MindTouch® Gains Real-Time Visibility to Grow Customer Success With Splunk Cloud

Executive Summary

MindTouch, Inc. is a provider of cloud-based customer success software. MindTouch empowers businesses to author, capture and serve knowledge to their customers by creating insight from customers' behavior. MindTouch wanted to move to an analytics-driven operational, customer service and business model with a solution that would enable it to monitor all parts of its cloud infrastructure, deliver great performance, diagnose complex customer issues and provide real-time insights. Since deploying Splunk® Cloud, MindTouch has seen benefits including:

- Full visibility into customer experience
- Enhanced customer satisfaction
- Overall business growth

Why Splunk

To provide a superior user experience, meet service level agreements (SLAs) for 99.9 percent uptime and achieve agile application development, MindTouch uses a DevOps team to ensure the performance of its software as a service (SaaS) solution, which resides on the Amazon Web Services (AWS) cloud. The team combines software development with IT operations for an integrated approach to updating and delivering applications quickly. To be effective, however, DevOps requires continuous testing and ongoing monitoring of the firm's authoring environment, as well as rapid issue remediation. The team must determine if there are delivery issues in any of its services, such as its ranking services based on algorithms that learn user behavior. If any services perform below thresholds, DevOps needs immediate visibility into the issue to identify the faltering component within the application stack before the issue can impact customers.

MindTouch chose Splunk Cloud because it wanted to focus its resources on core business goals rather than administering an on-premises IT infrastructure. "Everything we can do with Splunk Enterprise, we do with Splunk Cloud, but without any infrastructure to maintain," says a MindTouch software engineer. "Splunk Cloud gives us the scalability to support our growing multi-tenant environment without worrying about managing hardware, capacity planning or tasks like software patches."

Industry
- Technology

Splunk Use Cases
- Application delivery
- Business analytics
- IT operations

Challenges
- Required to meet SLAs and provide superior customer experience
- Needed to ensure agile application development and performance
- Lacked real-time operational visibility into cloud infrastructure
- Wanted to move to analytics-driven business model
- Efficiency was hindered by manual time-consuming processes

Business Impact
- Gained full operational visibility into cloud infrastructure
- Tripled customer base without increasing size of DevOps team
- Enhanced overall customer satisfaction
- Instant problem detection, rapid remediation and adherence to SLAs thanks to real-time monitoring
- Faster issue remediation—days to minutes
- Improved efficiency of application delivery and deployment
- Transformed pricing model through business analytics

Data Sources
- AWS servers
- Databases like MySQL & Apache Cassandra
- Memcached server
- Load balancers

Splunk Products
- Splunk Cloud

Real-time operational insight improves customer success

With Splunk Cloud, the MindTouch DevOps team has real-time operational visibility into its entire infrastructure in the cloud, including its AWS servers. Dashboards display metrics on the behavior of all key components, including application performance. The team detects potential bottlenecks and takes remedial action before customers experience problems. For example, dashboards track response times of searches within each customer's knowledge base and if latencies are detected that exceed pre-set thresholds, Splunk Cloud issues alerts that notify on-call technicians. If a customer service issue does arise, DevOps can quickly identify the problem by correlating logs across different data sources. Moreover, DevOps can view historical data to determine trendlines and proactively address potential problems.

Agile application development and issue remediation

To continually improve its services, MindTouch issues software updates and service releases weekly. Without operational insight, these upgrades would be risky because they might introduce flaws that could jeopardize applications. With Splunk Cloud, however, DevOps can quickly test code and closely monitor its performance when in production. The team greatly reduces the time required to prepare new code and can promptly roll back releases if issues are detected.

Similarly, to diagnose underperforming applications, administrators previously had to manually collect and analyze logs from multiple components throughout the application stack, which was very time consuming and costly. With Splunk Cloud, administrators easily collect data from all relevant components, then graph the data in dashboards to determine each problem's root

"With our operations already in the cloud, Splunk Cloud is ideal for us. We get the full functionality of Splunk Enterprise, which means the real-time data and insights to optimize our services, refine our processes and rapidly put software into production. But now, someone else minds the servers and addresses capacity."

— Software Engineer, MindTouch

cause. What once took hours, if not days, is now done in as quickly as minutes. Coupled with Splunk Cloud's real-time monitoring, MindTouch has a feedback loop that permits nearly instant problem detection, rapid remediation and adherence to SLAs.

Business analytics lead to business growth

Thanks to the business analytics gleaned from Splunk Cloud, MindTouch was able to refine its pricing by billing its customers according to the number of relevant search requests their users make each month. The company has increased its customer retention and grown its overall business, as the 100 percent uptime of Splunk Cloud continues to enable MindTouch to deliver value to its customers. According to the software engineer, "Since deploying Splunk Cloud, we have been able to triple our customer base while maintaining the same size of our DevOps team."

In addition, MindTouch uses Splunk Cloud to extract business analytics for its internal users. Administrators can perform ad hoc searches to obtain information such as the distribution of customers. "Splunk dashboards provide our entire company with daily visibility into our cloud infrastructure," concludes the software engineer. "From DevOps and sales to the boardroom, the knowledge we derive from Splunk Cloud is vital to our operations."

Download Splunk for free or get started with the free cloud trial. Whether cloud, on-premises, or for large or small teams, Splunk has a deployment model that will fit your needs.

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