Travelport Lands Exceptional Customer Experience with Full-Stack Observability

Key Challenges

Relying on a variety of tools for monitoring, logging, dashboarding and alerting, Travelport needed a simplified, holistic view of its infrastructure, applications and API to enhance full-stack observability and improve MTTD.

Key Results

With Splunk Observability Cloud and Assigned Expert Service, Travelport achieved full visibility across its entire environment, gaining a comprehensive understanding of its critical apps and services, maximizing customer experience.

TRAVELPORT

Industry: Travel & Transportation

Solutions: Observability, Assigned Expert Service, IT Service Intelligence, Application Performance Monitoring, Splunk Real User Monitoring, Splunk Synthetic Monitoring

Products: Splunk Observability Cloud, Splunk Assigned Expert Service

Simplifying the complex travel ecosystem requires a simplified observability solution.

Powering bookings for hundreds of thousands of travel suppliers worldwide, Travelport keeps the travel and tourism industry flying high. With more than 400 global airline partners such as Delta, British Airways and KLM, access to over 48,000 car rental locations and hundreds of thousands of bookable hotel properties, the company connects buyers and sellers of travel through its next generation marketplace, Travelport+, driving innovation that simplifies the complex travel ecosystem.

Operating in over 165 countries with up to 201 billion itineraries priced daily, Travelport relied on a complex mix of observability tools to monitor product health and performance. However, the company lacked the holistic view required to identify, alert, troubleshoot and remediate incidents in a timely manner, resulting in longer impact times for its core customer-facing product. Correlation was also a challenge. Disparate tools forced teams to transition between them to determine an issue's root cause, increasing MTTD and impacting Travelport's ability to serve its customers.

On top of that, the legacy IT solutions Travelport used presented every event as a critical alert. Experiencing up to 20,000 alerts in a single day, the Travelport service desk was overwhelmed with no clear insight into which events actually required attention, putting its service desk in a position where it could not possibly address legitimate events efficiently, impacting service availability.

Travelport needed monitoring tools that worked smarter, not harder. For that, Travelport turned to Splunk Observability Cloud. And to customize the Splunk stack to fit its unique technical requirements, Travelport turned to a Splunk Assigned Expert for strategic guidance, ensuring support for its key customer-facing product.

Outcomes

75%
reduction in MTTD

Exceeded
uptime goal, delivering better customer experience

95%
reduction in false positives with Splunk Observability Cloud

Taking off with full visibility and centralized insights

After suffering through heavy turbulence with tools that had no analytics capabilities or central logging facility for business and technical insights, Travelport saw clear skies with Splunk. "In the Splunk Observability Cloud, we get a unified picture of everything," says Ashok Uppalapati, director of engineering for Travelport's access UI division. Splunk's full-stack observability solution provided Uppalapati and his team with a holistic view of Travelport's cloud-hosted apps, services, infrastructure and Kubernetes. "Identifying an issue is significantly easier now because of whole-stack correlation, drastically lowering MTTD," says Uppalapati. Since implementing Splunk, Travelport has seen a 75% reduction in MTTD, enabling the company to exceed its uptime goal for its core product, delivering a better user experience and giving the company a leg up against competitors.

Through Application Performance Monitoring (APM) capabilities in Splunk Observability Cloud, Travelport now has a comprehensive graphical representation of its entire app and Kubernetes ecosystem. "APM gives complete insight into the app ecosystem, including all microservices, communication and performance, dependencies and network latencies between microservice requests," says Uppalapati. "Because APM gives graphical capacity that depicts the full process with calls and failures with correlations, the operations team can spot issues in the app without the need to bring in development teams for debugging."

Crucially, Travelport has gained a better understanding of how its critical apps and services affect its business. "Using data from Splunk Observability Cloud's APM, Log Observer and Real User Monitoring (RUM) capabilities, we created an impact assessment dashboard," says Uppalapati. "Because all our data is in a single place, we can now do impact analysis on indicators such as call volume, revenue loss, booking or segment loss and more." This data is extremely valuable to both the Travelport operations and senior leadership teams, who deeply care about maximizing customer experience through maintaining the overall health of the application.

Not only that, Splunk Observability Cloud's Synthetic Monitoring helps Travelport detect issues that previously flew under the radar. "Our global availability test revealed periodic network and DNS issues in specific regions that we had never discovered before," says Uppalapati. Ultimately, this provides Travelport valuable insights into its customer experience around the world, addressing issues before end users notice and report them.

Soaring to new heights with a Splunk Assigned Expert

But that was only the beginning of Travelport's journey with Splunk. The company tapped into Splunk's Assigned Expert Service to engage with a strategic advisor who applied deep product knowledge of the Splunk stack to further optimize its environment. With Splunk Assigned Expert, Travelport had three main objectives:

- Create a better approach to analyzing events and reducing the number of alerts
- Identify the root cause of each alert
- Correlate alerts to a product's health and performance, maximizing customer experience

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> Top-line revenue is at risk every minute we're not fully up and running. Splunk's Assigned Expert rolled up their sleeves and found a way to optimize our environment to better respond to disruptions."
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> **Ed Hubbard,** Director of Site Reliability and Monitoring, Travelport

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Transforming from "every event is an alert" to fewer, actionable alerts was a collaborative effort that involved migrating the presentation and correlation layers from Travelport's mainframe environment to the new Splunk cloud environment. "This is where our Assigned Expert came in," says Ed Hubbard, director of site reliability and monitoring at Travelport. "We wouldn't have been able to correlate alerts to a product's health, and in turn, reduce false positives by 95%, without our Assigned Expert's deep product knowledge and their ability to get in the weeds and essentially 'mold' the Splunk stack to fit our technical environment and requirements."

"Not only have we significantly reduced false positives and the number of overall alerts, but the alerts we do have are now directly actionable," continues Hubbard. "When one comes in, we know exactly what needs to be done to address it." This significant change in alert fidelity has allowed Travelport to be more responsive to the most critical alerts impacting customers without spending hours determining an issue's root cause — maintaining digital resilience and customer satisfaction.

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> Our teams love APM as it allows them to see where the issue originated in the app ecosystem, including data on requests, latencies and traces with correlation, enabling us to improve MTTD by 75%."
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> **Ashok Uppalapati,** Director of Engineering, Travelport Access UI Division

In the window seat: Travelport's single pane of glass for product health

Operationally, Travelport now has a single pane of glass that is used daily to monitor the health of all products, communicating red/amber/green type status to the data center, the command center or service desk team. This data makes sure Travelport customers have access to its services around the clock. "This shift in system uptime directly translates into a better customer experience for every user of our products, which is one of our top organizational priorities. None of this would be possible without Splunk and our Assigned Expert. Splunk is the best product that I know of to do all that event aggregation and correlation," says Hubbard.

Looking ahead, Travelport is eager to extend its observability implementations to additional portfolio products. "This will be straightforward since all of our implementations are in Terraform, so it's just a matter of replicating the same code across all products," says Uppalapati.

And continued collaboration with Splunk is always on the horizon. "I can't imagine where we'd be without our Splunk Assigned Expert, who's become an extended member of my team," says Hubbard.

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