Melbourne Cricket Club keeps Microsoft Dynamics CRM system up and running with Loadbalancer.org

One of the oldest and most prestigious sports clubs in Australia, Melbourne Cricket Club selected Loadbalancer.org to improve the availability and management of its Microsoft Dynamics CRM application. It can now deliver dependable customer services for over 360,000 existing and future members.

MELBOURNE CRICKET CLUB

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Raman Tiruchunapalli
ICT Infrastructure Manager, Melbourne Cricket Club

Challenges

- Existing Microsoft load balancing software performing poorly in converged network

- Scheduled out-of-hours downtime required for CRM system maintenance

Solution

- Loadbalancer.org Enterprise 10G

Benefits

- Reliable load balancing performance, leading to time savings in the IT department

- Zero downtime in Dynamics CRM application

- Better visibility of CRM application performance to assist system management

Challenges

Every year, Melbourne Cricket Club welcomes 3.5 million sports fans to the Melbourne Cricket Ground, which is affectionately known as 'the G'. As one of the most exclusive sports clubs in the world, it has 102,000 feepaying members and over 260,000 people on a waiting list, hoping for the opportunity to join. It manages data about all these existing and would-be members using the Microsoft Dynamics Customer Relationship Management (CRM) application, on premise, and needed a highly available, efficient and load balanced solution to meet the intense demands of match days.

In 2015, Melbourne Cricket Club launched a multi-million dollar IT infrastructure upgrade called Smart Stadium that included a new Wi-Fi network and IPTV rollout as part of a $45m investment into improving connectivity in the stadium and bringing all systems into one converged network shared across two data centers. The club's existing Microsoft load balancing software struggled to cope with this new converged network environment and scheduled downtime was required for maintenance. So, when the time came to upgrade the Dynamics CRM platform, the club decided to find a more robust and reliable load balancing solution to ensure the optimal performance of this business-critical system.

Solution

With a view to implementing a long term solution and after researching several vendors, Melbourne Cricket Club chose the solution from Loadbalancer.org. It installed two Loadbalancer.org Enterprise 10G appliances, in active passive configuration, to balance CRM application traffic across multiple servers in two data centers.

"Selecting Loadbalancer.org was a pretty easy decision for us to make," recalls Raman Tiruchunapalli, ICT Infrastructure Manager at Melbourne Cricket Club. "The functionality, good price point and long term approach of Loadbalancer.org was what we wanted. Also, talking with the Loadbalancer.org technical team made us feel very comfortable with our choice."

Results

Melbourne Cricket Club's IT infrastructure team can now work far more efficiently, as time is no longer wasted trouble shooting issues with Microsoft's load balancing software. "Now that we have Loadbalancer.org products, we can focus our time on other areas of our network without having to worry about load balancing our CRM at all," Tiruchunapalli says.

Most importantly, the club's customer service teams can work more productively as there is zero downtime in the CRM application that they rely upon to do their jobs. Around 60 employees use Dynamics CRM on a daily basis to update contacts, take payments, and respond to membership enquiries, book tickets and process ID cards.

"Microsoft Dynamics CRM is such a critical system for our business, that it is really important for us to have zero downtime," Tiruchunapalli says. "Loadbalancer.org allows us to perform maintenance on our CRM application during working hours, without interrupting services for employees or causing any inconvenience for club members."

In addition, the Loadbalancer.org products provide Melbourne Cricket Club with improved visibility of the usage of its CRM system. The IT infrastructure team can see a wide range of application performance statistics, such as how many users are connected to each server or data center at any one time. This helps the team to manage Dynamics CRM by providing early insight into any potential problems.

Melbourne Cricket Club is now planning to use Loadbalancer.org products to balance other solutions in its Smart Stadium, including email. Tiruchunapalli concludes, "Loadbalancer.org products really work – and I'm not just saying that for the sake of it!"

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 personalised support.