



“We use the BIG-IP system to achieve enhanced application performance and virtual server infrastructure optimization, allowing us to deliver the cloud advantage of huge savings to our customers.”

Schalk Theron, Chief Information Officer, SpringCM

Content Management Provider Helps Customers Reap Cloud Advantages

SpringCM, an award-winning provider of cloud content management solutions, needed to keep pace with its rapid growth while continuing to provide customers with high performance, cost-effective solutions. To ensure the cloud advantages of lower costs and higher flexibility, SpringCM chose Application Delivery Networking (ADN) devices from F5®

With F5 products, SpringCM is able to keep its costs low and application performance high. These efficiencies help its customers achieve 50 to 80 percent lower total cost of ownership versus on-premises alternatives.

Business Challenges

SpringCM, founded in 2005, uses a cloud model to deliver content management applications, rather than implementing costly, high maintenance, on-premises solutions. The company was listed on the Gartner Magic Quadrant as a Visionary in 2009 and 2010. Notable customers include American General, Hellman Worldwide, Thermo Fisher, Cox Communications, and Cricket.

SpringCM has enjoyed growing popularity as a cloud provider of document management and workflow solutions, and as its customer base has grown, so has the breadth of solutions the company offers to its customers. “Our customers begin to use our other solutions, including contract management, dynamic case management,

invoice automation, and case management, as they see the benefits of the platform,” says Schalk Theron, Chief Information Officer at SpringCM.

The company has continuously seen its traffic volume double every quarter. And while the SpringCM business model centers on providing a reliable, secure service with high efficiency and lower costs, the third-party load balancing solution that SpringCM was using was insufficient to support its growing traffic. “Our load balancing vendor could not support the five nines of availability that we wanted, and without throwing significant amounts of money at the problem, we could not grow,” says Theron.

Overview

Industry

IT Services—Enterprise Content Management

Challenges

- Manage increasing application traffic
- Redirect traffic seamlessly
- Analyze traffic to create customer solutions

Solution

- BIG-IP® Local Traffic Manager™
- BIG-IP® LTM® Virtual Edition (VE)
- BIG-IP® WebAccelerator™
- iRules®

Benefits

- Delivers a better cloud experience
- Reduces costs
- Supports rapid growth

SpringCM wanted to achieve maximum data center efficiency to provide a cost-effective service. "We needed to implement ADN equipment that would allow us to get closer to 100 percent utilization," says Theron. Further, the company wanted to streamline data center administration. "We need to rely on vendors who help us spend less time administering equipment and more time providing trusted solutions for customers."

Solution

In 2007, SpringCM decided to rebuild its data center infrastructure, and it chose to implement ADN solutions from F5, including BIG-IP Local Traffic Manager (LTM), F5 iRules® and BIG-IP WebAccelerator™. BIG-IP LTM with iRules gives SpringCM complete control over application traffic. BIG-IP WebAccelerator improves application performance by offloading the network and servers.

The SpringCM cloud platform operates on hundreds of virtual machines and includes a pair of BIG-IP LTM devices with BIG-IP WebAccelerator at its primary data center, and BIG-IP LTM Virtual Edition (VE) at secondary data centers. Using iRules, F5's customizable scripting language, SpringCM can direct traffic to the appropriate application server pools—whether physical or virtual. With this flexibility, the company can support complex environments that may include web-based workflows, electronic forms, and interaction with web services. "With iRules, we can support very complex transactions. This is crucial to our ability to interoperate with other vendors' elements of a total customer solution," says Theron.

To further optimize performance, SpringCM uses the Intelligent Browsing Referencing™ capability of BIG-IP WebAccelerator, which eliminates the need for web browsers to revalidate cached content, and SSL offload, which migrates CPU-intensive SSL encryption

and decryption from SpringCM application servers to the F5 devices, as well as dynamic caching and compression.

To support its international growth, SpringCM plans to use BIG-IP® Global Traffic Manager™ (GTM) to manage application traffic among data centers, and BIG-IP LTM VE in its new data centers. The virtualized BIG-IP LTM environment gives the company a chance to "evaluate market interest before investing in extensive physical hardware," explains Theron. Finally, SpringCM is evaluating a combined F5 and VMware solution to migrate virtual machines over long distances, using VMware vMotion and F5 ARX® file virtualization devices to enhance and simplify management of customer data.

Benefits

With the BIG-IP system, SpringCM has built a more reliable and efficient cloud services environment. The flexible management and server function offload capabilities that F5 products provide result in lower costs for SpringCM, and a higher performing, more cost-effective environment for SpringCM customers.

Better Cloud Experience

SpringCM uses F5 technology and staff expertise to support its customers' needs. With the BIG-IP system, Theron and his staff can swiftly analyze and optimize web traffic. For instance, says Theron, "if a customer has an issue uploading a large number of documents to SpringCM, we can use iRules to quickly find the source of the problem." It might be that the web client the customer is using (be it based on Java, or Microsoft .NET, or something else) requires that the customer adjust its web services to work with SpringCM. "With iRules, and the help we get from the F5 support team, we can provide a customer solution in minutes. With our old infrastructure, it would have taken days."

Lower Costs

The BIG-IP system also helps SpringCM keep its data center costs low. "BIG-IP WebAccelerator is helping us save at least 30 percent on bandwidth, and we are achieving 80 to 90 percent server utilization, which dramatically lowers our hardware costs. Further, BIG-IP LTM VE allows us to maintain readily available, redundant servers without making huge investments in hardware," says Theron.

SpringCM cloud solutions are not only three to five times faster to implement, customers also typically experience a 50 to 80 percent lower total cost of ownership versus on-premises solutions. Says Theron, "We use the BIG-IP system to achieve enhanced application performance and virtual server infrastructure optimization, allowing us to deliver huge savings to our customers."

Platform for Rapid Growth

For SpringCM, scalability and reliability are key. "We only use technology partners—like F5 and VMware—that provide services we can confidently build our business on," says Theron. The BIG-IP system is highly extensible, allowing SpringCM to add capacity and capabilities as needed. "F5 technology and virtualization will support our international expansion," says Theron. For instance, BIG-IP LTM VE, in combination with VMware vMotion, will help SpringCM enter new markets quickly, without the time and expense typically required for building physical server environments. Concludes Theron, "With F5, we know that we won't have to turn to additional ADN vendors, because F5 innovations will help us solve our customers' business problems with ease."

F5 Networks, Inc. 401 Elliott Avenue West, Seattle, WA 98119 888-882-4447 www.f5.com

F5 Networks, Inc.
Corporate Headquarters
info@f5.com

F5 Networks
Asia-Pacific
apacinfo@f5.com

F5 Networks Ltd.
Europe/Middle-East/Africa
emeainfo@f5.com

F5 Networks
Japan K.K.
f5j-info@f5.com

