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Case Study:

Insurance Co. Tames Its Complex Web Applications

Data Correlation and Analytics Enabled by Ironstream

Challenge

As a major player in the rapidly evolving insurance industry, this Fortune 500 insurance company was growing its online presence at a rapid pace. Their high-powered mainframes could certainly handle massive and growing transaction volumes, but the complexity in having nearly 100 Java Virtual Machines (JVMs) in its web- application architecture was becoming troublesome.

Basically there was just one central problem -- a lack of visibility into details of the operations of those important JVMs. As a consequence, when a slow- down or other issue occurred, root- cause analysis and problem resolution was excessively time-consuming, difficult, and resource intensive.

The only way to address the inefficiency was to be able to collect all the relevant data across the entire systems infrastructure -- meaning the z/OS mainframe environment as well as the distributed-systems environment – and then to correlate all the information in one place where analytics and other big-data tools could be applied to it. However, the big-data repositories and tools resided mostly on one side of the business. How, then, to achieve that enterprise-wide capability?

Solution

This insurance leader chose Splunk® Enterprise as its big-data platform for log management and analytics, and it chose Ironstream from Precisely to ensure that the Splunk platform had real-time access to log data in the z/OS environment.

Ironstream was developed specifically to help organizations like this one to collect mainframe log information — e.g., on SMF records, log4j data, USS (Unix System Services) logs, and SYSOUT data — and to transform it into an efficient format for operational and big-data usage, and send it to the Splunk platform.

After conducting a successful Proof of Concept (POC) exercise with the help of Precisely services, the company selected Ironstream solution and moved quickly to deploy.

Results

The company now has full visibility into its entire web-based application infrastructure, enabling faster, easier problem resolution. Root-cause analyses can now be fully applied when problems arise, which improves the ability to prevent recurrences of the same issues.

There are other benefits too, including:

- Elimination of the need to dig through and process each individual JVM log, together with the large volumes of information that may reside within the logs, to try to pinpoint the source of an error.
- Comprehensive alerting and reporting capabilities.
- Ability to configure alerts to identify specific types of bottlenecks and errors in web applications, enabling the IT staff to be more proactive instead of reactive in problem resolution.
- An IT operations analytics (ITOA) framework to work from to ensure SLA adherence and enable better planning for future operations

In sum, the company is boosting operational efficiency and lowering overall costs while earning greater satisfaction among its customers, employees, and partners who rely on its web-application infrastructure.

To learn more about this solution and how it helps leading firms address operational intelligence, enterprise security, and other problems and opportunities, visit:

www.precisely.com/ironstream