

Case Study – Outlook Freezes When Switching Between Applications

Customer

- IT Operation Manager, Global Law Firm.

Challenge

- Outlook freezes when user's switch between office applications and Outlook.
- Problems were intermittent and could not be easily recreated.
- The problem was related to a major new desktop environment that included many new applications including Office 2003 and Interwoven's Document Management System (DMS).
- There were numerous other performance issues affecting all Outlook users.

Methodology

- Using Advance7's **RPR** methodology, the **REACT** team identified the root cause of the problem.
- Network analysers were positioned across key IT components to capture network trace data from the user's PC across to the Exchange servers to provide end-to-end analysis.
- Simultaneously, Exchange Server performance counters were collected.
- A number of user incidents of the problem were captured.
- All the collected diagnostic and trace data was analysed using Advance7's proprietary toolset.

Result

- Outlook Not Responding:
 - Advance7 identified a large (15MB) synchronisation transfer between the user's Outlook Application and the DMS servers that prevented Outlook communicating with the Exchange servers.
 - From Advance7's analysis of the problem the client's DMS support team were able to identify a number of DMS register entries that control the Outlook/DMS synchronisation process.
- Outlook Poor Performance:
 - Advance7 analysis showed that the performance issues where related to both Outlook 2000 and 2003 users and was not related to the user's PC or the network. We provided proof that the problem lay within the Exchange servers.
 - Advance7's impartial policy enables them to recommend the problem was handled by Microsoft as they are the best option to resolve the problem for the client
- The DMS support team gained information that enabled them to tune the DMS system which significantly improved the application performance and integration with Outlook.
- The support teams were able to follow up the remaining performance issues with Microsoft

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