



N(i)² Customer Success

Cdiscount.com

Customer

Cdiscount

www.cdiscount.com

Headquarters

Neuilly Sur Marne, France

Industry

e-commerce

Infrastructure

100,000 sqm of product
warehousing
30,000 parcels shipped daily
6,000,000 website page views daily
700 employees, 200 servers
4 major data centers

IT Domains

Data Center Management
Connectivity Management
Network Management

Solution

N(i)² Data Center Resource
Management

COMPANY

Based in France, Cdiscount is a leading distribution company and an important French provider of e-commerce services. More than 700 people work every day to offer the largest selection of items at discounted prices. Cdiscount is now a subsidiary of the Groupe Casino.

PROBLEM

In less than ten years, what started as a website developed by three brothers to sell consumer goods online, had become one of France's leading e-commerce providers, with an IT infrastructure that spanned four data centers.

"Our IT infrastructure is constantly evolving to meet the needs of the business," Cdiscount Technical Director Olivier Foing said. "What we found was it had evolved in various complex ways, to the point where only a few 'IT gurus' were able to reliably deploy changes in the data center environment." The intricacies of how their IT had been architected were not properly documented, and that knowledge needed to be captured, assured and made more widely available. At the same time, the costs of their IT operations were rising disproportionately, and needed to be better controlled.

Foing knew that long-term, this was a recipe for disaster. With the trend toward greater dependency on IT, the business couldn't risk any lengthy outages at the service level. The company's growth curve required them to maintain their services seamlessly, while going after new opportunities in the United Kingdom and elsewhere.

CHALLENGE

Like many IT-driven businesses Cdiscount had grown amazingly fast, having amassed over 200 servers in four locations to handle the 2,000 hits their site received every second.

Key Benefits

Maintain a repository of detailed infrastructure configurations to convey which IT resources are over- or under-utilized, and those not used at all;

Change management capabilities that model and compare the impacts of various “What If?” scenarios;

Better business continuity by mitigating risks in implementing change;

Enforced corporate policies, best practices, operating standards and procedures (ITIL).

With barely a chance to catch their breath during this growth, it had become a huge struggle to keep track of what resources they had, how they were being used, and in what capacity.

“We lacked visibility on our IT infrastructure,” Foing said. “This led to confusion and delays when deploying changes. And impact analysis was simply impossible. What we needed was a tool that could help us put ITIL best-practices into place. We needed to set up a central repository of configuration data to be shared by all IT domains, and with tools to help visualize the infrastructure from different perspectives. We needed to know, for example, what applications are reliant on which servers, and what elements are overtaxed, underused or not used at all,” Foing said.

SOLUTION

“We found the traditional inventory tools on the market just didn’t lend themselves well to the unique challenges faced by modern data centers. Things like: network cabling, power provisioning, rack and chassis placement, application dependency - being able to map and model these elements is essential, in addition to servers and systems information,” Foing said.

The IT infrastructure is not only the backbone of any modern business; it can be - and should be - a springboard for growth when leveraged successfully. In N(i)², Cdiscount found a software provider that understood that, and had designed products, such as the N(i)² Data Center Resource Management solution, specifically with this goal in mind.

RESULTS

Taking advantage of N(i)²'s iterative approach, Cdiscount had their initial load of configuration data online and in production within three months. Immediately they were able to:

- Map applications to logical infrastructure
- Model the impacts of services on business layers
- Map logical nodes to physical infrastructure (servers, chassis, storage, locations...)
- Graphically view IT infrastructure in various ways including hierarchical, peer-to-peer, location and business contexts
- Understand power load, cooling needs, and where to weed out inefficiencies in their data center design to save money
- Use N(i)²'s Multi-environment Management to design and model “What if?” scenarios to lessen the impact of changes

“Our Human Resources, our service delivery, our IT support ... these groups and others are benefitting in their everyday operations from being able to access a dependable single-source of truth about the underlying IT infrastructure to understand the connections and dependencies and plan changes accordingly”, Foing said.

Going forward, Cdiscount plans to expand its reach beyond France, to Ireland and the UK, as well as an enhanced presence in Germany. "Implementing the N(i)² Data Center Resource Management Solution was crucial for us to confidently and cost-effectively add services and maintain our existing ones - without fail," Foing said.

ABOUT N(i)²

N(i)² is an innovative and leading technology company that develops and markets cross-domain service management software to proactively manage the service and infrastructure lifecycles for IT, Networks, Facilities and Cloud domains from a single platform. N(i)²'s unique software provides service providers and large enterprises comprehensive visibility and control over complex infrastructure resources in their data centers. N(i)² enables them to rapidly provision and effectively deliver services by being Cloud-Ready, Services-Ready and Business-Ready. For more information, please visit: www.ni2.com.

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