

“TrueSight takes all of the guesswork out of troubleshooting web applications”

MIKE MARQUARDT
DIRECTOR OF APPLICATIONS
DEVELOPMENT
COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO

INDUSTRY

Education

CHALLENGE

IT staff at Columbia needed to pinpoint the source of problems reported by users of in-campus web applications.

WHY WEB APPLICATION PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT?

Incoming data on application problems was sketchy, poorly structured and often inaccurate, resulting in hours of guesswork and wild goose chases with inadequate tracking tools. IT staff needed a way of following users through the applications to identify choke points and address them.

SOLUTION

Collaborating with Jenzabar, a provider of enterprise software and services for higher education, Coradiant implemented TrueSight Web Application Performance Management for authoritative problem tracking and reporting.

KEY BENEFITS

- Issue reporting now summarized in reports and on dashboard – no more e-mail and phone messages
- Comprehensive detail on user activity and navigation through web applications
- More efficient use of IT staff – resolving problems instead of struggling to find them

Columbia 

COLLEGE CHICAGO

COLUMBIA COLLEGE TAKES A GREAT LEAP FORWARD MANAGING WEB-BASED JENZABAR APPLICATION WITH TRUESIGHT

With more than 120 academic programs and nearly 12,000 students, Columbia College Chicago is the largest and most diverse private arts and media college in the nation. Columbia's IT department now reaps the real-time benefits of monitoring web applications with Coradiant TrueSight™ User Performance Management, helping its staff to identify and remedy application problems in a fraction of the time.

Columbia's IT department administers web-based applications that serve 2,000 faculty members, 800 staff members and 12,000 students. They maintain and support, among other web applications, the Jenzabar Internet Campus Solution (JICS), a portal designed for higher education that provides a single point of access to communications, web services, community building, and e-learning applications.

As in any enterprise, Columbia's IT staff troubleshoots network and application problems from all corners of the user community. “When there are server errors or when users aren't able to get what they need from our web-based applications, they turn to us,” says Michael Marquardt, Director of Applications Development. “Usually they send e-mail or leave voice messages like ‘The server is down,’ or ‘I'm trying to log in and I get error 2659.’ It's not very much for us to go on.”

FROM DIFFICULT TO FRUSTRATING

As if the sketchy information in the messages wasn't enough, Michael's team also had to try to determine which of the load-balanced servers was affected. “We have multiple servers in a pool for load balancing,” Michael continues, “so at first we thought that the problems might be tied to a single server. But we soon discovered that it was not always the same link in the chain that was causing the disruption, which meant that we had to look everywhere along the path every time something went wrong. Worse yet, we

were using utilities like Event Viewer and Performance Monitor, which told us what was wrong but didn't provide enough details about the user or server involved.”

Elizabeth Tallman, UNIX Administrator, gives an example: “At the beginning of each year, the school takes 250 students per day through a freshman orientation, then places them all in front of machines and asks them to register for their first classes. The traffic on the servers spikes, of course, and lots of users would get ‘server too busy’ errors, or they would click on buttons and nothing would happen because so many of them were trying to add the same class simultaneously. So the users were frustrated because they couldn't get their work done, and we were frustrated because it took so long to help them.”

ADDING CORADIANT TO THE MIX

Seeing the opportunity to smooth Columbia's transition to the web-enabled enterprise, Jenzabar helped introduce TrueSight to the environment through Coradiant's education-partner program. The program equips Jenzabar and its customers with valuable tools for deploying JICS and other products because it helps IT staff determine the source of problems that users encounter.

CASE STUDY

“...now we can track problems down to the level of the individual user, machine, IP address, platform, browser and ISP.”



TrueSight shows production web application and platform issues exponentially faster than any method today, and sets a new benchmark for lower total-cost-of-ownership and ease of use.

Implementation was easy, as Elizabeth describes: “The appliance arrived, we plugged it in, Coradiant helped us set it up and trained us for a day, and within a day or two I was getting reports. The monitoring software is intuitive, so the onsite training, combined with Coradiant’s online refresher training and customer support, has prepared us for everything we’ve needed so far. Jenzabar helped us set up the watch points in TrueSight to monitor the most important areas of user activity for JICS, and now we can track problems down to the level of the individual user, machine, IP address, platform, browser and ISP.”

THE END OF WILD GOOSE CHASES

Mike summarizes the benefits of using TrueSight: “We used to spend most of our time tracking down reported problems. TrueSight takes all of the guesswork out of troubleshooting web applications, so now we can spend that time troubleshooting instead of hunting.”

TrueSight from Coradiant is a safety net for IT and a hefty competitive advantage for partners like Jenzabar, whose customers can use it for monitoring any web application, including JICS.



“TrueSight takes all of the guesswork out of troubleshooting web applications, so now we can spend that time troubleshooting instead of hunting.”

ABOUT COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO

With more than 120 academic programs and nearly 12,000 students, Columbia College Chicago is the largest and most diverse private arts and media college in the nation. Columbia College Chicago offers an unparalleled array of courses with exceptional technological resources in the heart of one of America's greatest cities.

ABOUT CORADIANT

Coradiant is the leading provider of equipment used to manage, optimize and troubleshoot Web applications. Coradiant's award-winning TrueSight products use customer metrics gathered from each Web user visit as their primary data source for IT management.

Coradiant Web Application Performance Management products are deployed in hundreds of leading organizations and Fortune 500 companies including software as a service (SaaS), e-commerce, entertainment, finance, insurance, healthcare, and education.

For more information please see www.coradiant.com or call 1-781-810-4494

WWW.CORADIANT.COM

© 2009 Coradiant, Inc. The Coradiant logo is a registered trademark of Coradiant, Inc. Coradiant, Inc., TrueSight, and Watchpoint are trademarks of Coradiant, Inc. All rights reserved. COR_CS_DISC_1209

