solarwinds

Thai AirAsia avoids network turbulence with SolarWinds

Thai AirAsia, a joint venture between Malaysian airline AirAsia and Thailand's Asia Aviation, has overcome issues of IT turbulence by using SolarWinds Network Performance Monitor (NPM) and Network Configuration Manager (NCM) solutions to streamline and simplify network management and isolate malfunctions before they emerge.

The Customer

Operating in the highly competitive low-cost carrier market, Thai AirAsia offers a wide range of travel solutions to the low-fare market in Thailand and surrounding countries. The company is a joint venture between Malaysian airline AirAsia and Thailand's Asia Aviation. It serves AirAsia's regularly scheduled domestic and international flights from Bangkok and other cities in Thailand, and operates in association with group partners AirAsia X, Japanese AirAsia, Phillipines AirAsia and Indonesian AirAsia inc. The Thai AirAsia fleet consists of 30 modern Airbus A320-200s.

Thai AirAsia operates out of 13 airports across Thailand, flying to China, Hong Kong, Cambodia, Vietnam, India, Macau, Myanmar, Singapore and Indonesia. The airline operates out of Don Muang International Airport in Bangkok.

The Network Challenge

Thai AirAsia found that a growing number of network devices and an increasingly complicated operating environment was making it difficult to track network performance and locate problem areas. With so many crucial business processes relying on a stable network, the airline realised the need for a network monitor that could streamline and simplify network management, and locate faults in the network before they became a serious threat to operations.

ICT supervisor Piyachate Likitdecharoj said: "We didn't have an exclusive system for network management. If we needed to see the status of any device, we had to look directly at that device. Now we have over 50 devices, so it would take a long time to find out which one was malfunctioning, or to determine the cause."

With several external systems such as the New Skies Reservation System, the Flight Schedule system and the AirAsia financial and email systems also linked to the airline's network, Likitdecharoj found that network management was becoming increasingly complicated.

He said: "Since the remote systems are not yet integrated with our own, we can't deal with any problems ourselves; we have to liaise with system managers at the other end of the network."

CLIENT STATISTICS

- **Fleet of 30 modern aircraft**

- **2.6 million passengers in Q1 2013**

- **50 networked devices at Don Muang airport in Bangkok**

"The introduction of these solutions has proved hugely helpful for our work. We've been able to reduce the length of time it takes us to discover the cause of malfunctions, and we can see the usage history of our devices, which we can then use to liaise with system administrators abroad."

The Solution

The airline sought a feature-rich but cost-effective network management solution, and reviewed several brands before deciding to deploy SolarWinds Network Performance Monitor (NPM). Several months later, the airline bought SolarWinds Network Configuration Manager (NCM).

"We chose SolarWinds because it offered the most comprehensive benefits," said Likitdecharoj.

NPM allows Thai AirAsia to detect, analyse and resolve network performance problems quickly, before they cause issues. Likitdecharoj is able to search automatically for network devices that support the SNMP protocol, and can view real-time performance statistics via dynamic network topology maps, offering a deep insight into the network. Consequently, system administrators can see the entire network and keep up with developing changes, enabling them to quickly monitor and keep watch over network performance.

IP Address Manager automates DHCP, DNS, and IP space management. It centrally manages, monitors, alerts and reports on the entire IP infrastructure; maintains Microsoft DHCP/DNS & Cisco DHCP services from a single web interface; optimises IP space utilisation and avoids IP conflicts; delivers role-based access control; and offers critical insight into IP address space through real-time views and historical tracking.

Additionally a real-time dashboard provides warnings, reports and expert advice about the problems found and possible solutions. NPM helps Thai AirAsia to facilitate much-improved network monitoring and management, boosting performance and streamlining the role of the ICT team.

Thai AirAsia has also recently deployed SolarWinds NCM, which allows the team to configure devices from multiple vendors within the network, via a web console. NCM checks the configuration of all network devices in real time, sending a notification immediately when a configuration is changed and displaying a before-vs-after comparison. The configuration may be rolled back to return the device to its original configuration before a problem arises due to an incorrect configuration change.
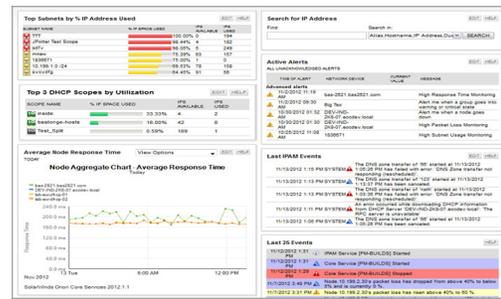
The Results

Likitdecharoj has found the SolarWinds solutions have been of great benefit to Thai AirAsia, increasing network efficiency and solving problems before they occur.

"These solutions have proved hugely helpful for our work. We've reduced the time it takes us to discover the cause of malfunctions, and we can see the usage history of our devices, which allows us to liaise with system administrators abroad. In addition, SolarWinds NPM detects devices likely to develop faults in advance. For instance, a switch might look as if it's working normally although an internal fan might be broken. As a result, we're able to ask the vendor to take a look and replace the device before it develops a fault, and our staff are able to offer a better service."

Using the 'Top 10' feature of NPM gives the ICT team a comprehensive view of the entire system, or they can opt to view only those nodes which look like they might be problematic.

SolarWinds NCM also allows the team to manage the configuration of over 50 network devices quickly and easily, and streamlines the task of replacing them.

"We no longer have to sit and collect the data for each device to see what batch number and model number it is, or what version of firmware it uses. When a device is damaged, all we need to do is phone to ask the vendor to replace it and upload the new configuration," said Likitdecharoj.

IT Management
Inspired by You.

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 http://www.solarwinds.com.

solarwinds
solarwinds.com

6 Temasek Boulevard #39-01/02, Suntec Tower Four, Singapore 038986
T: +65 6593 7600 | F: +65 (0)6 491 5123