

Customer Story: Scalable Automation Initiatives in the Healthcare Industry





Employees: 129,000

Revenue: \$18B

Business footprint: USA

Industry: Healthcare

Architecture:

Two data centers with local servers at each of about 50 sites

The challenge: Their automation initiatives couldn't scale

"We were pushing services for our virtualization staff, and site server people, and wondering how we could keep some modicum of control over our DNS, DHCP, and IP address management (DDI) services," explains this healthcare network's network architect.

The entire networking team at this 129,000-person organization is just a small

handful of professionals. And they were relying on some Powershell scripts to interface with BlueCat's API.

While the pet project proved the value of automating DDI services, the team began to run into scale problems. "We didn't want code being executed in ten different places. We needed to establish some order."

The solve: Graduating to a zero-touch server build initiative enabled by BlueCat Gateway

"We used BlueCat's Gateway network automation platform to build a number of scalable, fully supported automations. One of those is a cradle-to-grave process that covers everything from server build to decommissioning. It's zero-touch for the distributed network of facilities we serve."

Here's how the automation works: Users make selections in a self-service format through ServiceNow, providing inputs about the new server's location and purpose. Then, Gateway calls VMware's vRealize Orchestrator (vRO) to create the prefix for the host. Next, based on the user's selections, a backend algorithm creates the middle of the host. The suffix is a three- or four-digit number.

Once provided with the hostname, the user can boot up the server, obtain the next available MAC address and IP address from BlueCat, and then go back to ServiceNow and close the request.

"It's a huge win for repeatability and the amount of person-power saved on server builds," the network architect said. "Every one of these more sophisticated automation projects helps us allocate more resources towards improving patient care in other ways."





The lesson learned: Prioritize DDI automation to free up time for more strategic initiatives

More than half (56%) of IT managers report that their teams are overwhelmed with DNS-related tickets and service requests. This has a direct impact on IT's ability to tackle more strategic work. For this healthcare network's IT team, leveraging Gateway along with BlueCat's many integrations was the key to taking their DNS automation initiatives to the next level. It freed up time and resources for more high-value projects.

Along the way, BlueCat's DDI experts worked closely with this organization's technologists to propose architecture and technology solutions that allowed them to achieve their goals.



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