Unipart Uses Quest's Foglight® Experience Monitor to Improve Jaguar's Supply Chain

As one of the UK's largest privately-owned companies, Unipart is perhaps best-known as a manufacturer of automotive parts and accessories. Unipart also provides third-party logistics services, which account for more than half of their business.

The Challenge

A major challenge for Unipart Logistics is that its clients' customers are continually demanding better service. For Unipart to meet this challenge, it is critical that they have full visibility into its clients' entire supply chains, including process and system performance.

Unipart provides one of its clients, Jaguar, with an end-to-end logistics service. Jaguar has more than 1,000 car dealers worldwide and Unipart is responsible for the management of the processes and systems they use to place product orders and have instant visibility into lead times, prices, statement of accounts, ordering, picking, warehouse dispatch, etc.

The Jaguar dealers use a browser-based catalogue which allows them to remotely access the very latest, centrally-held data. By moving to a browser-based catalogue from a CD-based one, the dealers have a better ordering process and the ability to track an order, view stock levels, establish delivery dates and view their latest sales figures in real-time.

When the browser-based catalogue system was initially implemented, there were periodic performance issues — response times were five to six times slower than with the CD-based system. Occasionally, the dealers would experience system delays when accompanied by customers, which did not create the most professional impression.

Unipart struggled to establish a pattern that would help identify the cause of the problem, particularly since the issues did not appear to be regional. Online catalogues of technical parts can be notoriously complex due to the high volume of information available, which further complicated Unipart's problem-solving efforts.

Despite the fact that Unipart didn't own all the technology in the supply chain, they recognised that they needed to learn more about its performance and how Jaguar dealers were using the systems.

The Quest Solution

Unipart surveyed the market for a suitable end-user monitoring solution, and as a result, approached Quest Software for a trial of Foglight® Experience Monitor. They tested the solution for two weeks, established that the Quest solution would be able to provide sufficiently detailed information about each dealer's performance of the system, and therefore decided to purchase it.

Foglight Experience Monitor for Web-based applications proactively monitors the performance of real end users by providing insight into application optimisation and enabling the quick diagnoses of performance problems. Unlike active monitoring solutions that only track scripted user scenarios and desktop-based monitors that only track a subset of users, Foglight Experience Monitor tracks all users, all the time to provide a total picture of the end-user experience.

Foglight Experience Monitor provided Unipart with reports highlighting data trends, which enabled them to analyse which dealers were experiencing slow performance, and exactly what the dealers were doing when the delays occurred.

Unipart also found that Foglight Experience Monitor fits extremely well with its unique philosophy of working, known as the 'Unipart Way'. This philosophy is underpinned by a range of tools and techniques that enable a continual improvement in the levels of service delivered to its clients. Foglight Experience Monitor provides data for Six Sigma Analysis, a factual base for critical problem solving and

Overview

Headquarters

Oxford, UK

Critical Needs

Solution to provide visibility into performance of browser-based supply chain systems

Solution

Foglight Experience Monitor, part of Quest Software's End User Management Solution

Results

- Achieved fast identification, and subsequent resolution of supply chain system performance problems

- Delivered proactive application analysis for additional performance improvements

- Enabled greater focus of finite IT resources, saving time and effort

- Facilitated more valuable and credible system support

presents data in a way that supports Unipart's highly effective 'dashboard' and 'visual management' techniques.

The Bottom Line

Within two weeks of using Foglight Experience Monitor, Unipart had identified the causes of the Jaguar dealers' performance issues and were making changes to resolve them. "Without Foglight Experience Monitor, we were working in the dark. It enabled us to quickly pinpoint the causes of the problems and use the factual details provided to support any earlier ideas about the problems. We were able to focus our efforts in the places where changes would deliver improved performance. For instance, by amending the content presentation we were able to reduce response times of some pages by up to 30 percent," explained Myron Hrycyk, IT Director, Unipart Logistics. "Most importantly, the Quest solution enabled us to establish a Performance Improvement Plan, to provide a system that does justice to Jaguar's prestigious brand."

The benefits Foglight Experience Monitor provided for the Jaguar contract have been replicated with other client contracts where appropriate. "Our experience with Jaguar has highlighted that we can now ensure we focus our IT resource efforts in the right places. This enables us to keep our costs down, while delivering the high levels of service expected by our clients," noted Hrycyk.

Unipart is now also able to talk with more credibility to its clients, which adds value to the support process. "With Foglight Experience Monitor, we are able to talk factually and productively with our clients and their customers about their systems, as we have full visibility of their performance," added Hrycyk.

Unipart is emphatic about the high value that Foglight Experience Monitor has brought to their clients and therefore the Unipart Logistics business. "I would recommend to all IT Directors that a product such as Foglight Experience Monitor should be used strategically when deploying browser-based applications; it shouldn't be a bolt-on after-thought. Understanding end-user behaviour is critical for managing system performance and the 'user experience'," said Hrycyk.

About Unipart

Unipart Group is one of Europe's leading independent logistics, automotive parts and accessories companies. Established in 1987, following a management buy out, it is now one of the largest private companies in the UK, with an annual turnover of around £1.2 billion. During this time it has become a name internationally respected for its progressive polices and forward-looking approach to business. Unipart Logistics is one of Europe's leading providers of outsourced logistics and distribution services, to clients that include Jaguar, Vodafone, 3, Hewlett Packard, Halfords, Boots and Jessops. It specialises in managing complete supply chains from manufacturers through to retail distributors, providing warehousing, transportation and inventory management to ensure that clients' customers receive the right product in perfect condition at the right place, on time.

About Quest

Quest Software, Inc. delivers innovative products that help organizations get more performance and productivity from their applications, databases and windows. Through a deep expertise in IT operations and a continued focus on what works best, Quest helps more than 18,000 customers worldwide meet higher expectations for enterprise IT. Quest Software can be found in offices around the globe and at www.quest.com.

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