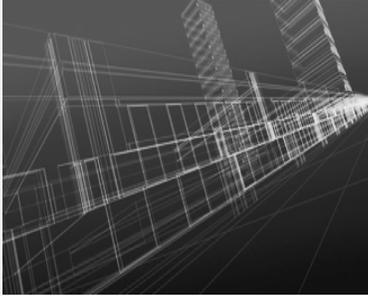


COMPUCOM SYSTEMS

EMC Smarts addresses growing demand for centralized management of physical and virtualized IT environments



ESSENTIALS

Industry

Managed services

Revenue

\$2.3 billion in 2011

Business Challenges

- Latency and performance issues
- Real-time systems management intelligence and issue resolution
- Network configuration updates required resources to execute
- Lack of visibility into clients' growing virtual environments

Solution

- EMC Smarts

Results

- First-year cost savings: \$550,000
- 80 percent faster root-cause analysis of system and network problems, in real time
- Time for large-scale network configuration updates reduced from two weeks to 30 minutes
- Monthly trouble tickets dropped from nearly 2,220 to about 500

OVERVIEW

CompuCom Systems, headquartered in Dallas, Texas, is a leading IT outsourcing company providing infrastructure management, application development, architecture and governance services, and procurement, deployment, and maintenance of hardware and software. Clients include Fortune 500 companies in retail, financial services, manufacturing, energy, pharmaceutical, healthcare, and other industries.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

As CompuCom clients began processing applications in real time and over wide-area networks, they began experiencing network latency and slow performance. CompuCom's management solution could not provide the real-time monitoring and rapid fault detection and resolution these more rigorous environments demanded. "As heavier loads began hitting our clients' infrastructures, it was taking us four to five hours to generate network maps and 10 to 15 minutes to poll their devices," says Michael Cruise, CompuCom's managing solution director. "Those long cycles just don't work in today's business world." In addition, CompuCom had limited visibility into clients' rapidly growing virtualized environments.

SOLUTION

With EMC® Smarts™, CompuCom provides remote monitoring, root-cause analysis, and event resolution for its clients' virtual and physical server, storage, and network infrastructures. CompuCom utilizes EMC Smarts Network Configuration Manager (NCM) to enable automated network change and configuration management, and facilitate compliance with key industry requirements such as Payment Card Industry (PCI) DSS and SAS 70 auditing standards. In addition, EMC CLARiiON® CX™ systems deliver consolidated storage to CompuCom's internal applications in support of human resources, financial, customer relationship management, and server virtualization processes. EMC NetWorker® provides CompuCom with backup and recovery support.

BIG BENEFITS, SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS

Smarts management solutions have enabled CompuCom to identify and resolve network issues dramatically faster and more efficiently. "EMC Smarts is truly a revolutionary product in network management that has helped our clients accelerate their integrated infrastructure management (IIM™) initiatives," says Cruise.

Using the Smarts solution, CompuCom detects, diagnoses, and corrects clients' systems and network problems in real time. CompuCom polls tens of thousands of devices in two to three minutes, versus 10 to 15 minutes previously, and performs

CUSTOMER PROFILE

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root-cause analysis in an hour or less, compared to four to five hours previously. Now, a single system administrator can monitor twice as many devices.

“With the holistic, integrated views provided by Smarts, we see the status of all devices and resolve issues much more quickly,” explains Cruise. “Our prior system had blind spots, so every time there was a mass configuration update or an issue, we would be flooded with false events. It was a big drain on resources to manually investigate them all. Smarts understands all the topology, connections, and what is inside the devices, so issues are automatically flagged and resolved without us having to hunt and peck.”

In the first year alone Smarts saved CompuCom approximately \$550,000, and the company expects to save at least that much annually as it expands its use of Smarts.

“Many clients have their own tools and don’t want to discard them. With Smarts, we can look at information these tools generate and pour it all behind a single pane of glass.”

Michael Cruise
Managing Solution Director, CompuCom Systems

A large, nationwide clothing retailer, and CompuCom client, reported significant improvements when it moved to the Smarts suite. The retailer’s monthly number of trouble tickets dropped from nearly 2,200 to around 500. In addition, the retailer’s device availability increased from 98.2 percent to 99.3 percent, and network availability improved from 98.3 percent to 99.5 percent.

Smarts also streamlines and centralizes management of CompuCom clients’ physical and virtualized server environments.

“Smarts gives us much more visibility into virtualized environments,” states Cruise. “That’s huge because everybody is working on virtualization, and we need to provide comprehensive systems management.”

CompuCom also has a long history of collaborating with telecommunications carriers, and now maps Smarts to carriers’ network components, such as their MLPS routers.

“Before, a client’s store could go out due to a carrier connection dropping and it wouldn’t show up on our map,” says Cruise. “It was easy to customize Smarts so it would connect to the carriers, and we can now see into their networks. When a carrier issue emerges, we no longer have to fruitlessly look across a client’s infrastructure.”

Another advantage of Smarts is ease of integration with other tools, such as Microsoft® SCOM or NetIQ.

“Many clients have their own tools and don’t want to discard them,” notes Cruise. “With Smarts, we can look at information these tools generate and pour it all behind a single pane of glass.”

GAINING OPERATING EFFECIENCY FROM AUTOMATED CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT

CompuCom uses Network Configuration Manager to simultaneously validate and update tens of thousands of devices. Smarts also produces detailed reports on the devices using a broad range of characteristics, such as versions, serial numbers, interfaces, memory capacities, and so on.

"We used to write scripts for updating and patching devices and then we'd have to monitor the scripts as they ran," explains Cruise. "It was at least a two-week process. With Smarts, we can set up the code and automatically push changes to 15,000 routers and switches at a client site in 20 to 30 minutes. Network Configuration Manager also facilitates clients' compliance with PCI DSS, SAS 70, policies, and best practices. CompuCom can set Smarts to automatically trigger alarms if configuration changes are out of compliance, such as a hospital granting public access to proprietary patient data.

DERIVING VALUE FROM INTEGRATION

The integration of the Smarts solutions was also recognized as a significant benefit.

"The data generated by our different Smarts solutions provides valuable synergy," says Cruise. "When Smarts alerts us of a downed router, we can trace it back to a configuration change captured in Network Configuration Manager. This saves substantial time and effort and enables us to advise clients if they made any unauthorized changes. We're planning to integrate our Smarts solutions so we can see changes in a root-cause analysis and then automatically run the events and fix configuration issues. By leveraging new integration points between the Smarts network configuration and IT operations management portfolio, we'll be able to deliver even more comprehensive and efficient network management to our clients."

With the broader functionality enabled by Smarts, CompuCom has increased the competitive advantage of its offerings.

"Our clients are amazed by the detail and relevancy of the information we now provide," says Cruise. "It gives them a tangible reminder of our value."

CONTACT US

To learn more about how EMC products, services, and solutions can help solve your business and IT challenges, [contact](#) your local representative or authorized reseller—or visit us at www.EMC.com.

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