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MONITORING HELPS WONINGNET IN PROACTIVE IT-SUPPORT

Proactive steering and monitoring with a new productized service from CoolProfs

WoningNet's advanced Housing Mediation System (WRB) matches the housing supply from the associated cooperatives to potential tenants and members of the platform. The extensive and user friendly system incapsulates complex selection and sorting processes to be able to distribute the scarce accommodation supply in accordance with complex national and regional laws and regulations.

WRB has been built to replace two legacy systems and is linked to various internal and external systems. Together with several other application, the WoningNet IT environment is considerable. There are thousands of daily request to the WRB system and it experiences many peak loads. CoolProfs has been assisting WoningNet by introducing an extensive monitoring solution to keep track of their systems and make preventative adjustments where needed.

From reactive to proactive

WoningNet has a large amount of data that is being consulted daily and there are around 1.3 million subscribers looking for social housing. With that amount of traffic we do sometimes run into issues, says Dominique Princen, Product Owner at WoningNet. "In the past, we used to have a reactive approach to performance issues. An employee from a housing cooperative or a potential tenant would report a problem to our Services Desk or call our Customer Support and only then would we know about the incident and start trouble shooting. This is far from ideal. You want to work proactively in order to avoid negative customer feedback.

Employees from the IT-Services department at WoningNet have created their own scripts to be able to monitor performance and the OutSystems Platform offers standard logging. This was, however, not

"We can identify and resolve a bottleneck before it becomes a problem"

sufficient, says IT-Manager Dirk Jan Zethof. "We were tracking and analyzing the data manually and OutSystems does not store logs for a very long time. That is why we were looking for a more robust solution, where we could go back further and identify the source of the change in performance. You want to get to the root-cause, not fight symptoms."



CoolProfs R&D

CoolProfs, a Dutch OutSystems partner, has been an important IT partner for WoningNet for more than 5 years. CoolProfs co-created the WRB-system together with WoningNet and is still engaged with further modernization and extension of the application landscape. Due to their vast experience, CoolProfs knew that qualitative monitoring is an important aspect in IT management. "Within our R&D department, the idea was born to productize our Monitoring solution", says Harmen Coops, Principal Consultant at CoolProfs. "We felt the urgency at several customers, including WoningNet. Correlating such an amount of data is impossible to do without help. We see it as our mission to help our customers with this. No other OutSystems partner has done this to date. It is great that we collaborate with WoningNet for our further development and finetune our solution together."

Insightful, effective and efficient

This new monitoring solution consists of an analysis platform developed using an Elastic Stack and a visualization solution & dashboards from Kibana. The dashboards offer an intuitive and attractive visualization into the course of a process, which API's are suffering delays and where we are facing

performance issues. "We have so much more insight into the entire configuration than we did before. In one overview, we can see whether the timers and properties are correct. This saves us so much time and reduces the chances of human errors significantly", says Nico Hoekman, DevOps Engineer at WoningNet. "There is a clear overview of the variables in Cool Monitor, much more so than in the OutSystems Platform logs. It is also a lot easier to use. On top of that, we now have much more data than we had before. A slow API call, for example, is now made very visual. When one environments communicates with another and a connection is slow, you see a real time increase in response times. We then know where to look for an error or where to implement a temporary workaround. We also have a much clearer way of seeing which customer process needs improvement and when to intervene on a release that is experiencing peak performance. We can now handle those processes outside of office hours, for example, which again improves the customer experience during our services window"

Improved customer service is by far our biggest win according to Zethof. "When faced with a significant outage or defect,

such as problems with login for example, it sometimes took days until we could provide a solution. Now, we can identify a bottleneck and resolve it before it becomes a problem. We can act proactively and the customer does not notice a thing. In the future, we expect to reduce the workload of our Customer Service Department and the Support Desk even further."

The key benefits of the Cool Monitoring for WoningNet:

- Realtime visibility into the health of the entire IT Landscape;
- Custom dashboards provide visual aids into performance management;
- Less time spent, fewer handlings, reduced amounts of errors during root cause analysis;
- Proactive problem solving and prevention;
- Possibility to further implement alarming and reaction;
- Improved service to customers and external stakeholders;
- Reduced traffic towards the service desk and customer support.



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Perspective

Besides the comfort of having insights into and control of the daily operations of the different environments, monitoring also offers perspective for further improvement of the customer service and communication, states Princen. "The WRB is connected to a payment provider. Recently, our dashboard was filled with errors and we could immediately detect that the issues were coming from the API between the systems. This makes it possible for us to partner on the issues at hand and work on a joint improvement plan."

The WRB System is mature and WoningNet is now in a phase of optimizing quality and improving the user experience of the application. "Monitoring plays an important role in this stage as well," says Princen. "Let's say we implement a change in the design of a screen or change some content; The dashboard allows us to track the progress. We can see whether the customer experiences a better flow or if it leads to incorrect data entries. We can then use the results to further improve the experience for our customers."

WoningNet mediates between people who are looking for accommodation and housing cooperatives, municipalities & companies. WoningNet is a highly demanded expert and paves the way in creating transparency on the property market. This is done by letting potential tenants make realistic and well thought through choices, even on such a heated scarce housing market. WoningNet collaborates with the cooperatives on new regulations and also takes some of the workload away from the cooperatives through IT automation. WoningNet also undertakes research activities and provides advice regarding developments and innovations on the housing market.

www.woningnet.nl

CoolProfs is a leading OutSystems consultancy company focused on the development of complex information systems. Our approach is fully geared towards the business and spans across the entire life-cycle. We are a highly qualified OutSystems (and Gen) partner. CoolProfs works for innovative organizations such as a.s.r., Maykers, DB Schenker, Municipality of The Hague, ABN AMRO, Samskip, Stedin and WoningNet and we do this with pride and pleasure. Our R&D department works closely with our customers and OutSystems Product Management to optimize a DevOps way of working and fully embed CI/CD on top of OutSystems. Our Center of Excellence proposition ensures a wholistic and successful roll-out of lowcode.

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