Using *assyst* ITOM to make informed business decisions

Based out of New Zealand, Focus on Business has been helping customers stay at the forefront of service management for 30 years. Since its early beginnings in the UK, it has provided specialist software integration and process consulting Service Management and business process improvement to customers from a wide range of industries - from Financial to Manufacturing, Education to Government and Retail to Distribution.

Focus on Business was selected as one of the 20 Most Promising IT Service Management Solution Providers of 2017 by CIO Review, recognizing its successes and efforts in simplifying Service Management for its customers using enterprise-class solutions in the service delivery ecosystem, namely the assyst Service Management suite by Axios Systems.

The use of *assyst* and the challenges faced

Having used assyst from Axios Systems to manage all aspects of IT Service Management (ITSM) since 2010, Focus on Business has also used the solution for IT Operations Management (ITOM) since 2013.

Speaking of the initial installation, Sean Hywood, Managing Director of Focus on Business, said: "The installation was seamless. Very quick and efficient. The configuration of setting up the IP zones and credentials is a one-time effort that took longer than the installation of the software itself, but overall completed the main installation in under a day. The ongoing maintenance is light, with no more than 1 day per month thereafter."

But the business faced a new challenge: to monitor the Availability and Capacity of a growing number of virtualized servers in the Azure cloud, as more end users began using the assyst solution it provides. A standardized method for alerting from theses platforms was paramount, and on top of this functionality, to trigger automations to handle basic administrative tasks.

To solve this challenge, Focus on Business worked with Axios and upgraded to the latest version of the ITOM solution in 2015

The solution

As well as making significant use of assyst's ITSM functionality across its diverse client base, Focus on Business now use assyst ITOM for Discovery, Monitoring and Business Service Monitoring (BSM). By doing so, they are able to discover all the assets across their infrastructure, which comprises local (office-based) equipment, through to virtual servers hosted in the Azure cloud.

Focus on Business also actively utilize BSM to measure and manage uptime on their services, made up from a series of 'tests' to calculate the availability and uptime of the services they offer to clients. The dashboards they produce are invaluable when reporting back to the clients on monthly SLA reports.

Challenge

To monitor the Availability and Capacity of a growing number of virtualized servers in the Azure cloud, as more end users began using the *assyst* solution Focus on Business provides.

Solution

Focus on Business worked with Axios and upgraded to the latest version of the ITOM solution.

Results

assyst allows Focus on Business not only to enrich data and provide management information quickly, but also deliver an overall quality service across the organization's business areas.

"From a monitoring perspective, we manage the Windows event logs and assyst application server logs. We have set up some threshold alerting on this for critical event management. So, for example when we receive a CRITICAL message from the assyst application server we are immediately notified from the Incident which is automatically logged in assyst. We monitor all the virtual servers for our clients through the ITOM solution as well, which provides us with a real-time view of the operational status of every customer environment we have under management."

Sean Hywood, Focus on Business

The benefits

assyst allows Focus on Business to not only enrich data and provide management information quickly, but also deliver an overall quality service across all of the organization's business areas. Some of the key benefits realized include:
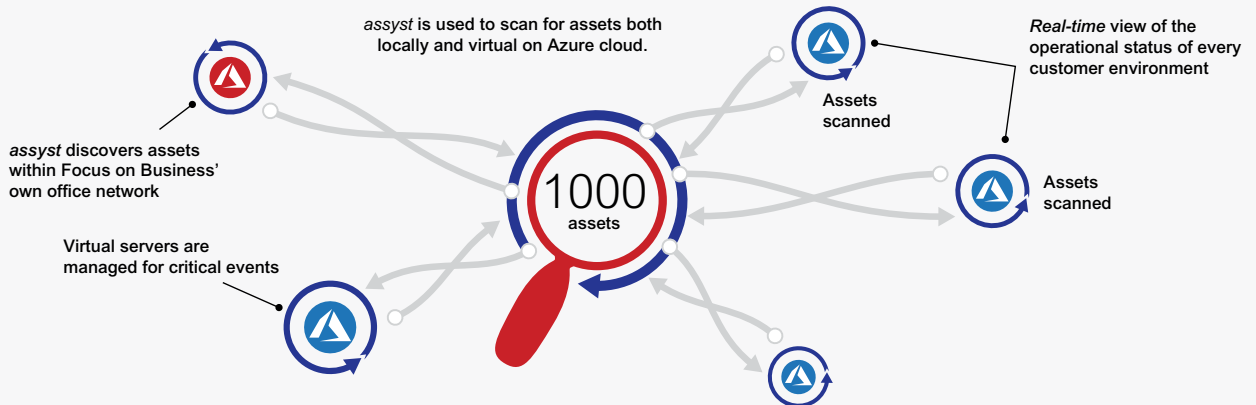
Real-time escalations

Focus on Business has created a Bridge with xMatters that provides real-time escalations to Mobile users on SLA breaches.
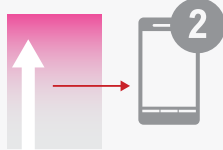
"It's fantastic, it provides a delivery mechanism quicker than traditional email, and targeted to individuals with a more immediate interactive response mechanism. What we've effectively created is a real-time integration that uses SMS messages as the transport and automates the interactions".

Sean Hywood

Asset discovery

assyst is used to scan for assets both locally and virtual on Azure cloud.

assyst discovers assets within Focus on Business' own office network

Virtual servers are managed for critical events

1000 assets

Assets scanned

Assets scanned

*Real-time* view of the operational status of every customer environment

Focus on Business has close to 1000 actively monitored assets. Anything it has scanned for is discovered and managed. Focus on Business has also used assyst to discover assets within its own office network from the server which is hosted on an Azure server.

Shift left automation

SMS

Critical events
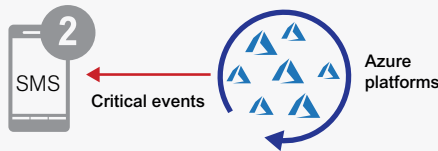
Azure platforms

Focus on Business has set up SMS notifications for critical events. The team manually turns off devices that are outside of SLA timeframes and continually monitor the Azure platform utilization. This will allow for the next logical step for ongoing management of the solution – automations around this space.

Fulfillment of services and reduced costs

INPUT

Automation

FAQ
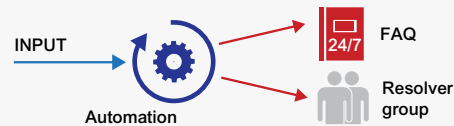
Resolver group

Within minutes, services are fulfilled by auto-directing end users to the correct resolver groups and providing knowledge articles 24/7, which in turn significantly bring down the cost and demand of Service Desk, thereby promoting self-resolution.

Availability monitoring and capacity monitoring

Availability monitoring and capacity monitoring, coupled with the automations, has freed up the time of the administrators to focus on other pursuits. This equates to:

In addition, monitoring availability has meant that Focus on Business is always meeting uptime guarantees and not being exposed to SLA penalties from outages, mitigating the risk associated with downtime for customers.

salary savings of 100K per annum

time savings of 40 hours per week

The future

The next steps for Focus on Business are to utilize the Endpoint management capabilities to control and deploy the assyst application for its clients. It will also look to manage it as a complete comprehensive service for both on-premise deployments and Azure cloud hosted clients.

Sean Hywood concludes: "The support from the local APAC team has been great, as has support from the executive team at Axios. We look forward to expanding our footprint in the region and spreading the value that Axios Systems has to offer."

"assyst's comprehensive solution has allowed us to save time in deploying cloud infrastructure to the benefit of our customers. It's also enabled us to be more responsive to customer demands while delivering a well-managed service with a high availability of 99.999% uptime.

Axios takes it to the next level with Business Service Management. Being able to show the clients' uptime/availability demonstrates rigor around our capability as a service provider.

The ease at which Axios can integrate with any other solution makes it easy to leverage previously invested technologies, maximizing the use of all our solutions. Rather than just using each a small amount, we are now able to use all our solutions to their maximum potential."

Sean Hywood, Focus on Business

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