



## VitalSuite at Work

### Pays out for Insurance Holdings of America

Insurance Holdings of America (IHA) is not your typical insurance provider. The Beverly, Mass. based company employs innovative, technologically advanced business to-business Internet and e-commerce solutions to service carriers, agents, adjusters and consumers alike. So when IHA was looking for a way to manage its custom end-to-end servicing application, they turned to an equally innovative solution: the VitalSuite product family from Lucent Technologies' NetCare division.



Insurance Holdings of America (IHA) supports a widely distributed network of more than 1,300 independent GROUPadvantage insurance agents located in offices and storefront kiosks across the country.

"We have over 1300 desktops in the field and just three people to support them," says Jim Barry, CIO at IHA. "We wanted a tool that could tell us what is happening within the system so that when we experience problems, we can see where they are. And if the system goes down, we need visibility into the events leading up to those failures. VitalSuite has given us that visibility, significantly reducing the amount of time we spend servicing our users. It's doing exactly what we need."

IHA supports a widely distributed group of independent GROUPadvantage insurance agents located in offices and kiosks at stores across the country. The agents employ a custom application developed by IHA to

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write, process and record policies on site. As the number of agents grew, Barry and his staff were tasked with delivering upwards of 99.5 percent availability for both the application and the network infrastructure.

“We needed a solution that could show us we were achieving that level of availability and also give us a hint about what was going on,” says Barry. During the evaluation process, Barry found offerings from companies such as Tivoli, Computer Associates and Network Associates were difficult and time-consuming to set up. Even worse, says Barry, it quickly became clear that none of these solutions would work in his environment or with his custom application without considerable modifications and additional investments. VitalSuite, on the other hand, took just four-and-a-half hours to set up, and almost immediately “it started reporting results and giving me information I could use,” says Barry.



Jim Berry, CIO at IHA, says the VitalSuite solutions have saved the company an estimated \$750,000 by helping IT quickly detect, isolate and resolve network and application performance problems.

VitalAgent software was installed on user desktops in the field, where it monitored and collected information on each transaction. That information was forwarded to a central VitalAnalysis server, which provided Barry and his staff with a detailed overview of how the applications were performing for his users.

VitalHelp correlated events and provided critical remote troubleshooting capabilities. VitalNet (formerly EnterprisePRO) delivered critical network performance data for capacity planning purposes. More importantly, VitalAgent on the desktops helped pinpoint where problems were occurring, allowing IT to quickly resolve system failures.

“Our agents can’t afford to wait 10, 15, 20 minutes to troubleshoot a problem,” says Barry. “They need to know what is wrong and have it



repaired immediately. VitalSuite has reduced our repair time from fifteen to less than five minutes because we know what we're facing going in."

Perhaps VitalSuite's biggest advantage is its ability to monitor and manage the company's mission-critical custom application. "That was the part that was missing with the other guys," Barry says. But with VitalSuite's Business Transaction Management System (BTMS), which allows customers to define, capture and monitor unique transactions within the custom applications that support their business processes, "we can actually see that final component and how the application is performing. Whether a problem is caused by an agent who made a mistake or congestion on the network, we can tell because we have visibility into that particular application." Barry says that feature alone has saved IHA an estimated \$750,000. "The VitalSuite solution allowed us to do everything we needed with just two monitoring stations rather than five or six different applications," he says.

VitalSuite has paid other dividends as well. "The fact that I don't have to use my highly paid engineers to look for problems is invaluable to me," says Barry. "Their job is to design and improve, not repair. In the past, we found ourselves having to use them (for troubleshooting), and they spent hours chasing non-existent problems. With VitalSuite, I don't have to worry about retaining these employees because they now have quality of life. They can go home a whole lot earlier when they aren't chasing phantoms."

Products and performance aside, Barry was particularly impressed with the VitalSuite team's responsiveness and quality of service. Early on, when he discovered a compatibility issue between VitalAgent and the computers he was using, Barry says "I gave both the VitalSuite people and ( the computer people ) a laptop and said 'Figure it out.' Normally in those situations you get a lot of finger pointing. Instead, they worked together and I had a new agent within a week. That is unheard of."

Then, on July 4, Barry called his sales rep to report a software problem. He was immediately connected with technical support. "They listened to what I had to say, repeated the scenario in the test lab, and found a bug," Barry recalls. "Within an hour, I had the problem fixed. I couldn't believe it."



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