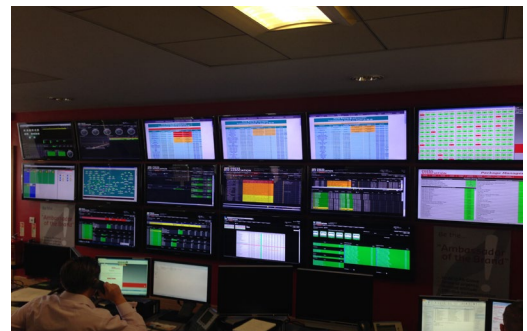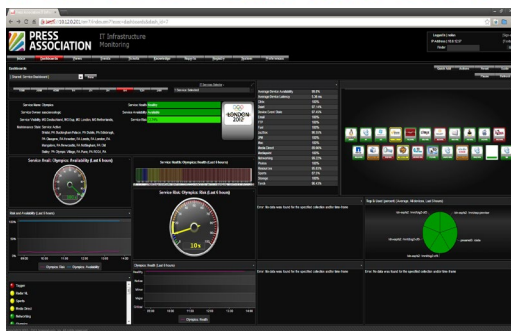**ScienceLogic**

Press Association: Network Monitoring with a Global Audience

How ScienceLogic Helped the UK's Press Association Hit the Gold Medal Mark at the 2012 Summer Olympics in London

PRESS ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ScienceLogic's monitoring solution enabled the UK's Press Association to serve as Official Host National News Agency for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London with no outages throughout coverage of the full event.

Business Challenge:

Monitor on-premises, Hosted, and Cloud APIs and Widgets, including feeds and deliverables for 40 Web roles and 10 caching roles, to a global customer base in real time.

Solution:
ScienceLogic's intuitive, interactive dashboards were customized to meet all the needs of PA and its global customers

Business Results:

- Coverage delivered into 40 countries in 28 different languages

- 2.1B Widgets requests handled, with a peak of 46,000 Widget requests per second

- 800M API requests handled

- Average response time was 58ms

- PA now monitors over 2,500 devices across its infrastructure

- PA's NOC uses ScienceLogic dashboards for full IT service management monitoring

The World Will Be Watching

When the UK's Press Association (PA) was appointed in 2010 as the Host National News Agency for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, the organisation began preparations for the unrivalled opportunity it had been tasked with.

However, this exciting prospect also produced significant responsibility to deliver live content for the largest peacetime event in the company's nearly century-and-a-half history.

Winning an Olympic medal is success *after* a ton of hard work. Winning the role of the Olympics' Official Host National News Agency is success *before* a ton of hard work.

By the Opening Ceremony, would the Press Association be ready for the challenge and up to the task?

The Business Challenge

Since its founding in 1868, the Press Association's long history and highly respected reputation for being fast, fair, and accurate was about to be tested on a global scale on the world stage. Serving markets in Northern and Western Europe, Eastern and Southeastern Asia, and North and South America, not to mention the home crowd throughout the United Kingdom, Press Association's staff of 800 had to get it right because the world would, literally, be watching.

The company was confident in its ability to deliver, but changes needed to be made. Long the content provider for news, sports, entertainment, lifestyle, and weather, with 12M online images and 50M more in its archives, the company had no shortage of experience with content distribution, journalism, data feeds, and live coverage. But the company's IT systems would have to cope with substantial and unrivalled strain primarily focused on integration and organic growth.

Furthermore, PA knew issues could surface in capacity, infrastructure, and tooling. The capacity questions included lots of unknowns, such as volumetric requirements and infrastructure sprawl. In addition to Olympic Park where 90 PA staff would be covering every minute of the games, feeds would be coming from an unknown number of sources, along with Widget and API requests at unknown rates and in unknown amounts. Infrastructure issues ranged from servers that were beyond manufacturer's warranty, to multiple failures on devices and aging hardware.

The Press Association IT team decided on a three-part delivery solution: on-premise infrastructure, plus Hosted API, and the Cloud. Olympic data would be delivered to customers by way of API and Widgets over and above the traditional on-premise solutions historically used. First, PA pursued upgrades of existing infrastructure, and increased on-premise virtualization capabilities. Then they added API hosting and caching through Mashery, and Widget hosting in Windows Azure. For their primary global markets, they planned for 40 Web roles and 10 caching roles. API would deliver in-depth and time-critical feeds with embedded video, pictures, and such, while the Widgets would supply lighter news flashes, results, medal tables, and the like. All would be built out using a mixture of Hosting and Cloud.

With all that in place, the greatest challenge would be coming up with a strategic monitoring toolset to keep everything straight, including ensuring that all systems remained up and running without failures, that API and Widget requests were handled and answered promptly, that all feeds were directed to the right entities, and that all customers were kept aware of everything in as simple and straightforward a manner as possible.

How were they going to do that?

The Solution

PA assessed budget, capabilities, and infrastructure to determine what monitoring toolset would meet the needs and fit the restricted budget. The capabilities of the company's tech teams were limited by a historic silo approach to IT rather than one of service-oriented integration. Regarding infrastructure, the tech team was limited by Nagios, the incumbent monitoring tool, which was disparate and had been long neglected in terms of upgrades and coverage. The challenge was to find a new infrastructure monitoring tool that would be the foundation for a full-scope monitoring suite that could both provide service monitoring and allow PA to see its entire infrastructure end-to-end, including on-premise, hosted, and cloud elements.

"We did our due diligence and our homework, with five of our systems administrators embarking on a sometimes painful journey to determine what would be required to run with Nagios and also to evaluate products from several vendors," explains David Reed, head of IS and Infrastructure at Press Association.

The decision tools employed by PA from their required Proof of Concept included:

- **Gap analysis** to determine what features could be initially foregone until they could be developed at a later date

- **Features matrix** to assess the amount of value for the money spent

- **Evaluation matrix** to weight key requirements and nice-to-haves

- **Support feedback** to measure the quality of the experience as determined through both false support calls and genuine ones

"We chose ScienceLogic because of its ability to deploy rapidly, especially when compared to the competitors we evaluated, and most particularly for their intuitive and insightful dashboards"

The differentiators PA considered in making its decision on choice of vendor included a wide range of deliverables, among which were:

- Speed of setup and deployment

- Degree of discovery

- Speed of dashboard creation and agility to populate its displays with real-time metrics

- Quality of Support Services, including the flexibility to develop new ones ad hoc

- Ability to group and report on services, whether on premise or cloud-based

- Risk-based analysis

"After all the evaluations, ScienceLogic came out on top by quite an overwhelming margin," according to Reed. "Importantly, all five system administrators agreed that the ScienceLogic solution was the easiest to run with, and they felt comfortable in our ability to hit the July deadline by using it."

Following the Proof of Concept evaluations, PA placed the order with ScienceLogic in May of 2012, which allowed only 4 weeks for implementation to meet the initial minimum milepost of monitoring the Olympic servers. The time to deliver and have the total solution up and running at full capability was extremely short, with the deadline looming for going live at the start of the Summer Olympics on July 28th.
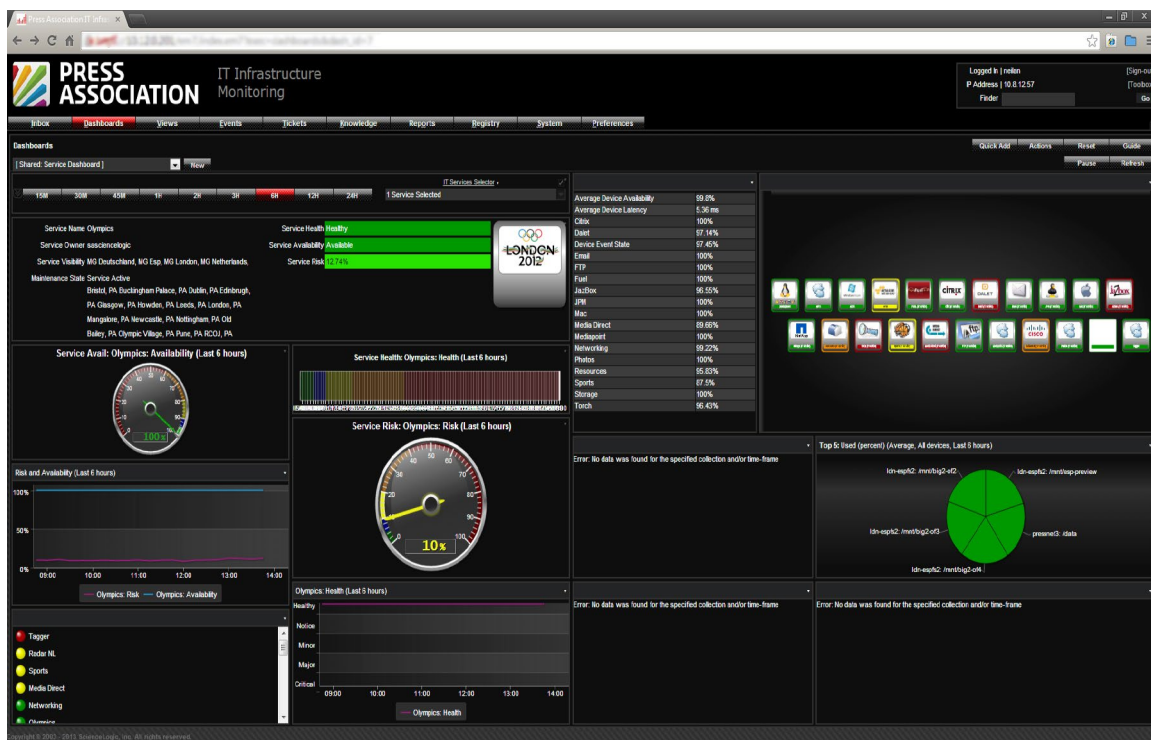
Figure 1. Intuitive, interactive dashboard customized for Press Association
by ScienceLogic for monitoring feed, infrastructure, and more.

ScienceLogic's Professional Services got to work in June and, over a four-week period, the team served as the subject matter experts and trainers for the rest of the Press Association IT staff, eliminating the need for an additional headcount or obviating any loss of productivity. The result was a solution up and running on time and without issues, producing over 10,000 monitoring events per week, of which 3,000 were critical, delivered on 10 dashboards for different stakeholders, including the CEO.

"We chose ScienceLogic because of its ability to deploy rapidly, especially when compared to the competitors we evaluated, and most particularly for their intuitive and insightful dashboards," explains Reed. "The dashboards were so instrumental in achieving our goal of showing our customers that Press Association's systems were providing the service they needed. ScienceLogic has also been flexible with development, and that has helped us progress rapidly."

The Business Results

The 2012 Summer Olympics was the most successful event in the Press Association's history. The company delivered coverage into 40 countries in 28 different languages. PA handled 2.1B Widget requests, with a peak of 46,000 widget requests per second, and 800M API requests. PA's average response time was a mere 58 ms. Following the summer games, the company continued its level of flawless IT into the Paralympics.

ScienceLogic's solution allows Press Association to monitor back office systems in addition to cloud infrastructure, and to look at systems proactively and fix issues before any service detriment occurs. Monitoring vital metrics of system health keeps PA's IT staff aware of how individual systems are running at all times, 24x7, without changing any procedures and without the need for any retraining.

The company now monitors over 2,500 devices across the Press Association and its international group of news, information and communications businesses with its NOC replete with dashboards for full IT service management monitoring across the board. The integration of Amazon Web Services and Windows Azure during the 2012 Olympic Games coverage demonstrated to the company that it need no longer be tied to a single cloud platform. The flexibility of ScienceLogic's solution allows data from multiple vendors to be shown at the same time on a single pane of glass through powerful dashboards.

During the Olympics, Press Association's NOC relied on a large dashboard with traffic light symbols to show which events could cause an outage. The company's IT team now takes a more holistic service view by grouping elements together on one dashboard, which allows both IT and business stakeholders to see each component and the underlying networks, including views from a component level. The capability from the ScienceLogic solution to present metrics to internal and external customers adds value that has the potential to translate into additional revenue enhancements for the Press Association.

Figure 2. Monitoring Central at Press Association utilizes the customized ScienceLogic dashboards that monitor the entire infrastructure end-to-end as well as all services, feeds, deliverables, and customers.

About The Press Association

The Press Association (PA) is the national news agency for the UK and Ireland and a leading multi-media content provider across web, mobile, broadcast and print. For the last 145 years PA has been providing fast, accurate feeds of text, data, photos and video. Today the business is increasingly focused on the delivery of complete products for both digital and print clients.

Our services include the best live coverage of news, sport and entertainment but also bespoke content marketing solutions for non-media clients. Our customers span all major UK print, broadcast and digital media; rights holders; leading brands and corporates; and the public sector.

Using advanced semantic technology, and delivery via APIs, we help our customers deliver rich and unique end-user experiences, create intuitive and responsive products for multiple platforms and devices, and optimise commercial value to our clients and partners.

Headquartered in London, PA Group is an international group of news, information and communications businesses which includes the Press Associaton.

PA Group has 27 shareholders, most of whom are UK national and regional newspaper publishers. The biggest shareholders are dmg media Limited, News UK plc, Trinity Mirror plc and United Business Media plc.
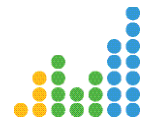
About ScienceLogic

ScienceLogic delivers the next generation IT monitoring platform for the network of everything. Over 15,000 global Service Providers, enterprises, and government organizations rely on ScienceLogic every day to significantly enhance their IT operations. With over 1,000 dynamic management Apps included in the platform, our customers are able to intelligently maximize efficiency, optimize operations, and ensure business continuity. We deliver the scale, security, automation, and resiliency necessary to simplify the ever-expanding task of managing resources, services, and applications that are in constant motion.

ScienceLogic won InfoWorld's 2013 Technology of the Year award, Red Herring's Global 100 Award, Deloitte's Technology Fast 500™, and MSPmentor 250, among other worldwide recognitions of excellence. For more information, visit www.sciencelogic.com.

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