

S.A. IPM: Belgium's Leading Newspaper Publishing Company – Chooses Juniper Networks DX

Sites:

- www.dhnet.be
- www.lalibre.be

Business Problems:

- Performance issues plagued the country's two leading newspaper Web sites, which were developed using PHP
- Inability to support increasing site traffic and visitor numbers

Key DX Benefits:

- Juniper Networks' DX™ application acceleration platform allows new peak in unique site visitors, increasing revenue opportunities
- Reduced load on Web servers, solving PHP application performance problems without additional servers
- Improved Web site speed and performance, reducing download times from more than one minute to less than 10 seconds
- Avoided rewriting entire site

S.A. IPM is one of Belgium's leading media publishing companies and news organizations, publishing two of the country's leading newspapers: *La Dernière Heure* and *La Libre Belgique*. It also has a range of smaller newspapers and news Web sites.

Given its media interests and focus, it is not surprising that IPM relies upon its Web-site infrastructure to deliver news and content to its many readers. Because each publication has its own Web site, the maintenance and reliability of these sites is a mission-critical objective for the company.

The Challenge

The two Web sites for *La Dernière Heure* and *La Libre Belgique* (www.dhnet.be and www.lalibre.be) rank in the Top five most-used French language Web sites, with each site receiving approximately 20,000 unique visitors per day. These Web sites were originally developed in PHP (Hypertext Preprocessor, an open source, server-side, HTML-embedded scripting language used to create dynamic Web pages), but they were unable to support the increasing volume of site traffic and page hits.

This was especially noticeable between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. each day – the peak traffic time for the sites. The problem appeared to be a bottleneck created around the database server, where too many processes from the Apache Web servers would hit the database server simultaneously, slowing response times and limiting site availability.

These performance issues were beginning to seriously affect the supply of information to site visitors. They needed to be addressed quickly, and in a way that would provide a long-term and reliable solution.

The Solution

One possible solution was to completely rewrite the websites, but the resources and time required made this solution impractical. So, VALain SA, a Web development and consulting company retained by IPM to deal with the Web-site performance issue, recommended the DX 2200 application acceleration platform from Juniper Networks.

The Benefits

Alain Fontaine, director of VALain, takes up the story: "Juniper Networks offered us a cost-effective and multifunctional solution to address the Web-site performance issues being faced by IPM. On the first Monday after the DX box was installed, a new peak of unique visitors to both Web sites was reached, because they were now able to cope with the heavy demand. Previously, at peak times, it would have taken a user around one minute to download a home page from one of the sites. Now it took between five and seven seconds!"

The Juniper Networks DX appliance was able to deliver this performance because it reduced the number of processes coming from the Apache Web servers from over 130 to between 10 and 30. The database servers responded faster because they were receiving five to ten times fewer database connections from the Apache servers. On the Apache servers themselves, "slow clients," dropped packets and other network realities no longer had an impact on performance because all connections, communication with clients, and serving of Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) traffic was now handled by the DX platform.

Patrick de Lannoy, multimedia manager at IPM, said: "We are delighted with the result and pleased that VALain recommended the use of the DX product from Juniper Networks. We can now deliver business continuity and performance for our online services, at a fraction of the cost and effort that would have been required by conventional solutions."



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