

IN BRIEF

Industry

- » IT services

Challenges

- » Wanted to upgrade hosting platform quickly and seamlessly
- » Needed a flexible and efficient traffic management solution

Solution

- » Riverbed Stingray Traffic Manager and Riverbed Stingray Application Firewall

Benefits

- » Seamless migration to new hosting platform
- » Significant savings on hardware investment
- » New platform more reliable, more secure and more flexible
- » Enhanced end-user experience
- » Additional control of third-party applications

MOGUL
ADDNODE GROUP

Mogul Services

IT services company migrates to new hosting platform quickly and seamlessly with Riverbed Stingray solution

Background

Mogul is part of Addnode Group, one of the largest providers of IT solutions in the Nordics. Mogul is also a service provider for Internet and telecom companies, and provides web hosting for clients such as the Swedish government and Swedish broadcasting service. Additional information about Mogul is available at www.mogul.com.

Challenge: Upgrade hosting platform quickly and seamlessly

The web sites hosted by Mogul handle high volumes of traffic – approximately 30 million unique visitors per month. The Mogul hosting service includes infrastructure, application management, technical support, and customer care. “Our customers expect a constant round-the-clock service and a good end-user experience,” explains Johannes Blomé, business director of Mogul Cloud Services.

The Swedish government web sites, for example, are a key source for public, press, media, business and government employees, both in Sweden and abroad, and have specific demands regarding security and accessibility.

Mogul has several data centers in Sweden, and when the company decided to upgrade its hosting infrastructure and consolidate its data centers, it faced several challenges. For instance, a common scenario is the requirement to maintain custom publishing systems and legacy applications, which often offer limited performance while content and usage increases considerably, running alongside new applications during a transition period.

“In cases like this we need a solution that can provide a seamless migration,” says Blomé, “and we wanted a single system that could protect, cache, manage traffic, balance workloads, and be integrated within the timescale of the project.”

Solution: Riverbed Stingray Traffic Manager offers manageability, flexibility, and scalability

Mogul had previously deployed Zeus Traffic Manager (now part of Riverbed Technology), “We were very pleased with its performance,” explains Blomé, “so it was a natural step for us to move to the Riverbed® Stingray™ platform.” Mogul decided to deploy Stingray Traffic Manager, a software-based application delivery controller (ADC), and Stingray Application Firewall software.

Opting for a software-based solution brought huge benefits, says Blomé, “We can use the same server platform for all our data centers, which reduces cost and complexity, and it’s easier to manage all aspects of hardware, software, and firmware.”

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Thanks to the quick and easy integration offered by Stingray Traffic Manager software, an eight-week target for upgrading the hosting infrastructure was achieved. Stingray Traffic Manager software offers manageability, flexibility, and scalability explains Blomé, "It's very easy to introduce new services to our customers without needing programmers to develop and implement them. Mogul is all in on Dev-Ops; and with the help of virtualization technologies, we are able to treat much of our infrastructure as code. This gives us the benefit to deliver new services to our customers without the need for installing new hardware, developing custom software, or experiencing service interruption. Stingray really helps us with this."

Blomé adds that TrafficScript — the customization language in Riverbed Stingray Traffic Manager — makes it easy to roll-out new services and functions developed by clients' in-house development teams, and deploy applications from external service or content providers, for example device detection rules for mobile devices, "You don't have to write a custom application for device detection; you can easily integrate with one that is already available from a service provider, and TrafficScript can be used for different customers with different platforms."

Benefits: A seamless migration to an improved hosting platform

Stingray Traffic Manager software enabled Mogul to upgrade to a new hosting platform quickly and seamlessly. "Stingray managed the traffic for both content management systems, and end-users continued using the same URLs — it all went smoothly without service interruption or a negative impact on the user experience," says Blomé.

Mogul and its customers now have a hosting platform that is more flexible, more stable, more scalable, more secure, more reliable, more energy efficient, easier to manage, and with a lower total cost of ownership. "We could not operate with this level of functionality without Stingray," says Blomé.

The traffic analysis and filtering tools within Stingray Traffic Manager software have proved a valuable tool for visualizing traffic, and Stingray Application Firewall software protects against attacks at the application layer. End-users now experience faster response times when accessing web pages and applications. "If we didn't have Riverbed Stingray software, we would need at least twice the amount of hardware to get the same user experience," notes Blomé.

"If we removed Stingray software, the underlying platform would be unable to deliver the same service level. It's brought us peace of mind."

Stingray Traffic Manager software is also a powerful sales tool, says Blomé, "It's very easy to understand the benefits it brings, and this is great when talking to potential customers." Mogul now plans to move other customers and services onto its new hosting platform. Blomé has no doubt about the impact of Riverbed Stingray software, "If we removed Stingray software, the underlying platform would be unable to deliver the same service level. It's brought us peace of mind," Blomé adds.

Value-added services for hosted applications

Mogul has also utilized Stingray software as an additional point of control for third-party applications. Mogul hosts a well-known content management system (CMS) on behalf of one of Sweden's leading media houses, providing users with a rich web 2.0 experience, which includes features for publishing video, social media integration, and publishing a large amount of content.

However, Mogul discovered that the CMS had an unusual vulnerability making it possible for malicious Internet users to create an unlimited amount of files in the CMS file system. This resulted in drives and storage becoming overloaded until servers could no longer cope, resulting in the online service unavailable. A malicious group exploited this serious bug and immediate action was needed to secure the availability of the web service. Although the software vendor was promptly

informed and immediately began work on a solution to the problem, it was clear that the bug represented a major issue for Mogul's clients, as well as some of the world's largest media web sites using the same CMS. Since the vulnerability was relatively easy to exploit a quick solution was needed that could be silently distributed amongst the affected customers. The alternative option was to either suspend part of the customer service, or leave the web site vulnerable while awaiting a software security update. With Stingray Traffic Manager software, Mogul was able to identify the exploit, and use Stingray TrafficScript software to intercept and rewrite web requests, which mitigated the vulnerability without impacting the service.

As a result, Mogul was able to respond rapidly to application vulnerability, and provide an additional layer of protection for key customers without making changes to the software application. In this way, Mogul's customers, using the third-party CMS tool, were protected until the software vendor was able to implement a long-term solution.

SUMMARY

Mogul hosts a number of business-critical web sites, including some belonging to the Swedish government. The company wanted to upgrade its hosting infrastructure, quickly and seamlessly. By deploying Riverbed Stingray Traffic Manager software and Riverbed Stingray Application Firewall software, Mogul achieved a seamless transition to a new hosting platform. The new platform is more flexible, more scalable, more reliable and more secure. Mogul has also been able to make substantial savings on hardware investment and offer an enhanced end-user experience.



About Riverbed

Riverbed delivers performance for the globally connected enterprise. With Riverbed, enterprises can successfully and intelligently implement strategic initiatives such as virtualization, consolidation, cloud computing, and disaster recovery without fear of compromising performance. By giving enterprises the platform they need to understand, optimize and consolidate their IT, Riverbed helps enterprises to build a fast, fluid and dynamic IT architecture that aligns with the business needs of the organization. Additional information about Riverbed (NASDAQ: RVBD) is available at www.riverbed.com.



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