Splunk® at Amaya Gaming

Online Gaming Provider Experiences Smarter Development
and Reduces Compliance Headache with Splunk

AMAYA

"Meeting our compliance requirements used be a time-consuming headache. Splunk has transformed the process and we can now do what's needed, hassle-free."

Manager of Production Design
Amaya Gaming

OVERVIEW

INDUSTRY
• Online Services – Gaming

SPLUNK USE CASES
• Product development and testing
• IT operations
• Business analytics
• Compliance

BUSINESS IMPACT
• Smarter product development to ensure no negative impact on service performance
• Reduced firefighting, freeing up resources to be more productive elsewhere
• Improved service availability, neutralizing the risk of revenue impact and potential long-term damage to customer loyalty
• Eliminated compliance headache by providing direct access to a dedicated compliance search head

DATA SOURCES
• Web services
• Java applications
• Application servers
• Message queues
• Linux
• Windows
• Various relational databases
• Infrastructure equipment

The Business

Amaya Gaming provides a full suite of online gaming products and services including casino, poker, sportsbook, platform, lotteries and slot machines. Some of the world's largest and best known gaming operators and casinos are powered by Amaya's online, mobile and land-based products, including Bwin.Party, Caesars, Paf, Betsson, William Hill, Bet365 and many more. Amaya is present in all major gaming markets, with offices in North America, Latin America, Europe and Asia. The company comprises former industry leaders Chartwell; Cryptologic – pioneers within online casino; Ongame – a leader within online poker; Cadillac Jack – a successful slot machine manufacturer; and Diamond Game – an innovator in lottery technology. Amaya enables its partners to deliver gaming content through online, mobile and land-based channels to improve player satisfaction, facilitate new customer acquisition and generate the highest per-player revenue yield possible.

Challenges

Due to its large, global footprint, Amaya was faced with a fragmented infrastructure, making it difficult to consolidate information from more than 80 different applications. In addition, only people with considerable technical skills could use the existing system logging tool. Due to compliance requirements, the developer team was not allowed access to Amaya's production sites, so they had no insight into how new products were performing once those products left the development environment. This meant that if something went wrong, it was a time-consuming task to identify the cause of the problem. When a specific incident occurred, the logs had to be extracted, zipped and sent to the development team before the problem could be investigated.

Enter Splunk

In 2012, Amaya Gaming acquired Ongame, a B2B online poker network. The Ongame team was already using Splunk software to proactively optimize its online gaming services. Introduced to Splunk as a result of the acquisition, Amaya began to use the platform for operational intelligence to support its production sites. Amaya sends the machine data produced by all of its own applications into Splunk Enterprise, including log files from web and application services, various operating system and infrastructure equipment. On top of this, Splunk Enterprise is used to index, search and analyze the data from as much third-party infrastructure as possible. Amaya runs Splunk indexers and search heads in the development, test, acceptance and production environments.

Amaya executives use real-time Splunk dashboards to monitor revenue streams, and Splunk Enterprise is also used across the service operations, customer support and DevOps teams at Amaya. Service operations use Splunk software primarily for troubleshooting, with real-time dashboards flagging incidents as they occur and for trend analysis. Splunk Enterprise also plays a key part in the customer support team's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). If a certain alert is triggered, the team uses Splunk software to investigate the incident and determines whether it can be resolved or must be escalated. Amaya's developers have Splunk dashboards open all the time. Everyone has access and can investigate how their products are working in the production environment.

> "With Splunk, we now work much more closely with the business. An executive can ask us a question and bam, there's the answer."
>
> **Manager of Production Design**
> *Amaya Gaming*

Breakthroughs

Smarter product development

Amaya's development team began using Splunk Enterprise to spot bugs. Being able to search and correlate the log data from new products and services resulted in a dramatic reduction of errors and incidents once the software was up and running in the production environment. The development team can now ensure the quality of releases, updates, and new products and services, as well as avoiding any negative impact on service performance. On top of this, the team is using Splunk software to go one step further and analyze which new features are being used, and how, by the end users of Amaya's services. This insight is then fed back into the development cycle and informs future business decisions.

Time savings

Before deploying Splunk software, the Amaya service operations team spent a high proportion of its time firefighting and investigating a large volume of errors in the system. By visualizing system health, the team has been able to tackle these errors proactively, reducing the overall number of incidents and identifying known issues. As a result, the department no longer needs to allocate one or two people to investigate, freeing up these team members to be more productive elsewhere.

Service availability

Amaya has been able to considerably improve the availability of its services through using Splunk Enterprise. By analyzing the data, seeing trends, visualizing the operations data, and spotting errors and deviation from the normal baseline, the company can ensure a high quality customer experience. Downtime can have a huge impact on revenue and potentially cause long-term damage to customer loyalty, so minimizing this is incredibly valuable. This commitment to uptime is a global initiative, with a 'green light meeting' to correlate trending across time zones taking place as one region hands over to another. For example, when Europe hands over to the Canadian office, they review any releases that took place in the European time zone that might have an impact in the Canadian time zone. Predictive analytics in Splunk Enterprise enable the team to drill down into the potential impact of slight upward trends, for example increased latency.

Compliance

The highly regulated nature of the gambling industry means that Amaya was faced with regular compliance checks from different governments and authorities around the world, often at very short notice. Meeting these demands could be time consuming. With Splunk, Amaya has been able to remove much of the headache associated with these compliance requirements, by giving the relevant authorities direct access to a dedicated compliance search head with pre-defined searches and dashboards. This dramatically simplified process means that Amaya can now give access to the data the authorities need at any given time.

In summary, Splunk has enabled Amaya to streamline a number of time-consuming and potentially costly processes, from meeting compliance requirements to troubleshooting incidents and errors. In addition, the development team has been able to gain a much better insight into how new releases are performing in the production environment, reducing the impact of any bugs and allowing a more proactive approach to how new products and services are being used. This has resulted in a much improved customer experience across Amaya's online properties.

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.

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