

CASE STUDY

Colruyt Group Satisfies Customers Inside and Outside Their Stores with Infoblox



THE CUSTOMER: COLRUYT GROUP

The Colruyt Group has been around for more than 80 years in the retail grocery and supermarket industry.

In this time the company has grown from a family business to a family of businesses. Colruyt, DreamBaby, DreamLand, Bio-Planet, and Spar are but a few of the companies belonging to the Colruyt Group. Managing a worldwide network with more than 30,000 employees and 800 locations across every continent is no simple task, especially since a single network management team is responsible for the entire network, including brick-and-mortar locations, distribution centers, administrative buildings, and data centers.

THE CHALLENGE

Keeping IT Pace with Business Growth

As the Colruyt Group keeps growing so does its IT infrastructure. Colruyt Group has automated processes based on customer scripts developed and managed by its network engineers, but this continuous growth was beginning to take its toll on the legacy solution and on the small team of 20 network engineers. Minor glitches often had to be attended to on an ad hoc basis and processes that should have taken 30 seconds easily took 30 minutes. This inefficiency increased operational costs and worked against Colruyt Group's strategy of giving its customers the lowest price on the market.

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Joris Beckers
Network Engineer
Colruyt Group

THE SOLUTION

A Shift from Complex to Complete

“We have always organized our network management ourselves, but over time, this task simply got too extensive, too complex, and too fragmented. If we wanted to keep on using the same processes, we would have had to hire two or three more people. Fortunately, there are tools available for network management today that can enable us to automate many of the tasks that once took precious engineer time to complete,” says Michel Deneyer, Team Lead of Network Solutions at Colruyt Group Services.

As the Colruyt Group began to explore solutions, they had two important criteria. The first was flexibility. The Colruyt Group needed a solution that could meet their needs for automation, and above all, efficiency. The second was compatibility. The company wanted the freedom to choose the hardware on which the network runs, not the other way around. SecureLink, an Infoblox Elite Partner, recommended NIOS DDI and NetMRI solutions for their ability to provide the flexibility and compatibility the group was looking for.

“SecureLink gave us very good advice and support during our search,” says Joris Beckers, Colruyt Group Network Engineer. “Even now, after implementation, SecureLink always reacts promptly and correctly when questions or problems arise. SecureLink has the right experience and expertise to assess the scope of the problem and solve it correctly.”

Today, efficiency is at the heart of the Colruyt Group’s management and automation of all processes. NetMRI is deployed for the management of more than 1,000 servers, 4,000 switches, 1,000 routers, and 6,000 access points. If conflicts arise, the Infoblox solution immediately sends out an alert so that network managers can carry out adjustments before issues emerge. To this end, the Colruyt Group uses 11,000 licenses, which makes it one of the biggest NetMRI projects in Europe. The company will also leverage NIOS DDI for Domain Name System (DNS) management.

THE RESULTS

Greater Bandwidth for IT Innovation

With several months of NetMRI experience behind Colruyt Group, the network team can clearly see the positive results. “Thanks to the increased visibility afforded to us by NetMRI, we discovered, among other things, that certain ports were not being used. By simply deactivating them, we saved a significant amount of expense in terms of operational load, maintenance, and time,” says Deneyer.

This is one of the most important benefits for Beckers. “As all automated processes are running smoothly, we can now focus our efforts and manpower on more strategic, business-oriented projects,” Beckers says. “At the Colruyt Group, IT plays a clear business-support role. There’s a good reason why the IT department is called “Business Processes and Systems.”

Customer: Colruyt Group

Industry: Retail

Location: Halle, Belgium

OBJECTIVES:

- Replace a complex and fragmented legacy system
- Eliminate inefficiencies to decrease operational costs
- A return to automation of mundane tasks

RESULTS:

- Greater visibility
- Significant time savings with automation
- Optimal internal operability to pursue technological innovation

PRODUCTS:

- NIOS DDI
- NetMRI

One of these business-supporting projects is the company's recently implemented mobile payment system, which enables customers to pay for their purchases with the Colruyt app in the shop and online, a first in Belgium. The Colruyt Group is also working on optimizing its internal operability. Thus, the team is ready to facilitate a bring-your-own-device program, which because of Infoblox, the network team now has the tools and ability to support.

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Infoblox unites networking and security to deliver unmatched performance and protection. Trusted by Fortune 100 companies and emerging innovators, we provide real-time visibility and control over who and what connects to your network, so your organization runs faster and stops threats earlier.

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