

Case Study

GLOBO

"Success story"

// Simply the best web accelerator

Big in Brazil and Latin America

The biggest media group in Brazil and Latin America is delighted with Varnish. For Globo, the number of servers and total costs have decreased, while significantly improving performance and speed. In the battle against machines Varnish easily wins.

*"Varnish not only handles more simultaneous users, but the solution also responds and delivers pages faster, while using less hardware resources."
- Joao Paulo Gonsiro Nacao, OS Team, Coordinator Globo.com*

Globo is currently the largest commercial television network of Latin America and the third largest in the world, behind only CBS and NBC, being watched by an estimate of **120 million people daily**.

Critical Issue

In 2008 Globo.com sees the need for a quick and effective replacement of its old web accelerator and starts looking at possible alternatives in the cache market.

- Our previous solution was based on NetApp Netcaches, which we felt had several shortcomings, especially related to cost and performance. Therefore, we started to explore the open source solutions. We tested Squid, however, we found that the performance was not good enough. We found some information about Varnish and decided to test it in our infrastructure, tells Joao Paulo Gonsiro Nacao.

Globo's choice

Initial tests delivered a so good performance that the IT-department needed to look no further. The high reliability of Varnish solutions was also a deciding factor.

- No other solution would get the job done faster or cheaper, adds Nacao.

Substantial hardware savings

- We rely heavily on open source software. In fact, we base as many of our solutions as we can on it. Linux is our primary operating system and we also use many other open applications such as Apache HTTPD server, TomCat, BIND, postfix, MySQL and others, confirms Nacao.

Varnish is a modern web accelerator that provides significantly better performance than relevant competitors. This yields a substantial potential for hardware savings. Varnish lightens the load on the web servers and provides the users with a better and faster reading experience. The accelerator temporarily stores the pages that the web servers produce so that they do not need to be produced over and over again for each reader. So, the pages are only updated when their content has changed. Varnish not only handles more users simultaneously, but it also responds and delivers pages faster, while using less hardware resources.

Facts about Globo.com

Globo.com is the Internet arm of Organizações Globo, Brazil's largest media conglomerate. Globos' business includes television, cable television, newspapers, magazines and entertainment parks. In 2003 Globo.com began providing both standard and paid Internet services.

Revenue 2009	\$ 40 million
Year Founded	2000
Employees	200
Headquarters	Rio De Janeiro, Brazil

Straight forward

Varnish Software offers installation, integration, operation and support services. Varnish Software also offers adaptation and further development if there should be a need for functionality that is not covered by the existing version.

According to Globo, implementing Varnish was easy, since it is easy to configure and has a well defined and straight forward language. In fact, Globo only had to make small amounts of code changes to adapt the logging system to fit with internal requirements.

Quick and efficient support

Globo invested in services from Varnish Software to help with the configuration, tuning and deployment.

- They gave us confidence with how to deploy the solutions, and how to get the best from Varnish. Their support was invaluable, and we have a real good relationship with Varnish Software team. They always respond quickly and efficiently, says Nacao.

"Varnish team gave us confidence. They always respond quickly and efficiently".

Varnish is now the main web cache solution for all of Globo's sites in Latin-America and handles more than 5 Gbps of Internet traffic.

- We are thrilled with the performance, especially given the low initial investment. Many other companies are interested and want to learn from our experience. We talked about our experience with Varnish at a conference and received great feedback.

More for less

Globo is not sure on how many web servers Varnish has replaced, but states that it's a substantial amount.

- It is difficult to have a precise number, but Varnish outpaces Apache with static content by at least three times.

When asked if they would choose Varnish again, their verdict is clear:

- Yes, because it is a very good solution for web caching and the actual replacement of the NetCaches was a success.

"We could replace the NetCache solution with fewer machines and more than double the performance. This solution reduced our power consumption and the space requirement in the datacenter"

Excellent performance under heavy load

- Varnish is a scalable and flexible web caching solution for Internet sites with high demand. Its key advantage is undoubtedly that it helps deliver excellent performance under heavy load, concludes Joao Paulo Gonsiro Nacao.

Globos' challenge

Globo needed to replace old net caching solutions from both a performance and cost perspective. They wanted to reduce energy consumption, ensure that their web pages were delivered faster to users, and reduce IT-infrastructure costs.

Solution

After several tests with Squid not delivering the desired outcome, Globo started searching the web for an alternative. Varnish quickly caught their attention. This is an open source HTTP accelerator that has seen a massive global increase in downloads and implementations since it was first launched in 2006. Implementation and configuration was straightforward and uncomplicated, and Globo also received support and services from Varnish Software that ensured flawless delivery.

Benefits

Globo has received several benefits, most notably a fast return on investment, less hardware, better performance and much flexibility. Overall it's the best solution available to handle their 5 Gbps of web traffic. The fact that the solution is open source is also a clear advantage since it fits with the IT-departments overall strategy to choose open and flexible solutions that can easily be tailored.