Real-Time Operational Intelligence Keeps Otto Group Running 24/7

otto group

Executive summary

Founded in 1949, OTTO is a leading German retail company and one of the biggest web retailers in Europe with more than 5,000 employees. OTTO is a member of the Otto Group, a worldwide-operating retail and services group comprised of over 120 companies in more than 20 countries. OTTO needed a real-time monitoring solution that could provide operational and digital intelligence across its complex infrastructure. Since deploying Splunk Enterprise, OTTO has seen benefits including:

• Enhanced customer experience across multiple channels

• Increased operational efficiency

• Improved speed and quality of new software deployment

Why Splunk

OTTO operates a multichannel retail model, giving customers the flexibility to order online, via telephone or catalog in a seamless and frictionless way. Supporting this critical business objective is a complex, multitiered, heterogeneous infrastructure. As a result, some of the most critical systems at OTTO, which need to be up and running 24/7, are its customer relationship management (CRM) call center application and the central order processing system. The system comprises all 20 Otto Group call centers in Germany, as well as OTTO's web store with source systems.

Group Technology Partner (GTP), the Otto Group's IT service provider, initially deployed Splunk Enterprise to achieve a consolidated monitoring approach and gain insight across its transactional infrastructure. It has a service-oriented architecture (SOA)-based architecture setup with databases, application servers and client applications.

Splunk software was initially used as part of the monitoring system for production use. Soon, the 10GB (per day) license wasn't enough, as GTP realized the full potential of the Splunk solution and upgraded to a 100GB (per day) license. The use of Splunk Enterprise has also been expanded to the development and quality assurance (QA) testing environments.

Industry

• Retail

Splunk Use Cases

• Application delivery

• Business analytics

• IT operations

Challenges

• Could only monitor call centers individually, not as a whole

• Had to recognize and resolve system errors

• Needed to speed up and stabilize rollout of new solutions across the group

• Wanted to optimize code before production

• Lack of end-to-end visibility into complex order management process

Business Impact

• Increase in operational efficiency

• Faster and more accurate troubleshooting

• Optimized maintenance; reduced downtime

• Increased satisfaction with GTP (IT service provider)

• Improved testing and system optimization before going into production

• Optimized order management business process

Data Sources

• Application and transaction logs from call center software

• Syslog files

• Business operations data

• KPI measurements of end-to-end business workflows

Splunk Products

• Splunk Enterprise

Harnessing machine data to achieve operational excellence

Before deploying the Splunk solution, OTTO could only monitor exceptions within single call centers. Through utilizing Splunk Enterprise, 20 German Otto Group call centers can now be monitored in real time, including 100 percent of all relevant backend requests. This ability has significantly improved OTTO's ability to recognize, identify and solve system errors, often before they can impact users. In addition, the time it takes to resolve problems has been significantly reduced, overall downtimes have decreased and maintenance has been optimized. Thanks to Splunk software, when a call center reports a failure to support, OTTO's IT team or department is already aware of the problem. The average time to act on a highlighted issue has now decreased to five minutes.

End-to-end insights enhance customer experience

Splunk Enterprise also provides OTTO with insight into the multilayered business transaction system that processes everything from customer details to payment processes. Previous efforts to monitor the performance of this process were time- consuming, requiring an individual to manually tie different business transactions together to see how each occurred from end to end. With this entire process now visible in real time in Splunk dashboards, OTTO is able to identify, understand and improve process bottlenecks, delivering superior customer experience.

Speeding up launches and meeting compliance requirements

Introducing Splunk to the development and QA testing teams has increased the speed and ability to launch more stable solutions and setups into the production environment. As a result, the quality of software deployments has improved significantly.

"The Splunk solution gives us real-time visibility into complex business processes. This allows us to simply and quickly identify, analyze and fix problems such as failures, work processes and delays. Furthermore, Splunk Enterprise helps us with achieving our KPIs through identifying the actual system stability and performance. Splunk is indispensable in our daily work."

Michael Otremba, Department Manager, Customer Care Center Software Development
OTTO IT

Splunk software has also been deployed in network operations at OTTO to monitor its switches and internal proxy servers. As an added benefit, Splunk software's long-term data retention helps OTTO address German compliance requirements by saving internal proxy server logs for 90 days.

Building on Operational Intelligence to achieve DevOps excellence

Splunk software has saved OTTO valuable resources because it needs so little configuration. Splunk Enterprise has helped OTTO IT to innovate new ideas that help OTTO gain Operational Intelligence across its infrastructure. The Splunk solution is being used to create a real-time hourly "top seller" list for the customer care center software client and to deliver data for a mobile KPI app. It is also used within the procurement department to monitor the procurement system and provide troubleshooting and analytics. It has helped create increased collaboration between Dev and Ops, streamlining development efforts. The OTTO IT department has a very complex SOA architecture and Splunk Enterprise has made multisystem analysis much easier.

Download Splunk for free or get started with the free cloud trial. Whether cloud, on-premises, or for large or small teams, Splunk has a deployment model that will fit your needs.

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