

END-USER EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT



DISCOVERY COMMUNICATIONS RELIES ON CORADIANT USER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT TO DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE LEVELS TO END USERS

Discovery Communication's vast web presence includes a number of the highest-traffic web properties; The Discovery Channel, Animal Planet, the COSMEO online homework help site and the highly rated Discovery Channel Store. Discovery Communications relies on Coradiant's End-User Experience Management to manage the performance of their web properties and to ensure a high quality, error-free user experience.

"Automatic problem identification makes IT more effective because it eliminates the noise, amplifies the signal and identifies the real issues."

PATRICK GARDELLA
DIRECTOR OF ONLINE ARCHITECTURE
DISCOVERY COMMUNICATIONS LLC

INDUSTRY

Media and Education

CHALLENGE

Discovery Communications wanted to find the cause of problems as quickly as possible

WHY END-USER EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT?

Existing tests only covered parts of the site and did not give full visibility into what users were being delivered.

SOLUTION

TrueSight IM (Incident Management) and TrueSight AIM (Automated Incident Management)

KEY BENEFITS

- Instant knowledge into the causes of problems
- Visibility all the way from the user to the servers
- Ease of installation and use

Discovery Communications LLC is the number-one nonfiction media company reaching more than 1.5 billion cumulative subscribers in over 170 countries. Their vast web presence provides additional information for viewers about topics related to programs presented on their networks, helps promote interest for Discovery's unique programming, and provides a sizable array of products that are available for purchase by consumers. Discovery also operates a number of respected educational sites, including COSMEO, geared towards K-12 learners.

"The web is an integral part of the Discovery Communications mission," said Patrick Gardella, director of online architecture for Discovery Communications. "We handle an extraordinary amount of traffic, delivering the high quality users expect from Discovery. Our online commerce site is a very popular destination, particularly during the holiday season."

"As our traffic grew, we needed better ways to find and track down problems and issues," continued Gardella. But the sheer volume of traffic and the varying combinations of user actions, different browsers, and quality of the users' network connections made troubleshooting a difficult task.

"We wanted to trace what is happening down to real users, in order to diagnose problems," according to Gardella. "And we wanted to be able to do it instantly." Problems could surface from a variety of sources, from viewers to senior management at Discovery. All of the problems would be sent to IT for action, and most problems were difficult to recreate.

Discovery's key goals included identifying any problems that web visitors face, and then being able to investigate problems quickly and understand the causes of problems.

"Of course the automatic assumption is that glitches are Discovery's problems," said Gardella. "If we would become aware of a problem, we would have to combine logs from various data points, from web servers to applications servers and to database servers and try to tie the timing together in order to get a clear picture of what happened. That was a very time consuming and costly process."

"We looked for other approaches to meet our goal of finding issues and narrowing down to the root cause quickly. Synthetic tests were useless for our environment, and could not provide visibility into what users were actually doing and experiencing. Approaches like client java script code were just not an option. We have too many paths, too many data centers and too many domains."

Discovery conducted an in-depth evaluation of web performance management tools, and conducted demonstrations of all of them. "Coradiant TrueSight™ won the evaluation hands-down," according to Gardella. Among the chief benefits, Gardella cited Coradiant's appliance model, ease-of-use, fast installation, no infrastructure and no data base work.

CASE STUDY

“Being able to see what is happening to actual users all the way from the user back to the server is vital.”



The use of AIM allows you to narrow down exactly what is wrong, or where to look, rather than having to look at all the components of the traffic. Not sure if the problem is isolated to that ISP in Texas having problems? AIM will tell you.

“PLUG IT IN AND GO FOR IT”

The solution to a complex issue was found immediately after installing Coradiant TrueSight. At one point, Discovery's education site COSMEO had a large number of duplicate purchases, in essence selling purchasers the same product twice. It created a lot of extra work for customer service, users were inconvenienced and orders had to be fixed manually. After weeks of fruitless investigation, TrueSight was installed, and within minutes, discovered the problem. The users were clicking the purchase button several times, if they thought the transaction was too slow, causing the sale to register as many times as they clicked (one user clicked seventeen times). When they looked at the transactions in Coradiant TrueSight, they found the cause of the problem right away and the problem got resolved immediately.

TrueSight also quickly solved a costly bandwidth issue. The Discovery properties use Flash to provide a highly dynamic user experience. Flash elements, including large video clips, are pre-loaded into client browsers to increase the apparent response time to visitors. A bug in the Flash pre-load code caused the objects to be delivered twice. Coradiant detected the problem, identified the cause, and a fix was installed. Network usage was cut significantly and users got faster delivery.

DISCOVERY COMMUNICATIONS RESULTS

“Coradiant TrueSight has been in place for 2 years now,” said Gardella. “If you are in IT running web sites, Coradiant is critical. It's a must-have capability. Coradiant gets rid of a lot of the guessing and long investigations into the sources of problems.”

“We've exceeded our goals of identifying problems quickly and making IT a real asset to the business. We keep users happy and keep the commerce portions fast and responsive. Troubleshooting, and being able to narrow things down quickly, is a huge advantage. Being able to see what is happening to actual users all the way from the user back to the server is vital.”



“AIM will likely be the first place I look when I start TrueSight from here on out.”

ABOUT DISCOVERY COMMUNICATIONS LLC

Discovery Communications is the number-one nonfiction media company reaching more than 1.5 billion cumulative subscribers in over 170 countries. Through TV and digital media, Discovery's 100-plus worldwide networks include Discovery Channel, TLC, Animal Planet, The Science Channel, Discovery Health and Discovery HD Theater. For more information please visit www.discoverycommunications.com.

Discovery Education is the leading provider of video-based broadband educational content in the United States. From its COSMEO homework help website to school services and products reaching 35 million students across the nation, Discovery Education's mission is to provide effective digital resources to educators, students and families. By helping families embrace and use new educational technologies, Discovery Education strives to improve student achievement and academic performance.

ABOUT CORADIANT

Coradiant is the leading provider of equipment used to manage, optimize and troubleshoot web applications. Coradiant's award-winning TrueSight products use customer metrics gathered from each web user visit as their primary data source for IT management. Coradiant End-User Experience Management products are deployed in hundreds of leading organizations and Fortune 500 companies including software as a service (SaaS), e-commerce, entertainment, finance, insurance, healthcare, and education. Coradiant is headquartered in San Diego with offices in North America and Europe.

For more information please see www.coradiant.com or call 1-877-731-7277

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