Leon County

The Customer:
Local government agency in Florida

Application:
Internal and external DNS

The Challenge:
• Needed better reliability, simplified administration and security of DNS services

The Solution:
Infoblox appliances running the DNSone® package for:

• Plug and play DNS service delivery

• Simple deployment and administration

• Dramatically improved reliability

• Enhanced security

The Customer

Leon County is approximately 671 square miles, with a population of approximately 245,000 people. The county is guided by an elected seven-member Board of County Commissioners, and the County Administrator is appointed by the Board to oversee all functions, directives and policies. Other elected officials serviced by Leon County staff include the judiciary, State Attorney, Public Defender, Clerk of the Court, Property Appraiser, Sheriff, Supervisor of Elections and Tax Collector. The county employs more than 1,750 people at 14 locations.

Providing 24x7 access to the network, the Internet and the information necessary for the county's subdivisions and agencies to continually operate requires highly scalable, manageable and reliable domain name system (DNS) services. Key systems serviced by the County network include electronic mail services, justice information system, emergency medical service system, geographic information system, county library system, several financial, human resource, and work order management systems, as well as file and print services county-wide. Also supported is the 2nd judicial circuit network, which includes connections in four surrounding counties.

The Challenge

Leon County initially delivered DNS services via Sun servers running Linux. DNS data files were managed manually, which became cumbersome, difficult to scale, and consumed excessive resources and produced substantial reliability issues. The daily management issues were exacerbated because there was no one to call for support when problems were encountered with the ad-hoc solution. Further, limited IT resources prevented the small Leon County staff from keeping the operating system up to date and left the network vulnerable.

When these issues finally became untenable, the Leon County IT staff conducted research to find a better way. The team determined they required a DNS solution that is:

• Reliable and scalable

• Easily deployed, upgraded and maintained

• Highly secure

"Before we installed the Infoblox solution, users often complained of issues as much as 2-3 times a day. Since deploying the Infoblox products, we haven't received a single DNS-related user complaint."

Michelle French,
IT Coordinator, Leon County Board of County Commissioners

The Solution

Leon County researched several options, intentionally seeking an appliance solution because of the inherent deployment, management and security benefits. Infoblox met all of their criteria and Leon County selected and deployed four Infoblox appliances running the DNSone package at its control room in the Leon County Court House. One is set up as a primary device to deliver internal DNS services with another device operating as a secondary to continue service delivery in the unlikely event of an outage. The third device is set up to resolve internal DNS requests for the library network and the final one provides external DNS services for the county web site.

The Infoblox appliances are designed to provide the foundation for next-generation network identity services in a secure and easy-to-manage form factor. The hardened design and intuitive graphical user interface (GUI) enable the off-loading of DNS and DHCP services from general-purpose servers that typically handle multiple functions and require significant administration overhead. Instead, these services can be easily managed by a purpose-built, high-availability (HA) appliance that is inherently secure, reliable and scalable, freeing network administration resources and providing increased security for these critical network identity services.

The Result

Leon Country IT staff have been extremely pleased with the Infoblox appliances and wish they had deployed the devices sooner. They especially like that the devices have dramatically improved network reliability.

Leon County IT staff also liked that the devices are so easy to install. "When I first started to set them up, I had received no training and had them up and resolving in less than an hour. I found it incredibly easy to set up and maintain in a high-availability cluster. I also really like that the devices are locked down without extraneous open ports, allowing us to rest assured that our DNS system is protected against attacks," commented Jon Adcock, Network Systems Administrator at Leon County Board of County Commissioners in Tallahassee, FL.

Additional features and tools Leon Country representatives find useful include built-in reporting, back-up capabilities, and DNS zone and serial number updates that occur automatically, eliminating manual steps and potential errors. Scalability was also important to Leon County as they have tripled their number of domains since purchasing the appliances and experienced little to no impact on performance.

Michelle French, IT coordinator for systems at Leon County Board of County Commissioners in Tallahassee, FL, commented, "The reliability improvements alone justified the solution change. Before we installed the Infoblox solution, users often complained of delays and Internet access issues as much as 2-3 times a day. Since deploying the Infoblox products, we haven't received a single DNS-related user complaint. Further, operational efficiency has improved for the IT staff because of the easy management features and scalability of the devices. Overall we are extremely happy to have found Infoblox."