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CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

OmniCenter Simplifies Network Security and Monitoring at Golden State Foods



"OmniCenter is the first and only tool we've found that provides robust network management capabilities for every component in our complex, heterogeneous systems environment that includes IBM AS400s, Windows servers and many other devices including our video over IP teleconferencing system. Dollar for dollar, OmniCenter runs circles around Tivoli and all the other performance management solutions we considered."

-- Mike Bourque, Technical Services Manager, Golden State Foods

Organization:
Golden State Foods

Industry:
Food Processing and Distribution

Location:
Headquarters: Irvine, California
Other facilities throughout the United States, Malaysia, Australia and Egypt

Applications:
IT Management and Performance Management Network Security

Solution Set:
OmniCenter™, Version 5
OmniCenter™ Security Module

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Founded in 1947, Golden State Foods (GSF) has processed and distributed replenishable supplies to McDonald's Corporation since it opened its first restaurants in the 1950s. In 1967, GSF became one of the primary providers to McDonald's and a source of many of its best known products, including the Big Mac™ special sauce. Since then, Golden State has helped launch McDonald's into the global market and has become a one-stop-shop for nearly everything in the McDonald's supply chain.

With three million pounds of beef per week to process and deliver, and 2,500 employees scattered throughout the world, GSF has a very complex, heterogeneous network environment and supply chain model. Successful management of the entire operation is directly related to the smooth operation of its diverse IT infrastructure.

"McDonald's has a time-sensitive supply chain and a critical public reputation to maintain, and we help them deliver on both," said Mike Bourque, Technical Services Manager for GSF. "Our success impacts their success and the ultimate satisfaction of everyone who dines at McDonald's."

GSF maintains its mission-critical systems on IBM AS400 minicomputers, widely used in the industry because of their renowned, long-term reliability.

In addition to thirteen AS400s located in nine different cities, Bourque's group is also responsible for the health and welfare of a Windows server farm -- plus 160 other network resources including Cisco and ADTRAN routers, Extreme switches and a NetScreen Firewall/VPN.

Just two years ago, comprehensive network management for this extensive, diverse systems environment seemed impossible. Today Bourque is able to manage it all with just twelve IT staff members, six at headquarters and six at remote sites.

THE SECRET IS IN THE. . .

Bourque says his secret is not in the sauce, it's in the box. The Netreo OmniCenter box.

"Before we implemented OmniCenter, we were constantly in a reactive mode," he explained. "If a developer had to restore a large library of files from an archival tape to do testing, it sometimes maxed out the AS400 disk and brought down the entire system. We had no idea what our threshold or utilization numbers were."

Bourque began looking for a single, simplified solution for managing and protecting this technologically diverse environment. He needed a tool that would support his mission-critical AS400s and provide a solid security solution for his Windows XP and 2000 servers.

"The ROI produced by OmniCenter is the best in the industry when compared to similar products."

"Netreo's OmniCenter was the first and only tool I found that monitors both IBM and Windows systems," Bourque said. "The Tivoli network management product for AS400s does not support Windows servers unless you buy an additional, expensive module. Even that would not have worked for us, because Tivoli only supports Windows on IBM servers, and some of our servers are made by Dell."

According to Bourque, the implementation was simple, from start to finish. "Netreo offers a focused process and insight into what's important -- in addition to an extremely simple, versatile and flexible product. In just one day, Netreo was able to install OmniCenter and configure it to poll fifteen different sites and hundreds of different devices, including our Tanberg IP video conferencing system."

"The implementation services and technical support we receive from Netreo are strictly first class. Everyone associated with Netreo is outstanding to work with."

100 PERCENT VISIBILITY

From a single dashboard, OmniCenter alerts everyone at GSF when there is a potential failure or when a threshold is being reached, so that it can be resolved before it locks up a system or causes other systems to fail. If the responsible person is not at his or her desk to receive the alert, a message is transmitted to that individual's Blackberry®.

"The first time I used the Netreo OmniCenter System, I knew we couldn't live without it."

"We can also use trend reports to support our recommendations to our executive committees regarding upgrades and increased bandwidth," Bourque added.

Netreo has made dramatic differences in the lives of GSF's IT and Help Desk personnel. By relieving them of routine "babysitting" chores, Netreo's products have enabled the GSF Technical Services staff to complete all their IT projects this year. "We actually reached about 125 percent of our business goals. A large part of this is due to being able to leverage all our existing resources to the max," said Bourque.

SLEEPING BETTER AT NIGHT

"If we have a virus outbreak and the traffic shoots way up, we can jump right in and see where it is coming from and stop it from happening," Bourque continued.

Because the Netreo security module is integrated into the OmniCenter architecture, GSF is now reaping the benefits of an integrated fault, performance and security status reporting solution across an entire enterprise network.

"OmniCenter's Security Module identifies possible vulnerabilities and ranks them from high to low priority and tells you how to fix them," he observed. "Using most other products, you have to research and test the solution, which can take hours, even days."

ACHIEVING BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Netreo's products help GSF increase system availability and reliability. "The OmniCenter dashboard monitors everything, everywhere," Bourque explained. "If someone working early in the morning on the East Coast sees something going wrong on the West Coast, they can take proactive measures before the West Coast staff has even arrived at work for the day."

OmniCenter has also increased the level of assistance and skills that the Help Desk provides.

"Most of our staff hasn't had much training on OmniCenter. It's intuitive enough that people pick it up immediately. All of our IT personnel have figured out how to perform basic analyses when an alert is sounded. With that information, they open up a service ticket. That gets the ball rolling right away and ensures that we get the problem fixed as soon as humanly possible."



BENEFITS TO THE ORGANIZATION

- Monitors and collects network management information from fifteen sites in a single dashboard
- Trend analysis reports pinpoint issues such as latencies and bottlenecks in the system
- System managers in earlier time zones can identify possible issues in later time zones -- including viruses or worms -- and can start the problem resolution process as soon as an issue is discovered
- Trend results can be used to validate budget requests for additional resources
- Multiple individuals receive real-time messages when a server or other device/service is not functioning. If the first on-call person is not available, the problem is escalated to the next person