

Site license gives Bournemouth University boundless flexibility

Previously constrained by a large centralized load balancer that was difficult and costly to manage, Bournemouth University now uses virtual load balancers from Loadbalancer.org to keep its critical applications up and running. Thanks to a cost-effective site license, the university can deploy new load balancers on demand, giving it boundless flexibility to adapt and scale up its IT services.



Loadbalancer.org provides a rock-solid platform for delivering reliable, high performance applications for students and staff.”

Matt Hall,
Assistant Director of IT, Bournemouth University

Challenges

- Reduce the cost of load balancing
- Improve flexibility in application deployments

Solution

- Loadbalancer.org Enterprise VA
- Site license

Benefits

- More cost-effective and reliable
- Easy to manage and maintain
- High availability for critical applications
- Rapid deployments
- Flexibility to adapt and integrate

Challenges

For many years, Bournemouth University had used a single pair of hardware-based load balancing devices to balance traffic to several key applications, including its student services portal and two key remote working solutions. This legacy solution was, however, expensive to manage and upgrade. The university wasn't using all of the functionality offered by the high-end platform, so consequently, it was getting poor value for money from its investment.

The university's centralized approach to load balancing was also beginning to restrict the way that the university managed and developed its applications. Rather than having a single load balancing solution, managed by one team, it wanted to move towards having dedicated load balancers for each application, to give the university more flexibility in how it configured its load balancing capabilities to optimize the performance of services for staff and students.

Solution

After evaluating different products, Bournemouth University opted for a site license from Loadbalancer.org, which gives it unlimited access to virtual load balancing appliances at a very cost-effective price. With no licensing constraints to worry about, the university has been able to implement a distributed load balancer deployment across its two data centers. Each of its key applications now has its own dedicated pair of load balancers, and the university's IT team can spin up development instances as needed, when testing new applications.



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At present, Bournemouth University has up to 20 separate load balancers configured in active-passive pairs in production and development environments. The solutions are used primarily to support the university's eVision student records system, VMWare Horizon virtual desktop platform and LeoStream remote access software. However, with the flexibility afforded by the site license, the university has also been able to use Loadbalancer.org solutions to consolidate system alerts and provide high availability syslog data transfers to its Security Information Event Management (SIEM) system.

Benefits

The virtual load balancing solutions from Loadbalancer.org have proven far more reliable than the university's previous load balancer, which experienced a series of configuration and failover issues. According to Matt Hall, Assistant Director of IT at Bournemouth University, "Loadbalancer.org provides a rock-solid platform for delivering reliable, high performance applications for students and staff."

The Loadbalancer.org solutions are also much easier for the IT team at Bournemouth University to manage than the previous load balancer. Once the virtual appliances are set up, they require very little interaction or support from the IT team.

Critically, the Loadbalancer.org solutions have enabled Bournemouth University to ensure the high availability of applications that are vital for the delivery of teaching and student services. For example, over 20,000 members of staff and students have access to the student records system, and Loadbalancer.org helps the university to ensure that this key application performs well and stays available.

Having a site license has given Bournemouth University a great deal of flexibility and agility. For instance, when the university had to expand its VMWare Horizon platform quickly to support home learning during the coronavirus pandemic, it could get a load balancer up and running without delay.

Finally, Linux specialists at the university like the way that Loadbalancer.org provides the best of both worlds. The Loadbalancer.org solutions combine open source technologies, such as Linux, with a high quality, commercially-developed, intuitive user interface. Consequently, users without Linux skills can manage the load balancer easily, while people with Linux skills have all the flexibility in the world to adapt and integrate the solution to best meet the needs of the university

About Loadbalancer.org

Loadbalancer.org's mission is to ensure that its clients' businesses are never interrupted. The load balancer experts ask the right questions to get to the heart of what matters, bringing a depth of understanding to each deployment. Experience enables Loadbalancer.org engineers to design less complex, unbreakable solutions - and to provide exceptional personalized support.

