Anaplan Improves Product Delivery With Access to Operational Intelligence

Executive summary

Anaplan, the leading planning and performance management platform for smart businesses, is the global provider of a cloud-based business modeling and planning platform for sales, marketing, HR, supply chain, IT and finance. In order to ensure optimum product performance for more than 80,000 licensed users, Anaplan needed to improve log management and overall IT delivery across its support, customer success and product development teams. Since deploying Splunk Enterprise and Splunk IT Service Intelligence (ITSI), the company has seen benefits including:

- Quicker resolution of problems across IT infrastructure
- Better understanding of platform performance
- Improved security capabilities

Why Splunk

Anaplan is a fast-growing global company that adds a large volume of new users annually. This growth has been made possible due to the company's use of the cloud to deliver its product, providing the flexibility to scale its business as required and provide its services to customers on a 24/7 basis. However, while the cloud provides tremendous benefits to both Anaplan and its customers, it can also present certain management challenges. To support its SLAs for always-on availability, Anaplan needed to resolve issues such as a slow login process as quickly as possible. To do this effectively and at scale across a growing business, Anaplan recognized that access to a centralized method of analyzing application-generated machine data would deliver an improved level of customer service.

Splunk Enterprise is used at all levels of the customer support infrastructure to provide insight into application and platform performance while directly handling customer issues, speeding up the time it takes to identify and rectify problems. To ensure that high service levels are maintained for customers across the globe, Anaplan

Industry
- Technology

Splunk Use Cases
- Application Delivery
- IT Operations
- Security

Challenges
- Lack of central repository for logs impacted the time needed to identify and resolve problems
- Fast growth of the company resulted in ad hoc tools being created to achieve visibility across on-premises and cloud infrastructure
- Desire to ensure optimum product performance for customers with large global operations

Business Impact
- Greater visibility over infrastructure has resulted in quicker mean time to repair for support teams
- Smoother overall customer experience on the Anaplan platform thanks to improved performance monitoring through access to dashboards
- An overview of log data has resulted in greater security awareness and alerts established to better protect customers

Data Sources
- Application logs
- Audit logs
- OS logs
- Splunk App for Unix and Linux
- JMX data
- Syslogs

Splunk Products
- Splunk Enterprise
- Splunk ITSI

utilizes Splunk ITSI to monitor the performance of servers through a range of dashboards. This enables the company to pre-empt maintenance or software updates without degrading customer service. The data visibility provided by Splunk ITSI also has enabled Anaplan to proactively improve its security capabilities with new alerts established across a range of suspicious activities.

Taking the time out of problem solving

Before deploying Splunk Enterprise, the Anaplan support team invested a lot of time trying to identify the root cause of problems that occasionally emerged in its applications. The previous process involved the use of multiple command line tools and searches built in-house, as well as free open-source tools to identify where and why a problem had occurred. This was time-consuming and ineffective, taking up a large amount of the third-line support resources available. Thanks to Splunk software and the ability to quickly search through large volumes of log data, the Anaplan support team is now at least 10 times faster. This has freed up valuable time, allowing engineers to focus on other customer requirements.

Supporting and securing services 24/7

While Splunk Enterprise was used as Anaplan's solution for application performance management, another tool was being used for server monitoring. This made it difficult to determine whether a problem was being generated by an application or by a particular server. To address this issue, the company moved all of its metrics into Splunk ITSI, as well as utilizing the Splunk App for Unix and Linux and the Splunk App for the Monitoring of Java Virtual Machines with JMX. This means that Anaplan

"**Splunk is an integral part of our IT operations, supporting the growth of the business and helping us to ensure our customers receive the best possible service.**"

Martin Hempstock
Monitoring and Metrics Architect
Anaplan

now has a central set of dashboards that provide a consolidated overview across its entire infrastructure, making it easier to spot where a problem is located. This also has improved the company's security posture with new dynamically-adaptive thresholds and alerts established in Splunk ITSI to govern areas such as invalid logins and anomalies. This means that any anomalous activity is identified, alerts are registered and then an investigation can begin.

Proactively improve customer experience

Anaplan leverages the insight provided by Splunk Enterprise and Splunk ITSI to help build extensive Anaplan forecasting or planning models for customers and analyze the log data generated to monitor performance. This means if a forecasting model is not optimized for a growing international business or a new use case needs to be introduced, changes can be made to ensure it scales. Now, Anaplan is also able to determine when to best carry out maintenance to limit disruption to users who want to access planning documents. With customers having users distributed across the globe, this is a significant consideration in ensuring that documents are accessible and usable.

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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