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Networked applications are crucial to our core business. We find ACE™ ANALYST's capabilities to be very important for maintaining smooth operation of our mission-critical applications. Before tools like ACE Analyst came along, it was extremely difficult to find as many performance problems. Now we can isolate the root causes almost immediately after hearing complaints or, in many cases, before the problems even occur.”

*Julia Elliott,
 Network Project Manager
 TNT Express*

TNT Express Uses OPNET ACE™ Analyst to Manage Application Performance.

Background

TNT Express is the world's leading business-to-business express delivery company. The company delivers 3.3 million parcels, documents and pieces of freight a week to over 200 countries using its network of nearly 900 depots, hubs and sortation centres. TNT Express operates over 18,000 road vehicles and 42 aircraft, and has the biggest door-to-door air and road express delivery infrastructure in Europe.

TNT Express employs 43,000 staff worldwide and is the first ever organisation to achieve global recognition as an Investor in People. The company reported sales in 2004 of 4.7 billion euros. Profits of 373 million euros earned by TNT Express during 2004 were higher by 35% than the same period in 2003 (276 million euros).

TNT Express is a division of TNT N.V., the global provider of express, mail and logistics services, which also operates TNT Logistics and Royal TPG Post.

Objectives:

The TNT network has a growing number of applications, including traditional mainframe access, Web enablement of new applications, Intranet, Data Warehousing, CRM, SAP, e-mail, etc. Although these applications may perform well in development environments, they frequently under-perform, and sometimes fail, when deployed into production networks. As a result, users get frustrated, application developers point fingers at the network, and network managers suspect faulty application design.

When faced with under-performing applications and scarce intelligence about networked application behaviour, TNT was forced to pursue trial-and-error approaches to improve performance, which was time-consuming and expensive to carry out. Support staff would have to spend many days analysing complex data in order to determine if network upgrades were required.

“One of our biggest challenges is to ensure smooth operation of all our mission-critical applications, and to set the users' expectations as TNT migrates away from traditional green screen applications to client/server and Web-based applications.”

TNT's vision includes:

- Profiling new applications before they are deployed on the network, in order to assess the impact of the infrastructure on transaction response times
- Easily and more accurately predicting the impact of new applications and services on existing critical applications

Solution:

After examining the marketplace, TNT decided to implement OPNET's ACE™ Analyst to assist in managing application performance. ACE™ Analyst allows TNT to quickly identify application performance bottlenecks and their root causes, and then predict the impact of different fix options.

TNT Express is also taking innovative steps to improve performance expectations among users, through better simulation-based expectations using ACE™ ANALYST. This reduces the overall number of trouble-tickets.

NASDAQ: OPNT

