

University Of Illinois

Identifies and Solves Issues with SpringSource tc Server™

THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN • CHICAGO • SPRINGFIELD

SPRINGSOURCE RESULTS

SpringSource tc Server delivers the following business results to the University of Illinois:

- More Productive Application Management
- Faster Troubleshooting – Hours Saved on Each Issue
- Reduced Planned Downtime
- More Accurate Configuration Updates
- Improved Application Quality

TESTIMONIAL

“SpringSource tc Server helps us reduce the number of potential problem sources and focus on the areas where the issue might exist, saving us hours on troubleshooting a problem.”

“By using information provided by tc Server, we can make improvements to the quality of our HR application... and the quality of our other applications improves too.”

“With tc Server, we are able to manage the application as a whole, as opposed to trying to manage servers individually to make sure they are up and running and configured properly.. That is a time savings.”

University of Illinois

The University of Illinois is the premier public university in the state, operating campuses in Chicago, Springfield and Urbana-Champaign. The school is also the state’s largest educator with 70,000 students. In addition, the University of Illinois is a world leader in research and discovery, with an internationally renowned faculty.

Challenge

The University of Illinois created the HR front-end that handles processing human resources tasks for the University’s 25,000 employees across all three campuses. Other enterprise J2EE applications had been deployed on Apache Tomcat, and the University was looking for a way to increase its monitoring and management capabilities.

“We were missing the ability to see how the application is running, so we were spending a lot of time trying to guess what was going on,” recalls Nyle Bolliger, Director of Application Development and Support, University of Illinois.

“We managed our server instances through the standard command line interface and ran it with six servers in a cluster, which was a hassle to manage,” Bolliger explains. “We were maintaining many different configuration files and trying to keep up.”

Error detection and log mining were troublesome for the University as well. In the past, they had to consolidate log files to pull them into different tools to mine the logs. Then developers had to sift through logs, trying to figure out the cause of a problem.

“Thread analysis has been a real tough spot for us,” adds Bolliger. “It is extremely difficult to analyze the threads and understand what the application is doing. We had developers spend hours trying to sort through the threads and get nowhere. We were not even sure what we were looking at.”

Solution

The University of Illinois upgraded to SpringSource tc Server to host the HR system and gain greater insight into the application. SpringSource tc Server – the enterprise version of Apache Tomcat, the world’s most widely used open source application server – is a lightweight server offering operational management, advanced diagnostics, and mission-critical support capabilities.

Service

“SpringSource support has filled in some of the gaps in expertise that we have, such as thread analysis,” Bolliger says, referring to the

support contract the University maintains with SpringSource, the company behind tc Server and the leading provider of support for Apache Tomcat. "The SpringSource team has the experience and skills to address the challenges we have."

Benefits

SPRINGSOURCE TC SERVER DELIVERS THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS RESULTS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS:

More Productive Application Management

SpringSource tc Server streamlines application management because it provides the University of Illinois IT team with a central console where they can manage all their servers as a group, at the application level. "With tc Server, we are able to manage the application as a whole, as opposed to trying to manage servers individually to make sure they are up and running and configured properly," says Bolliger. "That is a time savings because it can take 20 minutes for our application to restart, and we have to run through each server one by one."

Faster Troubleshooting

tc Server has improved diagnostics by providing insight into application and server performance, helping identify problem sources fast while eliminating the time-consuming task of log preparation for analysis in multiple tools. "tc Server gives us a way to get more information and really see what is happening with the application," says Bolliger. "SpringSource tc Server helps us reduce the number of potential problem sources and focus on the areas where the issue might exist, saving us hours on troubleshooting a problem."

"Sometimes problems occur that we don't even realize," Bolliger continues, noting that tc Server allows the University to leverage JMX to communicate with applications. "With tc Server, the application can alert us when it is experiencing issues. The ability to catch those problems before we start getting calls from users is very valuable."

Reduced Planned Downtime

"By enabling us to make changes on the fly, tc Server reduces outage time, when we have to bring the application down for maintenance and making changes," Bolliger explains.

More Accurate Configuration Updates

tc Server provides the University IT team with the unique capability to view the application configurations via a single dashboard, simplifying procedures such as the University's recent Java upgrade. "Going through all the various config files and trying to understand what is running where, and what version of Java the application is using – that is a significant effort," says Bolliger. "Each application has its own configurations and its own Tomcat instance. tc Server helps us consolidate all that information, making it a more accurate process with less time searching through directories and trying to figure out everything out manually."

Improved Application Quality

tc Server helps improve application performance and stability by enabling the University of Illinois IT team to identify defects or bugs in the application that are difficult to detect through code reviews or unit testing but show up in production with a large volume of users. The team can utilize tc Server to see what is happening within the application which helps determine the source of a performance or stability issue. According to Bolliger, the first essential step in solving these issues is knowing whether or not the application is the cause.

"By using information provided by tc Server, we can make improvements to the quality of our HR application," Bolliger says. "However, our other applications improve too. We use a number of different frameworks, and tc Server allows us to identify and fix problems in those frameworks, which in turn improves the quality of all our applications."

About SpringSource

SpringSource, a division of VMware, Inc., (NYSE: VMW) and the leader in Java application infrastructure and management, provides a complete suite of software products that accelerate the entire build, run, manage enterprise Java application lifecycle. SpringSource employs the open source leaders who created and drive innovation for Spring, the de facto standard programming model for enterprise Java applications. SpringSource also employs the Java and Web thought leaders within the Apache Tomcat, Apache HTTP Server, Hyperic, Groovy and Grails open source communities. Nearly half of the Global 2000, including many world's leading retail, financial services, manufacturing, healthcare, technology and public sector clients are SpringSource customers. For more information visit: www.springsource.com.



North & South America
+1 877-486-9273

Europe/Middle East/Africa
+44 1276 414300

Asia Pacific
+61 284040150