Jagged Peak ensures stellar application performance with OpenDemand and IBM.

Overview

■ **Challenge**

Jagged Peak needed a way to ensure the performance and availability of its hosted realtime demand execution management application, or risk losing existing and potential customers

■ **Why On Demand?**

The company needed a resilient, scalable infrastructure — based on open standards — capable of integrating data from multiple sources to simulate customer IT environments

■ **Solution**

Jagged Peak deployed OpenLoad, a scalable application-testing solution — powered by a robust information management system — that allows the company to meet its customers' service level agreements (SLAs) by promising 100% solution uptime

■ **Key Benefits**

Enhanced ability to meet and exceed SLAs; increased customer confidence and satisfaction through better responsiveness; increase in application efficiency

Jagged Peak leverages technologies from IBM and OpenDemand Systems to ensure optimal performance of its demand execution management solutions for clients, including Global 2000 and multi-national companies.

Not far from the Florida coastline, Jagged Peak (*www.jaggedpeak.com*) has carved a successful niche for itself by enabling businesses to streamline their customer fulfillment and demand execution processes without making huge capital investments. The privately owned Tampa-based company's Web-based demand execution management application captures, processes and distributes orders in realtime from multiple sources to multiple warehouses.

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>
> *— Paul Demirdjian, Chief Executive Officer, Jagged Peak*

Anticipating and responding to customer and market demands in realtime

Staffed by nearly 100 employees, Jagged Peak offers businesses a single point of access and management for consolidated customer fulfillment tasks such as ordering, shipping, procurement, pricing and administration. Its customer base of more than 300 companies includes some of the biggest names in the travel, consumer products, pharmaceutical and financial services industries: SWISS Airlines, South African Airways, Nespresso and Pfizer Pharmaceuticals.

"Companies depend on us to facilitate their business-critical processes," says Paul Demirdjian, chief executive officer, Jagged Peak. "If the order fulfillment system goes down, the company goes down. Performance failure is unacceptable."

Ensuring performance under rigorous conditions

Due to its solution's ability to overlay existing systems with little to no integration, Jagged Peak has achieved a remarkable degree of success. In recent years, the popularity of Jagged Peak's application and services has attracted larger customers with more complex demand and supply chain environments. This initially posed a big problem for Jagged Peak because it was unable to verify the integrity of its solution when faced with larger order fulfillment networks. Previously, the company had used online services for testing before a release, an option that was no longer viable because such solutions lacked the scalability or robustness suitable for enterprise-level needs. With big customers carrying challenging service level agreements (SLAs) knocking on its doors and no way to manage their massive demand chains, the company risked alienating a large share of the market.

Since Jagged Peak offers its application as a managed service, it was imperative for the company to ensure that it could withstand the most rigorous conditions. "We had to perform extensive stress tests to ensure that our application doesn't fail when placed in a large enterprise environment," says Demirdjian. "In short, we needed to guarantee 100 percent uptime or else be hit by huge SLA penalties. And given that providing reliable managed services is a key differentiator, we risked losing our competitive advantage."

To solve its problem, the company needed a new application testing infrastructure to guarantee the strong performance of its offerings. A resilient infrastructure capable of integrating enterprise-level, end-to-end business processes would enable Jagged Peak to stress test its applications to ensure the superior performance that its customers expect from its 24x7 offering.

"We needed to measure the performance of our application and predict the demand for it, so we could proactively configure, maintain and support optimum service levels, rather than react to performance degradations," says Demirdjian.

Simulating real world environments

Jagged Peak collaborated with IBM Business Partner OpenDemand Systems, a Newark, New Jersey-based developer of rapid performance optimization products, to deploy an enterprise-level stress and load testing solution. OpenDemand's ability to demonstrate the capabilities of its testing tool during a full simulation in Jagged Peak's environment clinched the decision. What's more, the solution can scale up to meet the needs of Jagged Peak's largest customers.

In addition, the tool's open standards-based business platform makes it ideal for testing Jagged Peak's flagship application, Enterprise Dynamic Global Engine (EDGE). EDGE is designed to overlay disparate systems to connect all the demand execution touchpoints—from initial customer contact to final order fulfillment.

Now, Jagged Peak can ensure 100 percent uptime while handling high transaction volumes, and confidently sign-off on its SLAs. The company is also equipped to be proactive, rather than reactive, in optimizing application performance. "By turning to IBM and OpenDemand, we eliminated our worries about SLA penalties. We are now confident that our solution can deliver high performance 24x7, no matter how complex the demand," says Demirdjian.

A resilient and scalable solution

Jagged Peak's Web application performance testing solution is based on OpenLoad, an easy-to-use, browser-based solution from OpenDemand that enables load and stress testing of Web applications. The tool simulates real-world user scenarios to quickly detect bottlenecks in Web applications. It also provides rapid query and customized report functionalities.

OpenLoad is designed to substantially minimize the time and skill set required by application developers and testers to monitor application performance. The solution accomplishes this by using an open standards-based infrastructure, with IBM DB2® Universal Database™, Version 8, functioning as its scalable and reliable information management platform for test data. IBM WebSphere® Application Server provides the runtime environment for the monitoring tool's Java™ technology-based components. The solution runs on Red Hat Linux and is designed for the resilient IBM @server® xSeries, which provides mainframe-class reliability and scalability.

Jagged Peak uses one of the latest OpenLoad releases, developed specifically for the small and medium business (SMB) market using IBM DB2 Universal Database Express Edition, Version 8 (DB2 UDB Express) and IBM WebSphere Application Server - Express.

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–Paul Demirdjian

"We are extremely impressed with DB2 UDB Express and WebSphere Application Server - Express," says Donald Doane, vice-president of sales and business development, OpenDemand. "They enable small and medium-sized businesses to benefit from the rich functionality, ease of use and speed of the enterprise editions — at an affordable price."

Key to Jagged Peak's decision to go with OpenDemand was its open-standards architecture. "Leveraging open-standards technology enables OpenLoad to test almost any Web application, including dynamic Web sites, regardless of the technology used for their deployment. This is important to us because our application is designed to be technology-versatile," says Demirdjian. "From a scalability and stability perspective, OpenLoad is unmatched, and these features can be attributed to its underlying IBM infrastructure."

Going beyond expectations
Jagged Peak is still in the process of rolling out OpenLoad, but it has already seen an improvement at the product and service levels. Thanks to the scalable, reliable and robust architecture of their testing tool, Jagged Peak can optimize applications by testing them in different scenarios with thousands of virtual users.

"The OpenDemand/IBM solution has enabled us to create standards and efficiencies that we didn't have before," says Demirdjian. "For example,

our internal standards for static page downloads and data queries — pretty high to begin with — have improved dramatically. In some cases, we're managing to load pages in under one second."

Jagged Peak's relationship with its customers has also been strengthened as a result of the deployment. "Our clients have a great sense of confidence in our capabilities, knowing that our applications use high industry standards and the best infrastructure available. Our SLAs have a credibility that they didn't have before," says Vince Fabrizzi, chief sales officer, Jagged Peak. "Our company is not only meeting its SLAs, it is exceeding them, boosting customer satisfaction and expanding its client base. We expect to achieve a return on this investment in just one year."

"IBM and OpenDemand have enabled us to increase our application and service quality," says Demirdjian. "As we continue to grow our business, we are confident that we'll keep exceeding our customers' expectations and our level of responsiveness to them."

For more information
Please contact your IBM marketing representative, IBM Business Partner or IBM Direct at: 1 800 IBM-CALL.

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www.opendemand.com