China Merchants Bank reduces problem query cycle times by 98 percent

Bank proactively manages operational failures with IBM IT operations analytics software

Overview

The need

Because of competition and changes to online and mobile requirements for banks, Zhang Xiang, executive of open platforms for China Merchants Bank, needed to increase new product development and enhance operations and maintenance agility.

The solution

The bank deployed IBM Operations Analytics Log Analysis software to accelerate collection, analysis and calculation of key performance indicators (KPIs) relating to a massive volume of activity logs.

The benefit

The IBM solution speeds troubleshooting with early warning capabilities and facilitates a 98 percent decrease in problem query cycle times, driving operational and maintenance efficiency.

From a business perspective, banks in China must roll out new mobile apps at a fast pace or risk losing ground to their competitors. As executive of open platforms in the IT operations and maintenance management department for China Merchants Bank, Zhang Xiang views this challenge through the prism of IT. In doing so, he recognized the limitations of conventional application development, operations and maintenance methodologies in an IT environment.

A demand for increasing IT agility

"The traditional waterfall approach is increasingly inadaptable. Rapid transformations and growth in our business mean more demands on IT infrastructure management," says Mr. Xiang. "We need to ensure stability and efficiency over the long term, while also being agile enough to launch applications fast, to schedule apps based on wide variations in transaction volumes and to diagnose malfunctions in a timely and predictive way."

With the IBM Operations Analytics Log Analysis solution, China Merchants Bank has moved from reactive to proactive fault management, predicting failures by analyzing variables based on transaction volumes. "The IBM solution provides must-have capabilities and is critical to IT operations moving forward," says Zhang Xiang, executive of open platforms.

"Combining early warning and log analysis functions, the IBM IT operations analytics solution helps us improve the service quality our team provides."

— Zhang Xiang, executive of open platforms, IT operations and maintenance management, China Merchants Bank

To achieve those objectives, Mr. Xiang and his team must first conduct a performance capacity assessment, which requires collecting huge amounts of historical data showing transaction volumes during normal and peak times, as well as growth trends. Next, they must monitor transaction volumes in near real-time during peak periods and analyze those transactions to identify the range of possible effects on the bank's IT structure. When service interruption occurs, the team must be able to isolate the fault and switch over to new service capabilities rapidly.

A unified platform for log analysis

Based on this demand, China Merchants Bank deployed IBM Operations Analytics Log Analysis software, which facilitates the collection and analysis of, and the key performance indicator (KPI) calculations pertaining to, a large volume of transaction logs.

China Merchants Bank had already run a pilot program with an open source platform based on an operational intelligence framework, called Splunk. However, because of its close integration with the bank's existing suite of IBM application performance management solutions the bank selected Operations Analytics Log Analysis software instead, providing Mr. Xiang and his team with a unified platform for gathering and analyzing relevant logs and unstructured data. The team also uses the IBM solution to quickly and proactively locate faults by taking advantage of the solution's log management module—a significant advantage over the Splunk application.

From reactive to proactive IT maintenance

The IBM system helps China Merchants Bank distinguish key events from the bank's high volume of standard IT infrastructure-related events. It is the platform for closing the loop on IT operations and maintenance, integrating all business-related infrastructure information, accelerating the process of diagnosing and analyzing problems and their root causes, and in some cases even predicting issues before they emerge.

"Combining early warning and log analysis functions, the IBM IT operations analytics solution helps us improve the service quality our team provides," says Mr. Xiang. Indeed, the bank has shortened problem query cycle time by 98 percent, thus speeding troubleshooting and significantly reducing mean time to recovery.

Solution Component

Software

- IBM Operations Analytics Log Analysis

For more information

To learn more about IBM IT operations analytics software products, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website:
ibm.com/software/products/category/it-operations-analytics

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Systems Group
Route 100
Somers, NY 10589

Produced in the United States of America
December 2015

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