Assure1

Network Data Systems Increases Focus on Actionable Items with Assure1

BUSINESS NEED

Network Data Systems (NDS) (www.network-data.com) offers companies customized IT infrastructure solutions. A NDS team of 120 business and technology professionals provide IT infrastructure, professional and managed services to Fortune 500 companies with complex systems, multi-national workforces and challenging integration issues.

Headquartered in Illinois, NDS provides managed services for nearly 40 customers with 3,200 devices. In meeting the growing demands of its clients, the company extended the number of systems and platforms it supports. Unfortunately, due to the multitude of proprietary systems feeding into NDS's back-end monitoring tools, multiple tickets could be issued when an event would happen within a customer's environment. With multiple tickets being processed and no automatic way to determine similar or duplicate issues, employees began managing huge ticket workloads. This prompted NDS to look for a partner to help with event correlation and deduplication.

SOLUTION

Upon researching potential vendors, NDS determined a short list of three companies to compete for the business. NDS found the capabilities of Federos' Assure1 platform fitting for the needs of the business. This, in addition to the technical expertise and experience of the Federos team, drove NDS to move forward with Assure1. Together they decided on a phased roll-out of the platform.

"We've been able to cut four or five tickets down to one single ticket to address a client issue." – Wayne Dumas, Director of Managed Services, Network Data Systems
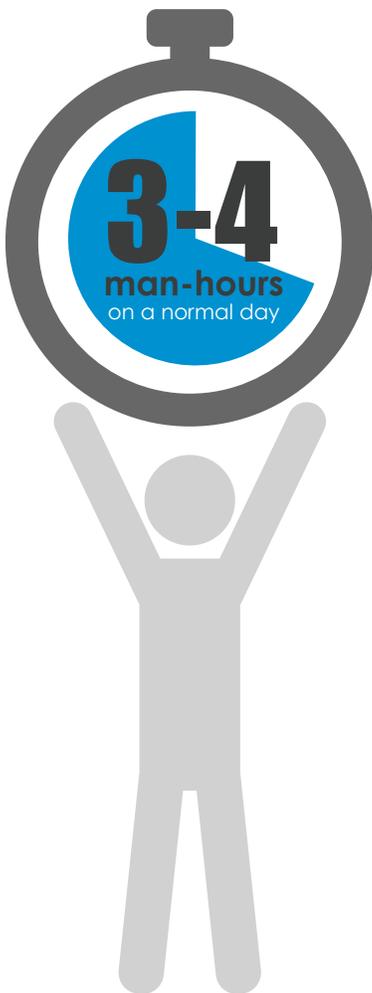
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Phase one focused on event correlation. Federos was tasked with becoming the common point of contact for NDS's ticketing system for all monitoring systems and tools. The Assure1 platform would need to de-duplicate and correlate events together, and then create a single ticket for the NDS team to address.

After the NDS and Federos teams began testing and validating the tool, they discovered the potential for ticket enrichment. This was an opportunity for Assure1 to not only correlate the parent/child events together into one ticket, but to also provide the engineer with the initial diagnostic steps to commence troubleshooting, saving NDS time and money.

The future stages of the roll-out include Assure1's fault management and performance monitoring tools, followed eventually by service-level agreement components.

RESULTS

During the event correlation phase of the Assure1 roll-out NDS has seen significant reduction in ticket generation volume and a significant increase in employee productivity. With the Assure1 platform, tickets for an event have decreased from five to one. Employees are now more efficient. No longer bogged down and overwhelmed with multiple event tickets, employees can quickly focus on the action items necessary to address client issues.

Prior to Assure1, it would take NDS engineers an average of one hour to troubleshoot event tickets (typically four or five tickets for some event incidents) and filter out duplicates. By automatically de-duplicating the tickets with Assure1, engineers now start working on issues immediately, saving employees 3-4 man-hours on a normal day.

Customers have also reported increased satisfaction with NDS services. Because employees have a smaller ticket load, they are more productive and customers see the problems in their environments handled and resolved at a much faster pace.

Quickly after the event correlation phase was complete, Federos and NDS teams began to work on ticket enrichment. This further increased efficiency and employee morale. Assure1 is helping to guide engineers in the right direction by populating tips for common issues directly on the ticket. The future goal is to have these steps automatically implemented by the Assure1 system, further improving NDS efficiencies, customer satisfaction and company margins.

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One year after implementing Assure1, savings of employee time, event correlation and ticket enrichment have resulted in a 30 percent ROI for NDS.

NDS has also found that the Assure1 tool can act as an e-bonding solution. It allows for Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) integration with the ticketing system, letting NDS exchange emails with customers directly through the system, while automatically updating the ticket on both sides.

As the future Assure1 phases roll out, NDS is expecting to further increase productivity, visibility and customer satisfaction.

ABOUT
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Federos

Federos provides a next generation, service assurance solution that unifies fault, performance, topology and service level management in a single scalable platform. With the product suite from Federos, you can drive IT and OSS transformation to service-oriented operations and accelerate delivery of new services to increase revenue, while consolidating disparate and legacy tools to significantly reduce operations costs.

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Network Data Systems

Network Data Systems is a Cisco Cloud and Managed Services Master Program (CMSP) Partner, with a Cisco Powered Service and Gold designation. Network Data Systems, some say, is the industry's best kept secret, a world-class specialist in providing IT infrastructure, professional and managed services. Headquartered in the Chicago suburb of Schaumburg, IL, NDS is trusted to serve some of the nation's largest, most complex corporation and government agencies.

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"Our business is all about efficiencies. So, wherever we possibly can, we are trying to find partners that we can work together with to create this automation to make things easier on our team." – Wayne Dumas, Director of Managed Services, Network Data Systems

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