FusionReactor - Driving Our Continuous Server Monitoring Strategy

Problem

To identify server problems before they affect customers' user experience and to manage and identify application performance issues.

Solution

Use FusionReactor to provide advance notification of server problems. Utilize and analyze log files and metrics generated from FusionReactor as part of our continuous server monitoring methodology

Benefits

- Easily identify potential problems before they escalate into a serious condition
- Spot negative performance trends at an early stage
- Base decisions on fact rather than on speculation
- Make application managers accountable for application performance
- Improve the performance of applications by pro-actively making changes based on feedback gained from continuous monitoring data
- Improve resource efficiency by addressing problems in a controlled and planned manner before serious conditions occur

"I find being proactive a better way of managing our sites."

-Company's Systems Technology Director.

Fortune 50 Company relies on FusionReactor

One of the world's largest package delivery companies has selected FusionReactor Professional Server Monitor to help track and tune 150 internal web applications used by over 42,000 people. The company's websites manage between 3.2 million hits to 5.5 million hits each day.

Continuous Monitoring

The company relies on FusionReactor as the main tool to identify problems in applications and on their ColdFusion servers. The company's Director of Systems Technology has a background in numerical analysis and finds it important to make decisions on application performance based on fact. Using FusionReactor as part of a method of continuous server analysis, one person on the team collects FusionReactor log-file data, creates standard deviation graphs, and looks for any variations in application performance this activity is done on a daily and on an as-needed basis. Performance variations are determined by examining daily response times for sites, applications and pages using key metrics from FusionReactor. The process of continuous analysis is then applied on a weekly basis, by examining application log-file data over time to identify performance patterns.

Improves Performance

The site's user authentication page is the highest utilized page which previously ran around 500-600 milliseconds, with four million hits per day. Before FusionReactor monitoring occured, the page performance went unnoticed. With the help of FusionReactor and the continuous server analysis approach previously described, the company was able to optimize this page and get page execution time down to 200 milliseconds representing a 300% improvement in response time.

Identifies Issues

When reviewing the weekly response time standard deviation graphs (built using FusionReactor metric data), the company's Director of Systems Technology was immediately alerted to an excessive deviation in response times for a specific application. There was no straightforward explanation of this phenomena and the initial cause was suspected to be a potential database or network issue. He then used FusionReactor server monitoring to pinpoint the problem. What he discovered was that one of the application's page sizes was too large because of an embedded Java control. The issue had been difficult to initially locate, as the problem only affected international customers. The development team replaced the Java control, which immediately fixed the problem. Having the ability to combine log file information such as response times, page size as well as other metric information is invaluable in enabling users to identify and track down problems, quickly and efficiently.

"Before FusionReactor we knew if a server was down, because customers would email us. Today, I know about the issues before the customer. I am all over that."

- Company Systems Technology Director.