

CASE STUDY

United Biscuits



The Customer

United Biscuits is one of the world's pre-eminent branded snacks businesses, producing some of the best loved brands – ranging from biscuits and crackers to cakes and savoury snacks. With brands up to two hundred years old, company holds leading or strong number two positions in its core markets of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, Belgium and Ireland, with a rapidly growing international business unit serving consumers from North America to the Middle East, Africa, and Australia. The enterprise network plays a growing role in maintaining production, responding to consumer needs and honing the company's competitive edge.

The Challenge

By the beginning of 2011, United Biscuits (UB) had seventeen manufacturing, distribution and office sites across the British Isles and a further seven across France, Belgium and the Netherlands, all connected via the corporate network.

As with any large enterprise, the company network was supporting an ever-growing and fluctuating range of IP addresses as office workers added VoIP phones, laptops and their own mobile devices and smartphones to the network. In addition, there is increasing reliance on today's corporate networks for connecting previously autonomous systems such as access control, fire and burgler alarms and factory floor control and instrumentation systems.

To meet the demands of IP address management (IPAM) and other core network change and management services, the company had been using automated DNS/ DHCP management software from a major global brand, but was finding it expensive to support, tricky to upgrade and so not easy to maintain up-to-date. It also relied on a fat client that had to be distributed and maintained for each operator.



The Customer: United Biscuits, a leading global branded snacks businesses

Application: Infoblox DNS, DHCP, IPAM, Network Change & Conf Management services

The Challenge: Replace costly software system with reliable and easy to use enterprise class solution

The Solution:

- 2 x Infoblox-1050-A with Network Services, one with Grid,
- 2 x Infoblox-VM-550 vNIOS for VMware with NS1GRID

In addition, explains Steve Hackett, Senior Network Analyst at United Biscuits, the old software solution: “It was becoming expensive as the licensing model was based on the number of IP objects” – an unrealistic proposition in view of the soaring number of IP objects needed to run UB’s services.

The Solution

As the QIP licensing model is per IP address, it was becoming more and more cost prohibitive; UB chose the more efficient and scalable appliance-based solution offered by the Infoblox grid. 4 Infoblox appliances were installed, 2 physical and 2 virtual offering a resilient and redundant solution to provide core network services for the company. The appliances were deployed With a Grid Master and Grid Master candidate (Provides a backup for the Grid Master while still providing services) with 2 members providing distributed services. Further benefits of the solution provided a consolidation of hardware, with the introduction of 2 virtual vNIOs Infoblox appliances and the ability to operate all IPAM, DHCP and DNS services on a single appliance.

The devices were distributed as part of an integrated grid. Infoblox’s high availability Grid architecture was a key feature for Steve Hackett. It increases reliability and improves disaster recovery through distributed appliances under central control. A distributed database also lowers operational costs while reducing errors and increasing data integrity.

Steve Hackett explained: “I preferred the grid concept for reasons already outlined. I also liked the appliance model which meant easy upgrades to keep up to date with features and security updates”. The Grid Master that is responsible for all management connections is all the single point of patch/upgrade management. Upgrades are downloaded to the Grid Master which will then distribute the package to other Grid Members, test the upgrade on a virtual partition, and once satisfied it completed successfully can then be upgraded.

The Result

Steve Hackett summarized the benefits of upgrading from the old software based solution to Infoblox: “Compared with the old system we were running, the Infoblox import process is far better. Also the old system needed a fat client to do everything whereas Infoblox is web based. This is great, as we don’t have to worry about distributing the client to the people who need it.”

In addition to the gains in reliability and ease of use, he also reports an immediate economic benefit: “Our annual renewal costs have been cut by about 30%”

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Steve Hackett
Senior Network Analyst
at United Biscuits



Infoblox is the leader in modern, cloud-first networking and security services. Through extensive integrations, its solutions empower organizations to realize the full advantages of cloud networking today, while maximizing their existing infrastructure investments. Infoblox has over 12,000 customers, including 70 percent of the Fortune 500.

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