

Virgin Protects Customer Experience With Transaction-Level Monitoring

Written by Debbie Hauss Thursday, 19 June 2008 16:05

“If the system times out for 20 or 30 seconds that’s an eternity for customers at checkout,” says Robert Fort, CIO and VP of IT at Virgin Entertainment Group. That’s the type of misstep Fort is expecting to avoid with the implementation of the Insight business intelligence tool from INETCO Systems Limited.

Insight transaction monitoring provides 24/7 monitoring and can be customized to send alerts based on the retailer’s criteria. For Virgin, the system sends alerts if transaction volumes or amounts exceed certain thresholds, says Fort. The system also can provide insight into multiple credit card swipes, transaction failures and slowdowns. By identifying and proactively resolving transaction issues, Virgin can protect its customer experience and thereby maintain its revenue stream.

Isolating transaction slowdowns

Using Insight, Fort started to see results within days of the application implementation. “In looking through the streams of data coming in, I noticed that most transactions were a half second to 1 ½ seconds, but then I saw some at 3.9, five and seven seconds. All of the longer transaction times were happening at one store and at one register in that store. Now we are analyzing that register. Insight has given us visibility we’ve never had before.”

For now Fort is using Insight to monitor credit card transactions but he plans to expand its use to other areas of the business, probably next focusing on communications behind Virgin’s in-store kiosks. “We know we have a fair amount of traffic at the kiosks but we’d like to go in and look at the average mean time for these transactions and look for anomalies,” Fort explains. “With Insight we may be able to catch the early signs of potentially large problems.”

An ounce of prevention

“Insight is helping Virgin’s loss prevention team identify transaction problems in real time and spend more of their time in the stores. “We are really putting the word ‘prevention’ back into loss prevention by being able to verify problems within minutes,”

says Fort. “Our LP people are actually excited about this because now they can be more focused on the stores. A lot of loss prevention is still happening internally and we must be on top of it in the stores to catch it.”

Beta testing Insight 4.1

Even though Virgin just recently implemented Insight, Fort has agreed to participate in Beta testing for the newest version 4.1, which includes an enhanced dashboard and some improved aspects of the alert system.