

Belgacom NV

Leading Belgian Telco Provider Tackles Performance Problems and Enhances Customer Satisfaction with Symantec

The leading Belgian telecommunications company Belgacom was challenged with patchy performance from its Oracle database. Valuable time was lost while attempts were made to identify the problem. Step forward VERITAS i³ for Oracle. By deploying this powerful application performance management solution, Belgacom was able to identify and overcome the database problems. The inevitable outcome of this is that performance can be optimized holistically without requiring an investment in new hardware.

Company Profile

Belgacom NV, the largest telecom operator in Belgium, offers local, intercity and international voice and data services, mobile phone services, satellite, and Internet services.

Industry

Telecom

Solution

Application Performance Management

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Luc Eraly

Team Leader for
Oracle Projects
Belgacom

Belgacom NV is the leading supplier of global telecommunications solutions in the Belgian market. The Belgacom Group mainly offers local, intercity and international voice and data services, mobile phone services, satellite services, and Internet services. As the largest telecom operator in Belgium, Belgacom administers hundreds of databases that hold all the data generated by the various services within the company. And just as with any other player in the market, this data forms the basis for future growth.

During a recent server consolidation program, Belgacom needed to tackle a considerably higher number of database performance problems than usual. This meant that the team of qualified database administrators lost valuable time tackling the various issues as they occurred. To prevent further delay in the consolidation project, it was decided that a solution should be found to deal with the problems at the database level.

“Because Belgacom primarily works with Oracle databases, we started by looking for an application from the same supplier,” says Luc Eraly, team leader for Oracle projects, Belgacom. “Detailed attention was given to Statspack Viewer and a solution from Quest Central and both applications were tested in real time. In the end we opted for the platform- and product-independent solution from Symantec (formerly VERITAS Software). Their solution was keenly priced and they offered us the guarantee that the product would be able to meet our expectations in full based on a proof of concept organized at Belgacom’s premises.”

Belgacom was able to immediately identify and resolve its Oracle database performance problems using VERITAS i³ from Symantec.

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Enhanced view of performance

First of all, the solution clearly and accurately detects problems and also provides a better view of performance across the entire installed base of databases. Owing to the Symantec solution, the databases and servers offer greater overall stability and high availability, and problems can be tackled before they cause any damage. In the end, the solution is a step closer to proactive database administration and away from reactive administration, enabling administrators to focus on their core tasks rather than being overtaken by events.

“The situation at Belgacom clearly called for an Application Performance Management solution (APM),” explains Jef Willemsens, Symantec account manager for Belgacom. “The solution we implemented is VERITAS i³ for Oracle, which tackles performance problems at a fundamental database level. In the past, problems were resolved by adding extensions and investing in new hardware and extra database administrators. Problems in database performance therefore used to entail a considerable amount of extra work for the database administrators, sometimes even leading to additional investment in hardware. Over the course of time, this situation became untenable in terms of cost as well as logistics. The server consolidation project was therefore the perfect opportunity to carry out a thorough analysis of the entire database infrastructure in one go.”

Belgacom opted for an APM solution based on the i³ philosophy of Symantec. The three ‘I’s stand for: ‘insight’, ‘in depth’, and ‘information’.

VERITAS i³ is in fact a consulting model used by Symantec to analyze problems faced by customers in a number of stages. Problems are quickly and efficiently pinpointed using the information collected, and an appropriate solution is then found. The final stage involves reporting to the customer and, if necessary, warning of possible problems that may escalate.

“The biggest asset immediately apparent was the logistical and structured approach adopted by the i³ philosophy. We were impressed by the speed and precision with which the database performance problems were identified,” says Eraly. “What’s more, it was possible to integrate Application Performance Management into the overall infrastructure very cost-effectively in view of the available system resources. The solution was fully up and running within barely ten days and only requires a minimum of maintenance and support.”

Ensures rapid ROI

“This solution means that Belgacom is spared from having to devise a long-term plan. Belgacom is now able to tackle database problems in the short term and long term. VERITAS i³ for Oracle can be installed very quickly, ensuring rapid ROI,” explains Willemsens. The benefits in terms of time are persuasive and also have a positive impact on other areas. Thanks to the Symantec performance management solution, it is possible to consolidate the entire installed base of servers and storage systems. The inevitable outcome of this is that performance can be optimized holistically without requiring an

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investment in new hardware. The power of the solution also generates savings in terms of man-hours for administrators, as well as developers. With the new Symantec application, it is now possible for one administrator to deal with the main obstacles and problems presented by hundreds of databases.

In the end, it is not just about peace of mind for the database administrators; the main goal is to ensure the satisfaction of Belgacom’s customers. Once it is apparent that the performance of the database infrastructure is transparent for the outside world, it goes without saying that problems will also be detected quickly, thus preventing any irritation. A performance management solution provides overall stability and increases availability, so customers no longer have to face delays and faults. The solution also means that customers have more rapid access to the data they are looking for, which in turn means that more customers can be helped at the same time.

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SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

Business Drivers

- Solution that tackles performance problems at database level

Technology Challenges

- Identify solution for overcoming Oracle-specific database performance problems
- Provide a better view of performance across the entire installed base of databases

Solution

Application Performance Management solution

Symantec Products

- VERITAS i³ for Oracle

Technology Environment

- Oracle databases

Business Value and Technical benefits

- Increased stability and availability
- Immediate identification of database performance problems
- Integration of Application Performance Management into the overall infrastructure
- Consolidation of entire installed base of servers and storage systems
- Maintenance and support reduced to a minimum