

WhatsUp® Gold Network Management Software Helps KHS Double Profits and Production Value Capital

CASE STUDY



INDUSTRY
Manufacturing

PRODUCT
WhatsUp Gold

SUMMARY

KHS integrated their IT operations into a single headquarter location and needed enhanced network management. Progress WhatsUp Gold was the right fit as it provides an agile and intuitive interface, as well as it's easy set-up and configuration. It made centralized IT management extremely easy.

“Now, IT staff can see poor application performance, shortage of server capacity, or network breakdowns from WhatsUp Gold’s dashboard, cutting down troubleshooting time by 80%. With higher efficiency, the IT staff can spend more time on carrying out projects, doing important work or improving processes.”

Peter Tsao
Manager of System
Operations Department, K.H.S.
Musical Instrument Co.

Founded in 1930 in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, KHS was formerly known as “Wan-Wu” group and changed its name to KHS in 1945. Besides the production, manufacturing, and sale of branded musical instruments, KHS also provides music lessons. As one of the top ten musical instrument manufacturers worldwide, KHS has production and sales bases all over the world with its headquarters located in the Luzhou District of New Taipei City, Taiwan.

“All modern enterprises’ operation systems, business strategies, and marketing strategies are closely related to IT. Therefore, the IT department must support the front-line staff with all kinds of information and services to help their colleagues and managers make decisions more precisely,” said Peter Tsao, Manager of the System Operations Department at K.H.S. Musical Instrument Co.,Ltd. Peter Tsao’s team has done just this while KHS has doubled the company’s profits and market value per capita with the existing labor force in just five years – a goal set by CEO Liang, Qinqi. As well, the IT department has launched and fully implemented data center virtualization and introduced next-generation ERP systems. During the course of these two projects, KHS has also upgraded to Progress WhatsUp Gold network management platform for precautionary purposes.

Conversion from Legacy to Modern Systems

KHS is not a listed company and does not have a holding company structure. To meet the diverse needs of all customers, the company has set up subsidiaries in a variety of places with different types of business. The business, financial, and IT units of KHS’ subsidiaries all operated independently. Ten years ago, the corporate group incorporated all IT operations into the IT department at the headquarters. Since then, the company has been confronted with the challenges of heterogeneous system integration as well as related problems.

In the past, each subsidiary purchased their own PoS systems and ERP software from different brands to meet their individual needs. After the integration of the IT operations at the headquarters, the IT department has had to manage a variety of PoS and ERP systems. The different data logic used by each subsidiary also gave the IT department a hard time organizing data warehousing logic. In 2012, the IT department launched data center virtualization with ERP introduction scheduled for 2015. They realized they must get rid of all obsolete systems and achieve higher network management efficiency to provide comprehensive support for their new application environments and systems.

After the completion of the major innovative plans, the IT department decided to improve IT productivity and network management efficiency with new tools. This means the replacement of their open-source OpenNMS network management software. “Configuration of open-source software was difficult,” said Peter Tsao. When problems occurred, the company could only rely on the IT staff’s experience and knowledge to identify whether the problems were related to network, hardware, or operating system. In addition, maintaining open-source software was time-consuming and troublesome. The IT staff must spend a lot of time learning whenever the company needed to add new equipment or set up the systems for special needs. These requirements imposed a heavy burden upon the time and manpower of the IT staff who were already terribly busy with solving end users’ problems and system issues and carrying out improvement projects.

Since OpenNMS was only used to perform basic functions, the IT staff could not understand whether a problem was caused by application performance, the operating system, or an interrupted service when applications or operating systems failed. Following the completion of the virtualization project in 2014, KHS went on to introduce the next-generation ERP system in 2015, renovating all of the business critical applications in the company. The entire adoption process of the new system, from introduction to completion, required a transition period of one to two years, thus doubling IT staff’s workload. “To achieve the goal of reaching double profits and production value per capita with existing manpower, the IT staff must focus on work with higher value. Therefore, we must shift to a new suite of software that is easier to use with a more intuitive configuration,” said Peter Tsao.

During the evaluation of the new network management solution, KHS realized that IT staff needed to maintain more systems after the new ERP system came online. The evaluation of the new systems focused on three aspects. The first was software support ability. Support for all internal IT systems including servers and application systems must exceed 90%. The second was an intuitive management interface that was easy to configure and operate. The third was a low total cost of ownership, including future maintenance expenses.

Agile and intuitive management with WhatsUp Gold

“With a large market share, Progress WhatsUp Gold provides an agile and intuitive interface, making configuration and management extremely easy. This is why we chose WhatsUp Gold,” said Peter. During trial runs, the IT department tested the software with several scenarios such as sending alerts upon system failures or rebooting the system when service errors or interruption occurred. Not only had WhatsUp Gold successfully proved its capabilities, it also monitored SQL Server databases deeply, helping managers find database bottlenecks. These benefits were why KHS chose WhatsUp Gold.

In 2014, KHS installed WhatsUp Gold along with the APM (Application Performance Monitoring), WhatsConfigured (configuration backup and change management), and WhatsVirtual (VMware virtual environment management) to manage all equipment at KHS and its branches.

Since then, the range of management has significantly expanded from networks to applications systems. Besides wireless and wired networks, WhatsUp Gold helps manage the operating system and VMware ESX servers. The software can detect the IP address of the storage equipment and makes sure the equipment operates properly. It also ensures stable operation of the application systems that have been moved to the cloud. Network traffic including traffic from major network equipment is also monitored.

So far, Progress WhatsUp Gold has provided many critical IT and business benefits:

- **Reduce troubleshooting time by 80%:** in the past when network monitoring capabilities were not as capable, it took the IT staff nearly half day to locate the cause of problems after users reported system

failures. “Now, the IT staff can pinpoint low application performance, shortage of server capacity, or network downtime from the dashboard of WhatsUp Gold, thus reducing their troubleshooting time by 80%. With higher efficiency, we can free up manpower for more important work, allowing the IT staff to focus on implementing projects, doing other work, or improving processes,” said Peter Tsao.

- **Locate system performance bottlenecks quickly, predict potential problems and solve them proactively:** besides monitoring hard disks and sending alerts when the storage capacity is running low, WhatsUp Gold also monitors SQL server databases and other key application systems using APM.
- **Manage configuration changes of network equipment effectively:** using WhatsConfigured to manage configuration changes of the network equipment, the headquarters can identify changes made by the IT staff at a specific branch that is not compliant with standard procedures.
- **Enhance virtual environment management efficiency:** VMware vCenter only provides basic monitoring functions for guest operating systems such as CPU memory utilization. WhatsVirtual provides more convenient management capabilities as it is directly connected to vCenter. The module can collect all detailed data pertaining to a guest OS. The data is processed seamlessly without the need for complicated configuration work by IT staff.
- **Increase customer satisfaction by solving problems in 30 minutes:** before the introduction of the new system, KHS had difficulty finding and solving the problems when the in-store IT equipment broke down. With WhatsUp Gold, the company can solve the problems in 30 minutes, hence a significant increase in customer satisfaction.
- **Manage online shops efficiently:** as bad news travel fast, failing to solve the problems in time could jeopardize company reputation or cause revenue losses. By monitoring the availability of online shops with WhatsUp Gold, the IT staff can now be free from these worries.

Apart from new functions, WhatsUp Gold’s management interface has constantly improved. Therefore, the company has upgraded to the 16.3 version in 2016. Progress’s solutions are expected to help KHS achieve higher efficiency and create more value by offering vertical integration services from manufacturing to sales, R&D, and distribution.



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About Progress

Progress (NASDAQ: PRGS) provides the leading products to develop, deploy and manage high-impact business applications. Our comprehensive product stack is designed to make technology teams more productive and we have a deep commitment to the open source community. With Progress, organizations can accelerate the creation and delivery of strategic business applications, automate the process by which apps are configured, deployed and scaled, and make critical data and content more accessible and secure —leading to competitive differentiation and business success. Over 1,700 independent software vendors, 100,000+ enterprise customers, and a three-million-strong developer community rely on Progress to power their applications. Learn about Progress at www.progress.com or +1-800-477-6473.

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