformed the business from having complex, continuously breaching end-of-link APs to an environment that can generate good SLA and performance reports at the click of a button. SolarWinds has been so successful that other business units have starting requesting that SolarWinds products be delivered to their customers.

"The biggest appeal seems to be the proactive handling of customers and their systems — this is something that we want to foster throughout all of our business units and SolarWinds can helps us achieve this."

The SolarWinds platform is now monitoring an environment that is 50-times larger than when the company originally installed the products. The primary SolarWinds engine will have about six additional polling engines, which run together to create a single instance. As more customers are added, that instance will have another primary polling engine accompanied by additional polling engines.

"We are aiming for a modular, scalable approach that can ultimately grow to cater up to 1,000 customers and a million elements—all connected to an enterprise operations console that will be supported by the SolarWinds software. We have gone for the complete suite of SolarWinds products to create this advanced shared platform internally, which will become our primary solution for delivering services to customers."

SolarWinds (NYSE: SWI) provides powerful and affordable IT management software to customers worldwide from Fortune 500 enterprises to small businesses. In all of our market areas, our approach is consistent. We focus exclusively on IT Pros and strive to eliminate the complexity that they have been forced to accept from traditional enterprise software vendors. SolarWinds delivers on this commitment with unexpected simplicity through products that are easy to find, buy, use and maintain while providing the power to address any IT management problem on any scale. Our solutions are rooted in our deep connection to our user base, which interacts in our online community, thwack, to solve problems, share technology and best practices, and directly participate in our product development process. Learn more today at www.solarwinds.com.



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