

Splunk® at mail.de

German Email Provider Increases Performance and Availability Through Operational Intelligence



“Before introducing Splunk we were ‘blind’ to our own systems to a certain extent. The significant volume of different log files made it very difficult to localize errors in our system. With Splunk Enterprise we are now able to do this proactively and in real time. We’ve been able to greatly increase the availability of our services and we see enormous potential for further Splunk use cases at mail.de.”

CEO
mail.de

OVERVIEW

INDUSTRY

- Online Services (Email service provider)

SPLUNK USE CASES

- IT operations
- Application management
- Business analytics

BUSINESS IMPACT

- Real-time alerting resulting in faster troubleshooting, improved service availability and time saving for the IT team
- Better customer support with the ability to investigate and resolve customer queries in real time
- Business insights provided to management and marketing teams

DATA SOURCES

- Mail server logs
- Web server logs
- Database logs
- Application logs

APPLICATIONS

- Splunk App for Google Maps

The Business

mail.de is a German email provider located in Gütersloh. The company prides itself on its innovative and secure email service “made in Germany.” An intuitive user interface provides customers with both an easy-to-navigate inbox and a secure email address. Since 2012, mail.de has offered users FreeMail, a product that combines the highest quality and security requirements with a free email address. Users benefit from continuously improved services and have a central interface for all their online communication.

Challenges

mail.de offers its customers secure, high-performance email communication, so ensuring that the service is highly available is business critical. As is the case with many emerging companies, mail.de’s IT infrastructure consists of an extremely varied server landscape, resulting in a number of heterogeneous systems with different log-file formats and a continually increasing volume of machine-generated data. This made it difficult for mail.de to gain a holistic view of the state of its IT landscape in order to identify errors in the system and avoid or minimize system downtime. When disruptions occurred, the IT team had to search for root cause on all the different systems—a protracted, time-consuming process—and so the availability of services suffered. mail.de wanted a new solution that would make it possible to centrally monitor all log files and introduce a real-time alerting system.

Enter Splunk

mail.de started using Splunk Enterprise and the software was implemented by a small team in just a few hours, without the need for external consultants. Whenever the mail.de IT team had questions, they were able rely on the support community at Splunk Answers (<http://answers.splunk.com/>) as a resource. mail.de quickly realized the potential of the Splunk platform and complemented the deployment with apps, including the Splunk App for Google Maps.

All log-file formats from various sources such as web servers, mail servers, databases and proprietary applications are indexed and analyzed centrally in Splunk Enterprise. Today, almost all of mail.de GmbH’s corporate divisions gain valuable insights from Splunk alerts, reports and dashboards. The IT team relies on Splunk software to troubleshoot and resolve issues before they can impact the service provided to customers; the mail.de support team uses Splunk Enterprise to quickly get to the bottom of any queries raised by customers on the phone; the marketing team uses insights from Splunk Enterprise to evaluate the effectiveness of certain campaigns and drill down into the behavior of customers; and mail.de’s management looks at the performance of key business metrics via Splunk reports and dashboards.

Breakthroughs

Optimized service through real-time alerting

Proactive real-time monitoring has proven to be an especially important feature for mail.de’s IT division. When an error occurs in the system, the root cause must be found as quickly as possible, before a user stumbles across it. In order to constantly

Free Download

Download [Splunk](#) for free. You'll get a Splunk Enterprise license for 60 days and you can index up to 500 megabytes of data per day. After 60 days, or anytime before then, you can convert to a perpetual Free license or purchase an Enterprise license by contacting sales@splunk.com.

optimize its entire service offering, mail.de has set up various alerts that immediately transmit an email notification in case of system failure or other anomalies. The support team can now also quickly locate and fix problems as and when they occur. For example, if a customer's email does not reach the intended recipient, the support team can use Splunk software to check in just a few seconds whether an internal error exists or the problem is on the receiver's side.

Time and money saved

Central indexing of all log files as well as the ability to correlate current and historical data in real time has resulted in considerable time savings for the entire company. With Splunk Enterprise, many different systems can be analyzed with just a few clicks. In addition, all divisions receive the information that is most important for them in a simple and easy-to-use format, eliminating the time consuming processing of individual requests. Teams also receive specific additional information ad hoc when necessary. For example, if a customer asks the support team about the whereabouts of a particular email, in just a few minutes the team can clarify whether the mail was delivered or not, and identify the cause of any possible issue.

Business insights across divisions

Insights from Splunk Enterprise are prepared for each division using a specially designed dashboard for standard reports. In this way, management is provided with a graphical display of the most important business figures, such as the number of new registration for the FreeMail service. The marketing team can see the effect of a campaign at a glance or quickly gain information on the utilization behavior of FreeMail customers.

In summary, the benefits of Splunk Enterprise are felt across mail.de's business. Thanks to Splunk software, performance and support issues can be located and resolved in the shortest of times. In this way, Splunk contributes to the optimization of the entire range of mail.de services across all divisions.