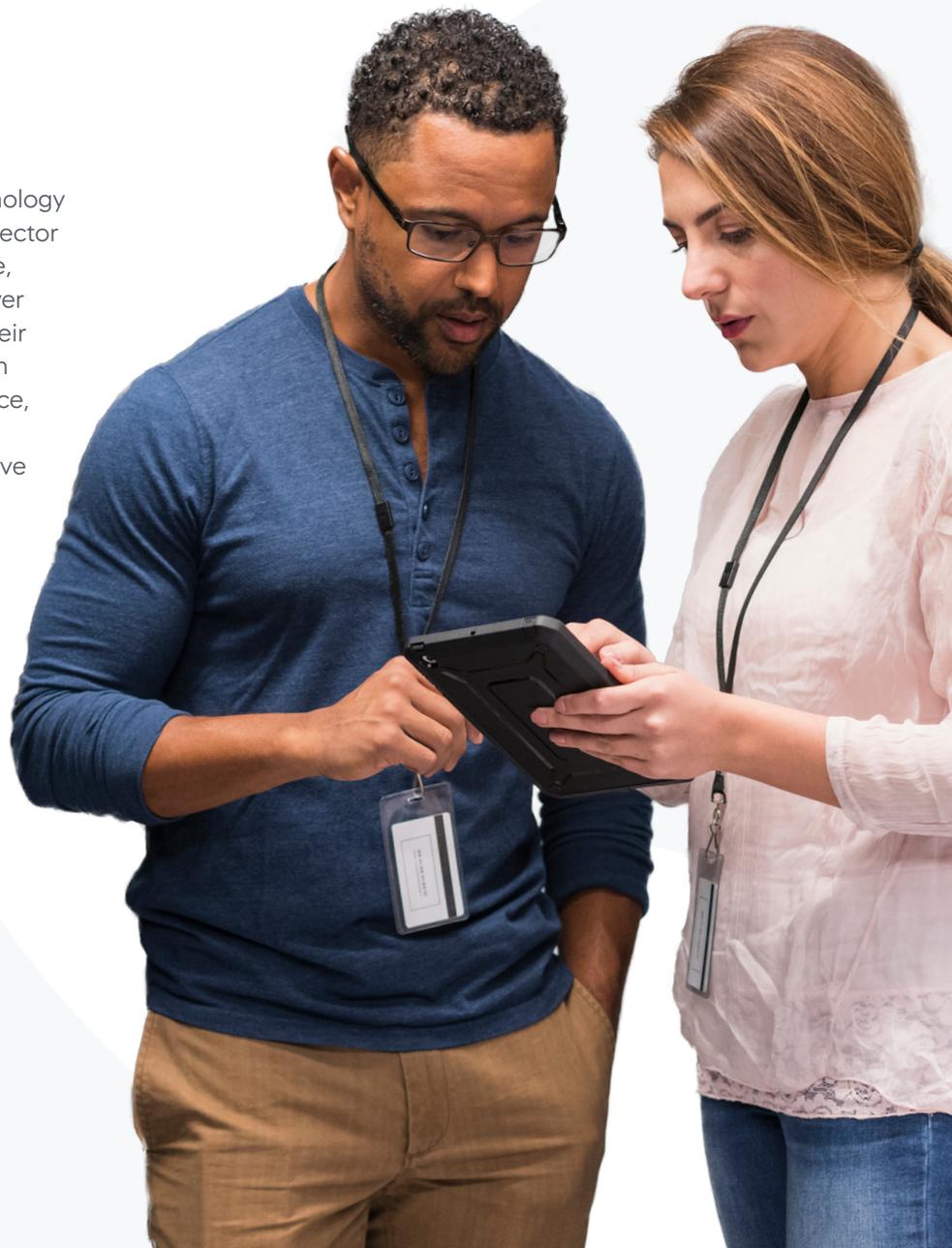


Computacenter optimizes global client services and operations with AppDynamics



About Computacenter

Computacenter is a leading independent technology partner, trusted by large corporate and public sector organisations. They help their customers source, transform and manage IT infrastructure to deliver digital transformation that enables users and their business. Computacenter's Delivery Automation supports customers with Automation as a Service, outsourcing IT infrastructure so customers can gain the benefits of automation without extensive upkeep. Computacenter is a public company quoted on the London FTSE 250 (CCC.L) and employs over 17,000 people worldwide.



Challenge

Paving the way to modernity

For nearly four decades, Germany-based Computacenter has provided organizations in the public sector, financial services, and other highly-regulated industries with cloud solutions and consulting that help companies integrate and adopt new technology. Over the years, the company has cultivated a reputation for helping customers better manage their data, improve efficiency, and become more agile and responsive to a rapidly changing business environment.

But gaining the trust and confidence of enterprise executives embarking on IT modernization requires demonstrating for them how stable, secure, and reliable new technologies can be.

“Customers work with us because we can help them transform their manual processes into automated ones and streamline many of their most critical operations like online ordering, shipping, and help desk support,” says Automation Architecture and Design Lead, Christian Siedler. “But in the back of their minds, they still worry about something going offline and creating more problems. We needed complete, end-to-end visibility across all their systems and applications to make sure they were all running at peak efficiency every minute of every day.”

Secure access to essential tools

As a global leader in IT services, Computacenter experts implement and manage all kinds of software and hardware designed to support and optimize their clients’ business operations. Unexpectedly, Siedler says most client discussions aren’t even about technology itself.

“Most of our clients are more concerned about the stringent legal guidelines and restrictions they have to follow because of the amount and types of data they have in their environment,” Siedler says. “They understand that they can do more by moving key systems and processes to the cloud, but they worry that the data governance and security protocols and regulations they face make adopting new technologies too risky and makes them apprehensive of adopting business-enabling technology in the first place.”

Computacenter helps to alleviate security and legal concerns by setting up customer infrastructure using its own local data center as the central point of integration, giving customers a secure and compliant way to connect

to third-party applications and cloud services. But taking on that level of responsibility means that Computacenter needed complete, real-time observability across all of its customers’ various technology deployments to deliver on its contractual promises to keep customer data safe while maximizing availability and performance.

“A lot of our customers have strict requirements regarding security and data protection, which require us to use our own data center as the central integration point to keep compliant with data residency and sovereignty regulations,” Siedler says. “Having a central global connection to our customers and third-party cloud services makes it a little easier to see and manage such an extensive IT footprint and improve their customer experiences while complying with data governance requirements.”

In the past, Computacenter teams frequently used monitoring tools supplied by original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to keep an eye on performance levels of individual services or connections. But as customer deployments became increasingly more complex — adding public and private clouds and new as-a-service solutions to their existing on-premise legacy systems — those disparate tools created visibility gaps that made it difficult to get a real read on the health and performance of every system, database, cloud, or web service in a customer’s environment.

“Without end-to-end visibility across our customers’ environments, it wasn’t as easy to respond to system or service interruptions as we would have liked because the exact source and cause were obscured,” Siedler explains. “We’d spend hours investigating and troubleshooting an issue, which meant only the most pressing issues were addressed, rather than the root cause. There was no way to prioritize alerts or to be more proactive and try to prevent issues from happening.”

Key Benefits

- 45% reduction in target time to detect and escalate alerts
- 24% reduction in mean time to repair for service management operations
- 11 minutes or less committed target time for tier one and non-tier one systems



Solution

A new perspective

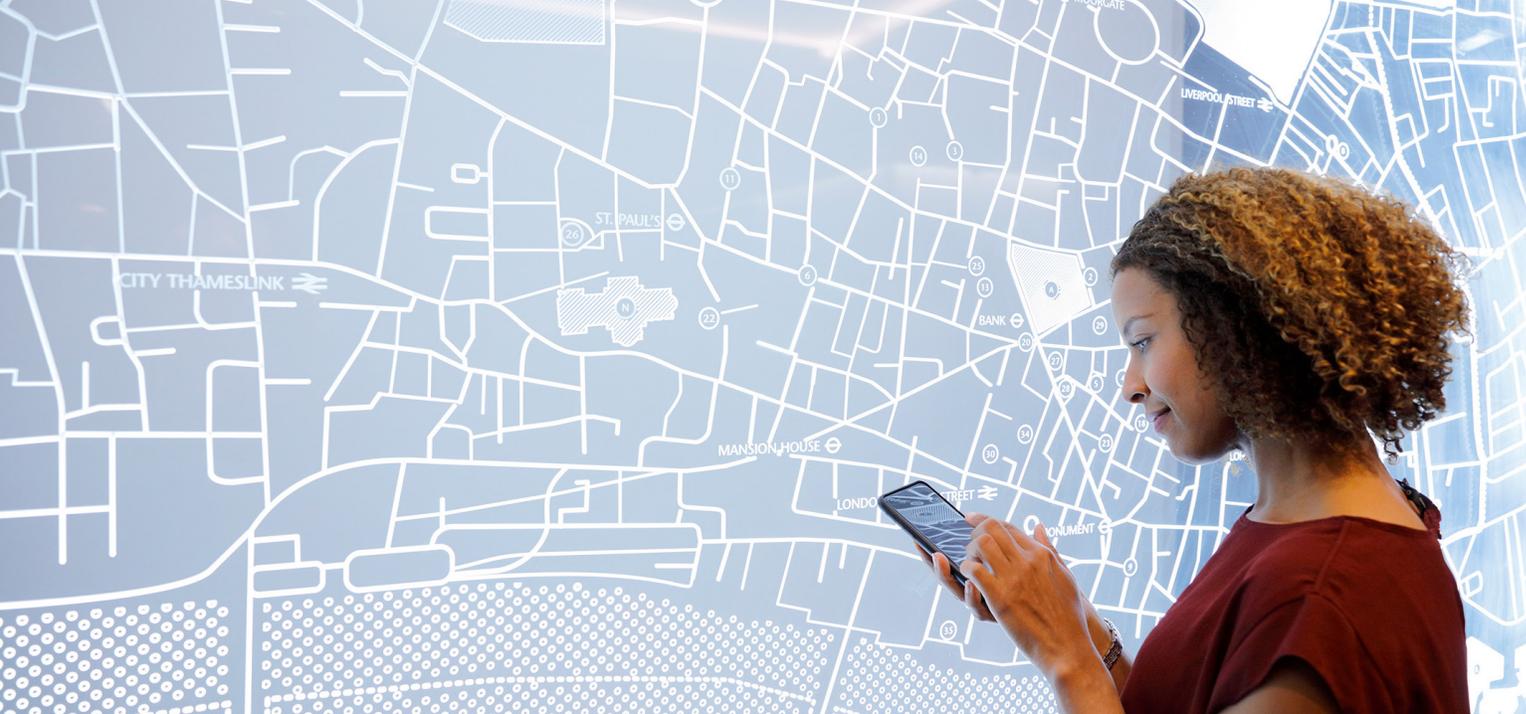
Eager for a simpler and more efficient way of keeping client operations running smoothly, the Computacenter team implemented AppDynamics. As a long-time Cisco partner and reseller, Siedler and his team were intimately familiar with AppDynamics' reputation as a leading observability platform but were still surprised to see just how big of a difference the solution could make in his team's daily roles.

"One of the first things we realized was how AppDynamics dashboards give us a configurable, real-time look at how and where our services are consumed," he says. "We can see every touchpoint with customer systems and pinpoint issues as soon as they pop up — or even before. The ability to monitor error rates and start pinpointing where issues might occur is a whole new perspective that helps us ensure that we have enough resources to optimize our services performance and keep our customers happy."

In particular, Siedler says that the heart of Computacenter's client integrations is the Microsoft Internet Information Services (IIS) server. Computacenter uses AppDynamics across the IIS server, databases, and the company's custom-configured Docker containers managed by a Kubernetes cluster to observe and react in real-time to traffic fluctuations in its containerized environment.

Soon after the Delivery Automation team started using AppDynamics, they ran into the perfect scenario to test the effectiveness of their new observation capabilities. After integrating a new customer, Siedler's team started the initial synchronization. However, the team saw a much higher volume of data than expected, nearly triggering a denial of service response that could have taken the customer's service offline. With AppDynamics, the team recognized the unusual peak right away, giving the team time to react and allocate more resources.

"It was a really positive surprise to see all relevant components in AppDynamics, where we could easily drill down from IIS into a database and visualize all the different dependencies between a specific web service call on IIS and the corresponding actions running against database in an interactive diagram," Siedler says. "It was a completely new way of understanding each client's environment that gave us an edge in preventing new issues from popping up or quickly intervening to address service interruptions to remain compliant with our customer service level agreements (SLAs) and data governance requirements."



Benefits

Building meaningful partnership with AppDynamics

Since deploying AppDynamics, Siedler says the team has noticed a dramatic uptick in alerts — receiving up to 80 alerts per day. While this might make the average person cringe, Siedler sees the increase as a good sign.

“AppDynamics has helped us discover recurring issues so we can act quickly and more precisely despite a growing workload,” he says. “We used to see only one major issue per month, on average, now AppDynamics helps us identify more potential issues and discover the root causes of these issues, enabling an even higher-quality 24/7 service for our customers.”

Siedler says his team can look at and measure everything from database speeds and other metrics to update backend code for greater performance and continuously tweak code or connections to prevent issues from reappearing in the future.

Improving performance and solving issues proactively with a best-in-class full-stack observability means he can decrease the number of people and resources dedicated to manually troubleshooting and investigating issues. Over time, his team can spend more time working on higher value issues and improving service quality — especially with the AppDynamics service and support teams providing continuous advice. Also, the information they receive through AppDynamics is important for continuous development and feature releases.

“AppDynamics treats us — and all of its customers — as a valued partner and a top priority,” Siedler adds. “AppDynamics helps with strategic planning that will allow us to extend our use of the solution to other areas of the business and confidently bring more of our services into the cloud.”

See your applications like never before

Learn more about how our solutions can meet your needs. Whether you're ready to get started or still have more questions, we'd love to hear from you.

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