

SaskTel Gains Fast ROI, Embraces Enterprise-Wide Analytics Strategy

SaskTel

Executive summary

When people in Saskatchewan, Canada need a new phone, lightning-fast internet, TV service or business communication solutions, they turn to SaskTel, the region's leading Information and Communications Technology (ICT) provider. At SaskTel, providing top-notch customer service is a high priority, so it adopted an enterprise-wide infrastructure monitoring, security and predictive analytics strategy. Since deploying Splunk Enterprise, SaskTel has seen benefits including:

- Return on investment (ROI) in 90 days
- Protect customer privacy with new process for call traces
- Ensure excellent customer service standards
- Speed time to introduce new products to market

Why Splunk

In 2012, Jeff Pasnak, a technical analyst in the IS division at SaskTel, set out to improve processes by gaining visibility into every syslog server in the corporation. "We had been working with syslog and had built various front ends with open source tools, but that approach wasn't scaling," says Pasnak. "We were spending far too much development time trying to create visualizations for people."

"We evaluated other vendors and none fit," says Pasnak. "The desire was to move toward more predictive analytics. If we could stitch those two pieces together, we could understand the cause and move toward where we are now — predicting when things are going to happen or make sure that they don't happen at all."

"Early on, in our first days with Splunk, we achieved ROI on a 50GB license within a matter of 90 days," says David Yaffe, technical analyst, SaskTel.

Single source of truth

SaskTel has implemented enterprise-wide IT operations and security monitoring and troubleshooting in the security operations center (SOC), network operations center (NOC) and beyond. Today, 700 active users and about 300 weekly users throughout nearly every SaskTel operations and infrastructure group rely on Splunk Enterprise to ingest and monitor call detail records and data from every router, switch, server, firewall and load balancer.

Industry

- Communications

Splunk Use Cases

- IT Operations
- Infrastructure Monitoring
- Predictive Analytics
- Security Investigation
- Security Incident Response
- Security Monitoring

Challenges

- Needed scalable solution for enterprise-wide IT and security visibility
- Manual, lengthy and error-prone call trace process took hours
- Maintain excellent customer experience

Business Impact

- ROI in 90 days
- Enabling call traces in seconds
- Enterprise-wide infrastructure and security monitoring, troubleshooting and predictive analytics
- Bringing new products to market more quickly
- Providing customers with needed services information

Data Sources

- Routers
- Switches
- Servers
- Firewalls
- Load balancers
- Call detail records

Splunk Products

- Splunk Enterprise
- Splunk DB Connect
- Splunk Machine Learning Toolkit

Fast time to market

Today SaskTel teams report that Splunk Enterprise is helping them to speed time to market. “With Splunk Enterprise, we can rapidly prototype new products,” Pasnak says.

The ability to rapidly prototype and bring new, innovative products to market quickly benefits SaskTel customers. For example, one useful new feature of the mySASKTEL app enables customers to learn how much money they save by using the free Wi-Fi network made possible by SaskTel’s partnership with businesses throughout the province.

Nearly seamless operations

“Splunk has allowed me not to change a lot about the way that I do things,” Pasnak concludes. “We’ve been able to enforce standards, policies and procedures within the corporation, and Splunk has helped us show why that’s necessary. We’ve been able to expand the system, implement clustering, search heads, Splunk DB Connect, and upgrade them all nearly seamlessly.”

“Everyone wants to be as efficient as possible and use tools that are truly accessible. The power of Splunk is that when I ran into accessibility issues, Splunk, as a vendor, sat down with me and fixed it. That’s important because I can continue to do my job. Now I can determine whether we are under attack or there’s simply a misconfiguration. With Splunk Enterprise 7.2, I’m back to getting alerts, doing investigations and resolving issues in minutes, as efficiently as I was before.”

Shan Noyes, Technical Analyst
SaskTel

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