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Case Study

Serco maximizes the availability and resilience of a business-critical SAP environment

When the international service company Serco Group plc took over the operation of IT services for a local authority in the UK, it needed to ensure the reliability of business-critical SAP systems. It deployed products from Loadbalancer.org to improve the overall resilience of the SAP environment and deliver the high application availability it promised in its Service Level Agreement.

"By using Loadbalancer.org products, we can meet the performance expectations of our clients' 8,500 users and deliver over 99.8% application availability."

SAP Technical Support Manager
Serco

Challenges

- Ensure the reliability and availability of SAP applications

Solution

- Loadbalancer.org Enterprise MAX hardware solution
- Loadbalancer.org Enterprise VA MAX virtual solution

Benefits

- Improves resilience in the SAP environment
- Achieves the SLA for 99.8% SAP availability
- Provides high performance for 100-500 users and 24 hour usage
- Meets the performance expectations of 8,500 users
- Prevents bottlenecks in traffic

serco

Challenges

As part of a multi-million pound public sector services contract, Serco took over responsibility for providing a range of front and back office operations, including IT services, for a local authority in the UK. This included hosting, delivering and managing the council's SAP applications for finance, payroll, human resources and supplier relationship management (SRM).

The SAP applications are absolutely vital for the operation of council services. If they failed, thousands of employees wouldn't be paid, suppliers wouldn't receive orders and invoices wouldn't be processed.

Solution

During the migration of IT services to Serco from the council, Serco decided to install load balancers to optimize the performance and resilience of the SAP applications. Serco already used solutions from Loadbalancer.org successfully elsewhere within its business, so felt comfortable selecting Loadbalancer.org again to support such a business-critical IT system for its new client.

Initially Serco deployed hardware-based Enterprise MAX products from Loadbalancer.org, and these solutions delivered consistently reliable performance for over five years. Then, in line with a new corporate IT strategy, Serco replaced its physical products with virtualized solutions from Loadbalancer.org to complement the newly-developed virtualized server environment within its data centers.

Results

Prior to the contract with Serco, the council didn't have a load balancing capability for its SAP applications. By introducing Loadbalancer.org products to control traffic flow in the SAP environment, Serco has succeeded in improving resilience to deliver a high level of SAP application availability for council staff.

Given the importance of the SAP applications for the council, Serco is contractually obliged to provide 99.8% availability. The use of products from Loadbalancer.org contributes to Serco's ability to meet this particularly high Service Level Agreement (SLA).

The SAP applications are not only used by council employees, but also support users in schools and fire stations across the county. In total there are around 8,500 SAP application users, at more than 700 sites, and the use of Loadbalancer.org products helps Serco to meet the SAP performance expectations of all these people.

For the Serco team that manages the SAP systems on behalf of the council, the Loadbalancer.org products perform an almost imperceptible but absolutely invaluable role. The team doesn't experience bottlenecks in traffic or any other load balancing issues that might impact SAP application performance. The Loadbalancer.org solutions just sit in the background and do what they need to do.

About Loadbalancer.org

Loadbalancer.org provides highly dependable, versatile and affordable load balancers, developed to improve the availability of critical IT applications. With extensive experience solving application delivery challenges for customers around the globe, you can expect honest advice and outstanding support from the Loadbalancer.org team who truly are experts.