

Major Hospital Network Leverages Akibia for Large-Scale Infoblox DNS Migration Impacting Life-Critical Systems

When a large hospital network in New England needed to update its DNS/DHCP infrastructure to meet current standards, improve security and reduce costs it turned to Akibia for help. Akibia's professional services organization helped the company identify a unique solution that leveraged Infoblox appliances for a centralized DNS solution. While improving DNS services was the end goal, a main challenge was implementing the solution without negatively impacting uptime of the organization's life-critical systems. Akibia, the organization's team, and Infoblox partnered to ensure the design and migration plan resulted in the smallest amount of disruptions. The result is a proven solution that works for the customer.

CHALLENGE

This large hospital network, which includes some of the most-well known and highly regarded research and care hospitals in the United States needed to update its DNS/DHCP infrastructure to achieve better support levels and also to migrate away from a legacy Lucent QIP system that was costing as much as \$200,000 in annual maintenance. The existing environment, which had been in place for 10 years lacked a lot of functionality, performance and security capabilities that have become available in the past decade.

All organizations run mission-critical applications, but this organization was running truly life-critical systems that would be affected by the DNS migration. Computers and systems used directly in patient care would be impacted, and so it was absolutely imperative that the failover from the legacy DNS solution to the new solution went as seamlessly and quickly as possible.

SOLUTION

Akibia collaborated with the organization's IT staff and Infoblox to help them design a solution based on Infoblox appliances. In addition to bringing the hospital network up to current DNS standards, the new design ensured greater security, and provided a single DNS solution that could be managed easily by the centralized IT staff.

Together the team developed a migration plan that employed the time-tested carpenter adage, "measure twice, cut once." In fact Akibia measured far more than twice to ensure the migration would go quickly and seamlessly.

INDUSTRY

Healthcare - Hospitals

CHALLENGE

Upgrade to a more cost efficient, and more effective DNS solution without impacting the uptime of life-critical systems

SOLUTION

Infoblox Appliances and Akibia Professional Services

BUSINESS BENEFITS

The organization was able to reduce costs, increase security and move to a single-centralized DNS solution

While many organizations believe a staged migration that moves all IP addresses to the new DNS servers in batches is the best approach, this actually results in multiple exposures and

“Akibia collaborated with us to create a customized solution that met our requirements. The project went very smoothly as Akibia, Infoblox and our organization all partnered together to leverage our combined talents. In the end we have a much more effective and cost-efficient DNS solution. 98 percent of our users didn’t even notice an impact during the cut-over, which to us, means certain success.” -- senior networking engineer from the hospitals.

more downtime for the systems. Instead, Akibia’s best-practice based methodology recommends certifying the solution will work with significant testing, and then migrating everything at once, in a single “flash” cut over.

Akibia built an exact replica or “shadow” of the organization’s DNS network on Infoblox appliances and did 8 imports of data, testing the data again and again. Once the team was confident that the Infoblox-based system was working perfectly, they conducted a late-night cut-over, which took less than ten minutes. Users of the network did not notice the switch, as IP addresses did not change.

RESULT

The new Infoblox appliance-based DNS solution ensures better security for the hospitals, features improved network response time and provides a single authoritative DNS environment for all the hospitals, replacing disparate systems at each location. In addition, the company will save significantly in maintenance fees, as compared to the costs associated with the QIP solution.

“By working with the Akibia team, customers can be assured a thorough process is followed to perform a flawless migration or installation. Further, they take considerable measures to stay current with our technologies and proactively perform audits of clients’ DNS infrastructures so customers are well taken care of after the installation stage.”

-- Victor Danevich, director of Infoblox systems engineering



Global Infrastructure Management
ZenSarakibia