

Fortune 500 Manufacturing Company



Profile

The Customer:

A Fortune 500 manufacturing company with facilities all over the world

The Challenge:

Bringing stability, business continuity, and efficiency to a complex, widely distributed, and highly dynamic mission-critical network.

The Solution:

- Infoblox Grid™ technology
- Infoblox DDI
- Infoblox NetMRI

The Results:

- High availability and disaster recovery
- Efficiency improvements that are yielding significant ROI
- The ability to manage millions of IP addresses in the midst of acquisitions and divestitures

“With Infoblox, our posture is stronger. Our ability to deploy, manage, and maintain our infrastructure is enhanced. So from our standpoint, ROI is across the entire platform.”

Senior enterprise architect

The Customer

This customer is a Fortune 500 manufacturing company with operations around the world. The business is active in both acquisitions and divestitures, making the IT infrastructure very dynamic.

The Challenge

According to the senior enterprise architect whose responsibility with the company is to ensure stability and business continuity, availability and disaster recovery are key requirements.

“To us it’s like life insurance,” he says. “We look to the reliability of our infrastructure to offset risk. If we can’t access certain systems in our data centers, we can’t produce our products. So there is a huge monetary penalty for outages.”

As an example, he mentions IP addresses. If a particular site runs out of them, systems stop reporting or stop functioning, or the site loses connectivity with the rest of the enterprise. In addition, during acquisitions, the company needs to get its new resources up and running as quickly as possible, and during divestitures, needs to decommission resources with minimal impact to the remaining network. This applies particularly to IP addresses, which can number in the millions. To efficiently manage acquisitions and divestitures, IT has to know how all those IP addresses are deployed and used and how to migrate or reassign them cleanly and efficiently. If it can be done without the use of spreadsheets, from a single user platform, the savings in time, money, and resources are significant.

The architect is familiar with the shortcomings of commodity solutions, and doesn’t consider them adequate for this kind of industrial-strength network management. “With one of the most commonly used solutions,” he says, “if you wanted to know which users logged into a DHCP server, you would have to pull very specific logging that is very difficult to read off of that server and sort through it.”

With this kind of cumbersome information gathering, it would be difficult to remediate or even find security issues. So to deliver the global stability the company requires, he believes that DNS and DHCP have to be handled by a centrally managed system that consolidates information and makes it available on a single pane of glass. And this is why the company depends on a commercial-grade solution to offset the risk of outages.

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The enterprise architect admits that such a solution can be a hard sell to upper management. “No company that I have ever worked for,” he says, “is looking to allow you to spend money without showing some return on the investment (ROI), and in most cases, they’d prefer it was before you even deploy the new solution. That makes solutions that offer limited functionality but lower initial cost look attractive to budget planners.” But what you end up with, he says, is a solution that doesn’t follow any regulated standards, and can actually turn out to be noncompliant with other processes and applications. And when it does, ROI turns into COI—cost of investment.

The Infoblox Solution

The architect has six years of experience with Infoblox solutions from three different companies he has worked for, so he is glad to have Infoblox to support Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) services and to manage IP addresses, and Infoblox Grid™ technology to synchronize and coordinate the company’s many and widespread locations. In addition, the company uses Infoblox NetMRI for automating network core services and Infoblox Reporting for enterprise-wide visibility.

Working together, these solutions deliver 100 percent visibility into the global infrastructure, so network administrators can see who is connecting to the network, when they have connected, what they have connected to, and how often they have connected. And that kind of reporting has led to significant number of useful functions that weren’t performed before and have been optimized specifically because of increased visibility.

“Infoblox is one of those things where until it is really deployed, it is difficult to understand or communicate the overall value,” the enterprise architect says, “and then it is very easy to show once it is deployed because you can produce reports. A lot of things that you couldn’t see before that you didn’t realize you are missing become very evident and very structurally required.”

The Results

The Infoblox Grid technology—with its ability to be deployed in redundant configurations and its built-in features for high availability—directly addresses the company’s need to keep systems running. And central management and reporting give network administrators visibility into exactly what is happening—and what might be about to happen—on the network.

As for ROI, the IP address management (IPAM) integration alone pays for itself by enabling a single staff member to see everything rather than having multiple administrators watching separate parts of the network. Other efficiency improvements include customizable views and role-based access. And Infoblox Reporting contributes to better regulatory compliance.

The company is considering additions such as DNS Firewall to address the vulnerability that DNS servers pose to malware and denial-of-service attacks and additional redundancy for geographies where outages are likely.

In conclusion, the senior enterprise architect says, “With Infoblox, our posture is stronger. Our ability to deploy, manage, and maintain our infrastructure is enhanced. So from our standpoint, the ROI is across the entire platform. It was very evident once we deployed it, which is why we are significantly expanding our deployment.”

About Infoblox

Infoblox (NYSE:BLOX) helps customers control their networks. Infoblox solutions help businesses automate complex network control functions to reduce costs and increase security and uptime. Our technology enables automatic discovery, real-time configuration and change management and compliance for network infrastructure, as well as critical network control functions such as DNS, DHCP and IP Address Management (IPAM) for applications and endpoint devices. Infoblox solutions help over 6,900 enterprises and service providers in 25 countries control their networks.