Infoblox
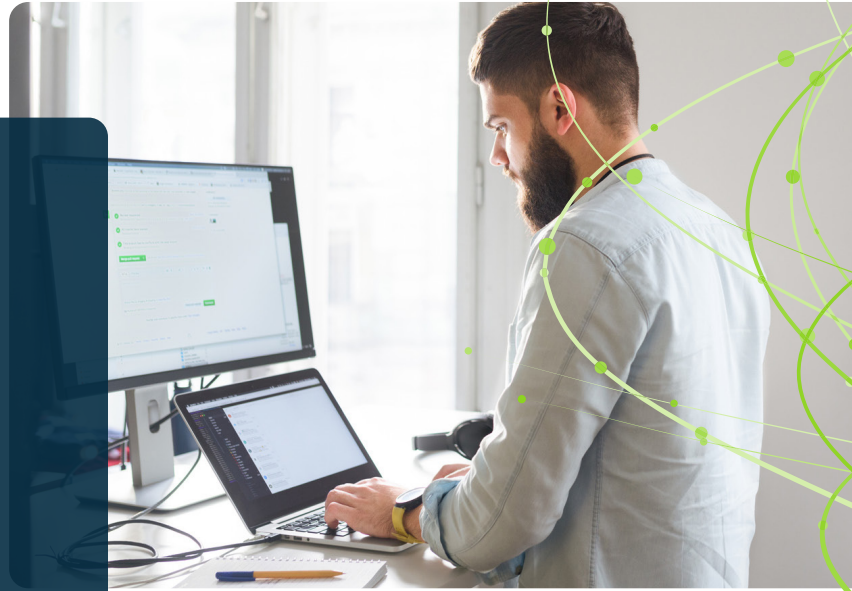
Morningstar Inc.

The Customer

Morningstar offers an extensive line of products and services for individual investors, financial advisors, asset managers, and retirement plan providers and sponsors. It provides data on approximately 500,000 investment offerings, including stocks, mutual funds, and similar vehicles, along with real-time global market data on more than 13 million equities, indexes, futures, options, commodities, and precious metals, in addition to foreign exchange and Treasury markets. Morningstar also offers investment management services through its investment advisory subsidiaries and had approximately $170 billion in assets under advisement or management as of Dec. 31, 2014. It has operations in 27 countries.

The Challenge

According to Andrew Watts, Morningstar's director of IT, his organization started a private-cloud project in 2013. In the legacy environment, the IT team had to cope with too many manual processes in network setup and configuration. "We were doing everything manually when it came to creating DNS entries," Watts says. "We were using a spreadsheet and working out what IP addresses were available and then, even with the spreadsheet data, still having conflicts. We needed to leapfrog this and other legacy processes, and we thought that private cloud would be the best option." His IT team engaged with BMC and ultimately settled on its Cloud Lifecycle Management (CLM) product.

The Solution

IP address management (IPAM) is usually a big piece of private cloud, and Morningstar didn't have an IPAM solution. When Watts asked BMC about its integrations , BMC said that CLM has its own built-in IPAM in, but it wasn't very advanced. The BMC team told Watts they've had good success with Infoblox.

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The Customer: Morningstar, Inc. is a leading provider of independent investment research in North America, Europe, Australia, and Asia

The Challenge: Integrating automated IPAM with BMC Cloud Lifecycle Management to support a large private-cloud deployment

The Solution:
- Infoblox IPAM

The results:
- Reduction of manual work to reduce operational burden
- Elimination of outages caused by IP address conflicts
- Acceleration of delivery through automation

After a survey of the IPAM landscape, and a proof-of-concept demonstration by the Infoblox sales team, Watts chose Infoblox over its competitors—and from that point it took only two weeks to get IPAM in production. "Infoblox IPAM was the most painless process in getting our private cloud up and running and continues to be so," Watts says, "We haven't had any issues."

Watts' team first built out the development environment in January 2014 and today has about 400 servers, 50 of which get stood up and torn down every week, with IP addresses being configured or de-provisioned. The production environment has about 200 servers across two data centers. These are less dynamic, but still account for 20 servers being stood up and torn down per week. slip into DNS servers.

The Results

Morningstar's private cloud has been up and running now for a year. Watts cites mobile application deployment as one example of how Infoblox IPAM has been successful. "We launched several mobile applications last year—iPad, iPhone, and Android for example. Infoblox gives us point-and-click deployment, whereas before we had to build the infrastructure by hand, create the wiring, and set up the IP addresses manually. The time involved has shrunk from a couple of months to a couple of days."

He listed several additional benefits:

- No manual work. "Configuration is a one-stop thing, and we don't have to touch the system very much."

- IPAM is no longer an operational burden.

- The number of operational incidents has dropped. Morningstar no longer has IP address conflicts that can cause outages.

- Automation speeds up delivery—so much that Watts intends to leverage it in more of the environment.

- The solution frees engineers from mundane tasks so they can concentrate on more important things.

As for return on investment, Watts says, "We know we've made the right investment, and we're happy with the result. But the thing I like about Infoblox is that I haven't had to think about it. I've spent a lot more time thinking about what we want to do with our private cloud as a whole. To me, that's the ROI."

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Andrew Watts,
IT director, Morningstar