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Profile

DANONE

The Customer:
World's leading supplier of healthy food products

Application:
DNS solution

Challenges:
• Required simplified management, high availability, and scalability

Solution:
Infoblox appliances running the DNSone package for:

• Nonstop DNS service availability

• Increased reliability and scalability

"With its purpose-built appliance approach, Infoblox is more reliable, secure, and easier overall for the IT staff to maintain."

Gilles Poisson, network director for DANONE

The Customer

Groupe DANONE, with more than 88,000 employees, 80 offices worldwide and brands such as Danone (Dannon in the US), Actimel, Vitalinea, Evian, Volvic, Aqua, LU, Prince and Wahaha, in more than 120 countries, is committed to continue its position as the world's leading supplier of healthy food products.

In order to do so, DANONE's employees, affiliates and partners rely heavily on D@nNet, the Groupe DANONE corporate network. Nonstop internal domain name resolution (DNS) services that map applications and server names to their associated binary IP addresses are required to keep intranet services available 24x7.

"DNS has become critical to IP networks," says Cricket Liu, co-author of O'Reilly and Associates' DNS and BIND—now in its fifth edition—and vice president of architecture at Infoblox. "DNS is the preferred method for internal naming, as well as the Internet. It handles resolving URLs and sending e-mail. DNS is also used by Microsoft Active Directory implementations. All of a sudden, the dependency on DNS goes from network domains to network servers and desktops."

The Challenge

At the same time that DNS has become more critical to corporate networks, it also has become more complex. For example, the basic documentation for BIND is more than 100 pages. These trends are prompting companies to upgrade their DNS software and servers, and these companies are looking for an offering that is secure, reliable and high performing. That's where appliances enter the picture. These hardened devices offer the benefits of easy deployment with low administrative and operational expense.

For example, as the DANONE IT team, which previously relied on Windows servers/domain controllers deployed throughout its highly distributed network to deliver these essential DNS services, embarked on a project to deploy Microsoft Active Directory throughout the network, they realized that the DNS system could be optimized for increased reliability and security while also simplifying upgrade and patching processes with a dedicated DNS appliance solution.

The Solution

Enter Infoblox Inc., a U.S.-based developer of purpose-built DNS appliances with operations and channel partners throughout Europe. After evaluating several appliance-based DNS systems, DANONE recognized the value of Infoblox's appliances with a hardened operating system and failover features, delivering inherent security, management, scalability and reliability advantages. DANONE initially selected and deployed at its corporate headquarters in Paris, France, five Infoblox appliances running the DNSone module to deliver DNS services and plans to expand the solution to its international affiliates.

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French-based systems integrator NetQost, a Quality of Service (QoS) and security expert, aided DANONE with the migration to the Infoblox appliance solution by completing a thorough analysis of the previous architecture and establishing a smooth transition plan to migrate DNS records into the new system via an automated process using the Infoblox API and Perl code.

DANONE has integrated the Infoblox appliance solution with Microsoft Active Directory in the back-end of its infrastructure and plans to deploy Infoblox appliances throughout some international facilities to ensure enterprise-wide, nonstop DNS service delivery and network availability.

"Nonstop DNS systems are tantamount to the successful operation of Microsoft AD," said Richard Kagan, Infoblox vice president of Marketing. "As one of the world's most recognized food product conglomerates with network resources operating around the world, Groupe DANONE's selection of Infoblox demonstrates the network savvy of their IT team and the robustness of our appliance-based solution that complements Microsoft AD environments to ensure 24x7 network availability."

The purpose-built Infoblox appliances with the DNSone package deliver nonstop DNS, IP Address assignment (DHCP) and IP address management (IPAM) network identity services in a secure and easy-to-manage form factor. The hardened appliance design and intuitive graphical user interface (GUI) enable the offloading of network identity services, such as DNS and dynamic DHCP, from general-purpose servers that lack reliability and scalability, require significant management overhead for patching and upgrading, and often introduce security vulnerabilities. Instead, these services can be easily managed by purpose-built, hardened appliances that are inherently secure, reliable, scalable and easily upgraded, freeing network administration resources and providing increased security.

The appliances can be linked into an ID grid using the Infoblox Keystone upgrade on each device, providing enhanced availability, visibility and management benefits. And, built-in IPAM capabilities provide essential reporting and control over IP address utilization without the need for separate hardware or software.

The Result

Gilles Poisson, network director for DANONE, concluded: "With its purpose-built appliance approach, including a hardened operating system, intuitive user interfaces and one-button upgrades, Infoblox is more reliable, secure, and easier overall for the IT staff to maintain. Since deploying the initial Infoblox solution, we have already seen a noticeable improvement in DNS service availability."

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 6,100 enterprises and service providers in 25 countries control their networks.

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