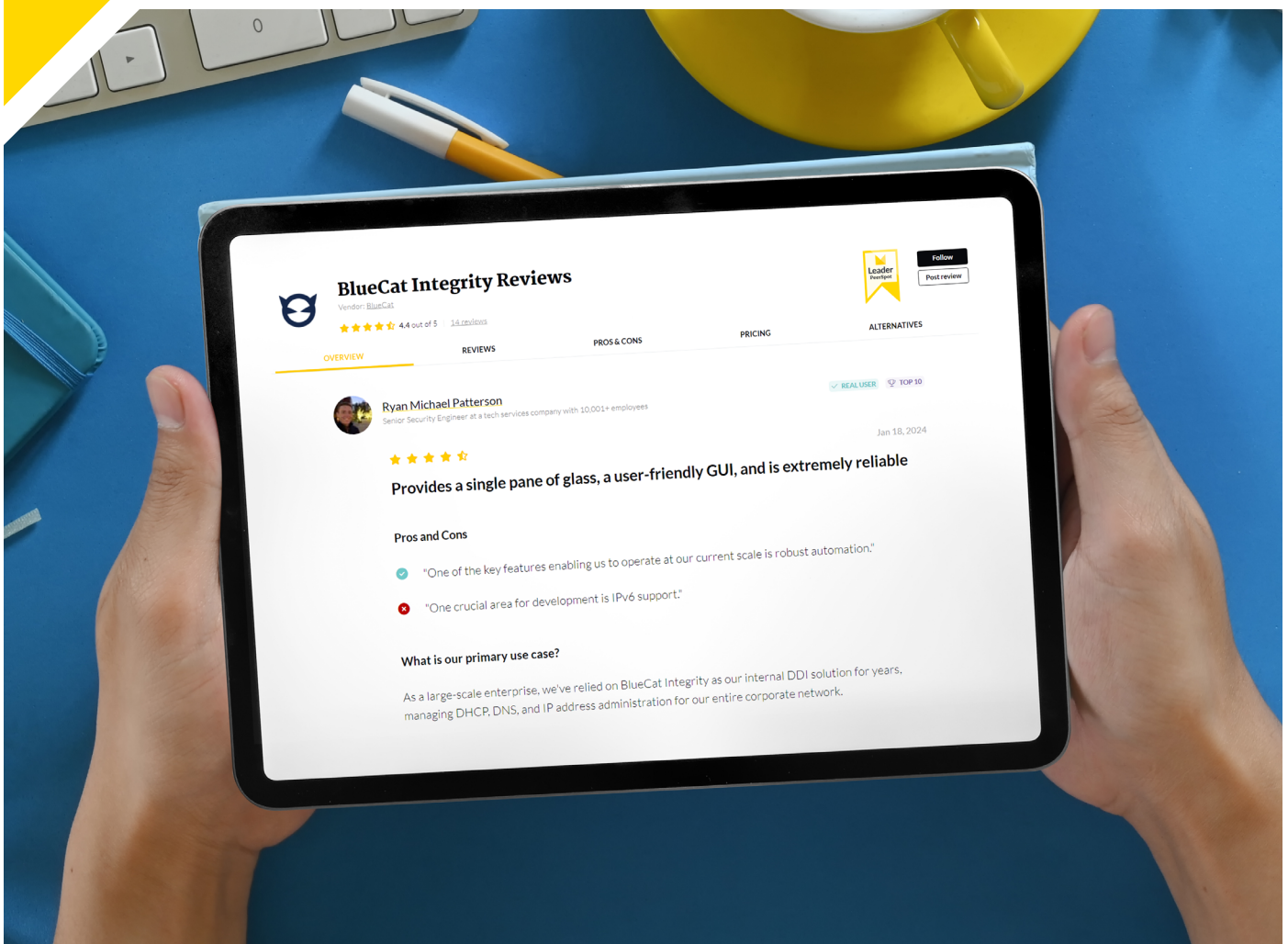


PeerPaper™ Report 2024

Based on Real User Experiences with BlueCat Integrity

Choosing the Right DDI Solution: 5 Key Selection Factors |



Contents

Page 1.	Introduction
Page 2.	A Brief Overview of DDI
Page 4.	Use Cases
Page 4.	#1 - Stability and Security
Page 5.	#2 - Open Standards
Page 6.	#3 - Ease of Use
Page 9.	#4 - Visibility
Page 10.	#5 - Centralized Management/ Single Source of Truth
Page 12.	Other Selection Factors
Page 12.	Reduced Downtime
Page 13.	Reduced Human Error
Page 14.	Freed Up Staff Time
Page 15.	Conclusion

Introduction

Keeping a network working and secure can be challenging for organizations that rely on point solutions for the core network services of DNS, DHCP, and IP address management (IPAM). It's hard to be efficient, and the work can be stressful and resource intensive. The stakes are high, too, as each workload potentially puts security and critical application availability at risk. Fortunately, the market offers software solutions that address these challenges by consolidating the management of core network services with a centralized DDI tool that offers improved visibility, security, and automation. This paper examines one DDI solution in particular, BlueCat Integrity, and describes the five reasons customers selected it over competitors. To them, what mattered in the selection process were stability, open standards, ease of use, visibility, and centralized management.

Except where noted, the companies described in this paper have over 10,000 employees.

A Brief Overview of DDI

DDI is a solution for managing networks that integrates management of Domain Name System (DNS), Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP), and IP address management (IPAM). With a DDI solution, one can manage all three of these components of network operations:

- **DNS** – the so-called “phone book of the internet,” which translates human-readable domain names like Amazon.com into the IP addresses that machines read, e.g., 104.239.197.100. DNS enables devices to interact using unique IP addresses.
- **DHCP** – the standard mechanism for dynamically assigning IP addresses within a network, i.e., for when a device logs into a network.
- **IPAM** – a method for planning, tracking, and managing IP address space on a network.



Senior Product Manager DDI & Network Automation at a manufacturing company with 10,001+ employees



“The main reason for the adoption of this product was to have one centralized management system. That was one of the key drivers.”

[Read review »](#)

DDI is useful for network management because there are risks when DNS, DHCP, and IPAM are managed separately. For example, confusion about assignment of IP addresses can cause problems for devices logging onto the network, and so forth. Outages may occur. Security risks can also arise if network managers cannot see what's happening with IP addresses on the network. Figure 1 offers a simplified reference architecture for a DDI solution.

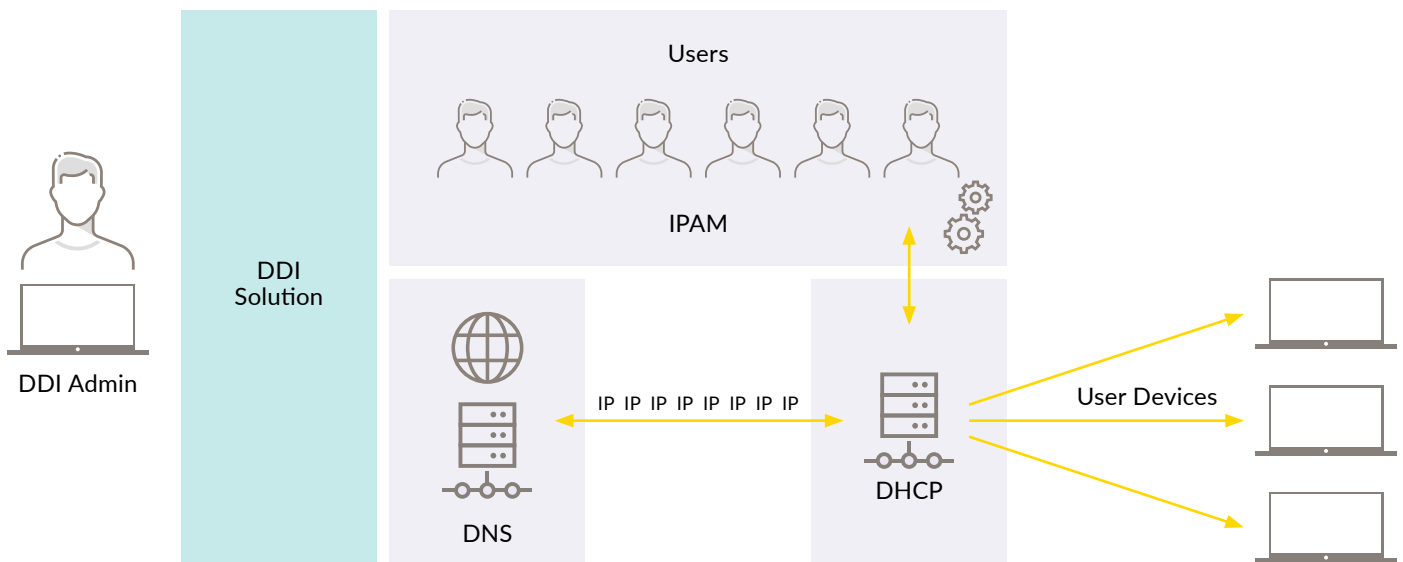


Figure 1 - DDI, combining DNS, DHCP, and IPAM into a single solution with centralized management and visibility.

Use Cases

PeerSpot members shared many different use cases for BlueCat Integrity. A Senior Consultant at a tech services company fields sixteen OS staff who use the solution for segment server management and Integrated Lights Out (ILO) code. A Technology Manager at a tech services company uses BlueCat's Adaptive DNS [BlueCat Integrity] for IP address management, while a Network Architect at a financial services firm leverages BlueCat for IPAM, which is managing their address space, along with DNS and DHCP services.

"We use BlueCat Integrity to have visibility into our address management," said an IT Engineer at a construction company. An insurance company primarily uses BlueCat Integrity for DNS purposes internally. According to their Senior Cloud Engineer, "We deployed BlueCat Integrity using a hybrid model because many of our applications are finance-related. This product helps us to secure those applications."



Reliable

#1 – Stability and Security

The essential nature of DNS, DCHP, and IPAM put a premium on stability and security for a DDI solution. If any one of its component parts goes down, the entire organization may be unable to function. For this reason, customers selected BlueCat over competitors due to its superior stability and security. "We also use Infoblox, but Adaptive DNS [BlueCat Integrity] is more stable and secure," said the tech services company's Technology Manager.



Network Architect
at a financial services firm with
10,001+ employees



“We’ve pretty much used, or looked at, every other product out there. One of the better things about Integrity is that the underlying code it uses is an ISC DNS and DHCP.”

[Read review »](#)

Similarly, a Senior Information Security Engineer at Schoolcraft College, a university with more than 500 employees, said that his school had previously used SolarWinds IPAM, “but it was terrible, so we switched to BlueCat, which we have found to be more reliable.” For the insurance company’s Senior Cloud Engineer, who evaluated several options, BlueCat Integrity “was one of the most reliable options in terms of both security and administration.”

#2 – Open Standards

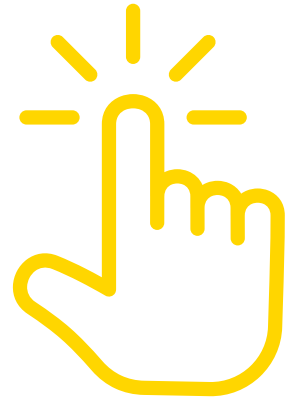
The integrative nature of DDI favors vendors that rely on open standards, versus those that create their own proprietary code. As the financial services firm’s Network Architect explained, “We’ve pretty much used, or looked at, every other product out there. One of the better things about Integrity is that the underlying code it uses is an ISC DNS and DHCP. It’s not like some of the other vendors that have created their own version of DNS.”

This user went on to offer an example. Infoblox, he said, “has its own [code] and things are not OPEN standard.” And, “Even Microsoft’s DNS is not OPEN standard.” He recognized that these approaches enable network managers to do things that are not possible in a standards-based BIND DNS environment. He added, though, “At least with BIND, you know what you’re working with.” He had a similar comment for BT Diamond IP, which created their own BIND version instead of using the standard. He remarked, “What happens there is that you get vulnerabilities on their product, whereas with BIND, it’s an open standard and you’re going to get vulnerabilities and CVEs corrected sooner than later.”

#3 - Ease of Use

BlueCat stood out from competitors for its ease of use. Network operations and security are challenging enough workloads. A solution that performs well but doesn't require a steep learning curve or cause hassles will earn well-deserved praise from users. As the insurance company's Senior Cloud Engineer shared, "Originally, we used Microsoft DNS, but it had many problems. We had to purchase and constantly monitor many tools with Microsoft. If we skipped an option during configuration, we would continue to receive error messages, and we would have to check the event logs to keep track of those errors. BlueCat Integrity is very easy to manage, so we chose it."

A DNS Lead/Senior Windows Engineer at a tech consulting company with more than 5,000 employees evaluated Men&Mice and Infoblox for DDI. BlueCat won out based on its ease of use and ease of installation. A Network Engineer at a healthcare company had also previously used Infoblox. "Compared to Infoblox, I found BlueCat easier to use," he said.



Easy to Manage



Omar C.
Cybersecurity & Privacy
Executive at Access Quality



“BlueCat Integrity has an intuitive interface, making it easy to use.”

[Read review »](#)

When this user worked with Infoblox, he characterized his networking experience as not great. He elaborated, saying, “It felt more difficult for me to use, but when I came to this organization, they had BlueCat, and it was totally different. It was the same concept but a different platform. I didn’t have any difficulty with it. I was able to jump in and use it.”

Other notable comments about BlueCat’s ease of use included:

- **“It’s easy to use and easy to understand.** It’s pretty user-friendly. I like its user interface. It’s pretty easy to use once you get around it. With the new version of the software, they changed the whole interface. From version 9.1 to 9.3, it’s a totally different interface. The new interface is even better.” - Network Engineer at a healthcare company
- “BlueCat Integrity has an **intuitive interface**, making it easy to use.” - Cybersecurity & Privacy Executive at a small tech services company
- “BlueCat Integrity is **user-friendly**, thanks to its powerful API. Our technicians appreciate the solution’s excellent graphical interface, which makes it easy to comprehend.” - Project Manager at a construction company with over 1,000 employees
- “BlueCat Integrity is easy to use for end users and **not difficult for administrators**. I have used much more difficult solutions that are not directly related to DDI. For end users, the solution is intuitive on a daily basis.” - Systems Engineer at a pharma/biotech company



Donatas B.

Project Manager at a
construction company with
1,001-5,000 employees



“BlueCat Integrity is user-friendly, thanks to its powerful API. Our technicians appreciate the solution’s excellent graphical interface, which makes it easy to comprehend.”

[Read review »](#)

Ease of integration also surfaced as a quality that BlueCat users admired. The financial services firm’s Network Architect put it like this: “We are integrating with more and more tools every day, not with a canned solution, but through an open API solution where we’re creating calls and writing to Integrity, back and forth.”

ServiceNow integration was important to the tech consulting company’s DNS Lead/Senior Windows Engineer. “It’s a great integration,” he said. “We’re expanding on those out-of-the-box tools with which integrations are provided. So, we’re able to expand our capabilities.”

Flexibility is a related aspect of the solution that drew attention from users. “It’s flexible,” a Senior Product Manager DDI & Network Automation at a manufacturing company simply said. “The tool can certainly be customized to no end.” A Cybersecurity & Privacy Executive at a small tech services company concurred, saying, “BlueCat Integrity is highly flexible. It can be used in a wide range of situations and offers numerous options for integration.” As a result, his team has been able to accelerate the solution’s implementation and reduce the amount of time they spend on DNS management.

#4 - Visibility

Managing DDI requires seeing what's happening on the network, on the DNS server, DHCP, and IPAM. The better the visibility, the more the solution is preferred. In the words of the tech services company's Cybersecurity & Privacy Executive, "We previously used Azure DNS and switched to BlueCat Integrity because it offered better visibility into the IPs." He felt that BlueCat's most valuable feature was IPAMs, "which provide visibility into all the IP addresses on the network."

The construction company's IT Engineer likewise shared that they had originally used Microsoft for DHCP, DNS, and IP address management, but, "We have since migrated to BlueCat Integrity for better visibility into our address management. Multiple people are able to manage using BlueCat Integrity."

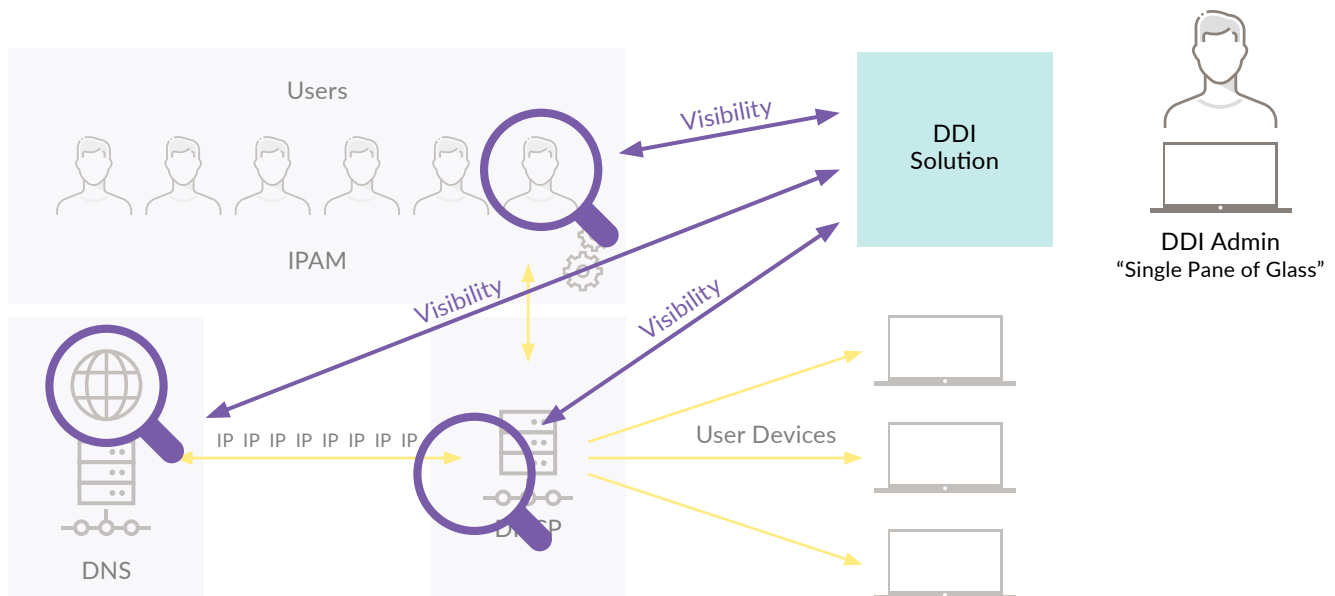


Figure 2 - A DDI solution should provide simultaneous visibility into DNS, DHCP, and IPAM - offering admins a single pane of glass.

#5 – Centralized Management/Single Source of Truth

The essence of DDI is a unification of management of DNS, DHCP, and IPAM. The better a DDI solution can operationalize that unification, the more effective it will be. PeerSpot members acknowledged that this aspect of the BlueCat solution was a driver of preference versus competing offerings. The manufacturing company’s Senior Product Manager said, “The main reason for the adoption of this product was to have one centralized management system. That was one of the key drivers. Also, we wanted visibility and stability for having that single source of truth.”

Schoolcraft College selected BlueCat after evaluating SolarWinds and ManageEngine “because it offered an all-in-one IPAM, DNS, and DHCP solution. We received some good recommendations from consultants, and we made our decision based on reviews,” as their Senior Information Security Engineer said. He then stated, “Everyone who had used it seemed to like it.”

Several users praised BlueCat for proving a “single source of truth,” which is how the manufacturing company’s Senior Product Manager characterized the solution. He then said, “We automate against it. We use APIs against it due to the fact that it is where the data is.” The healthcare company’s Network Engineer similarly noted, “It provides a single pane of glass view of our IP address space.”



Single-Pane-of-Glass Visibility



Senior Cloud Engineer
at a insurance company with
10,001+ employees



“We deployed BlueCat Integrity using a hybrid model because many of our applications are finance-related. This product helps us to secure those applications.”

[Read review »](#)

This user went into detail, sharing how “the whole organization depends on it for IP address assignments. We have a big network.” Specifically, he remarked, “To assign an IP, I don’t want to go to different servers or give the wrong IP. I can just go to [BlueCat] Address Manager, which gives me a complete view of everything. Even while troubleshooting, I don’t have to jump through two different things or four different things to solve a problem.”

Consolidation was another area where centralized management emerged as a feature that favored BlueCat. A manufacturing company, for example, consolidated tools and applications with BlueCat, per their Senior Product Manager. He also said, “Through an API and having the data there we were able to build some tools that have allowed us to get rid of a lot of other tools.”

“It has helped to consolidate tools. We are currently doing consolidation,” said the healthcare company’s Network Engineer. “We are integrating with another company, and in addition to DHCP, we are about to get BlueCat for DNS as well. We are in the process of working with BlueCat to move DNS from AD [Microsoft Active Directory] to BlueCat.”

Other Selection Factors

Beyond the five main factors driving preference of BlueCat over alternatives, users mentioned several additional aspects of the solution that they liked. For instance, some customers simply felt that BlueCat gave them “peace of mind,” which is a commodity in relatively rare supply in IT and security circles. The tech services company’s Cybersecurity & Privacy Executive observed, “Compared to Microsoft, BlueCat Integrity is an enterprise DNS solution that provides us with peace of mind and enables us to concentrate on other tasks without experiencing any failures.” The insurance company’s Senior Cloud Engineer had a comparable point of view, saying, “We have peace of mind because we no longer receive major incident calls late at night or early in the morning.”

Reduced Downtime

Avoiding downtime is one of the main reasons companies invest in a DDI solution in the first place. BlueCat delivers on this front, with the manufacturing company’s Senior Product Manager sharing, for example, “The solution helped our organization reduce downtime. Compared to where it was before, even if it’s a very theoretical question, I’d say the downtime has decreased.”



Senior Cloud Engineer
at a insurance company with
10,001+ employees



**“We have peace of mind
because we no longer
receive major incident
calls late at night or
early in the morning.”**

[Read review »](#)



Senior Product Manager DDI
& Network Automation
at a manufacturing company
with 10,001+ employees



“The solution helped
our organization
reduce downtime.”

[Read review »](#)

An insurance company offers an example. As their Senior Cloud Engineer said, “When we used Windows DNS, we had many issues, such as the server hanging occasionally. We had to reboot the entire server during production hours, which caused major incidents. BlueCat Integrity has minimized these incidents, and we now have zero downtime. Nothing has happened on our site since we implemented it. All major incident calls have been eliminated.”

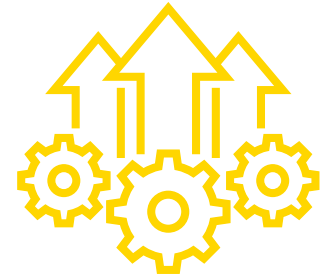
Reduced Human Error

People make mistakes when administering complex networks. If the mistake involves DNS, DHCP, or IPAM, it can result in an outage or security risk exposure. For this reason, BlueCat users were pleased that the solution had the effect of reducing human error. The healthcare company’s Network Engineer spoke to this need when he said, “It [BlueCat] has helped reduce human error, especially if you’re looking at it from the perspective of having one pane. You don’t want IP conflicts. If I was using two different platforms for my big organization, it’s possible that I could assign the same IP to something else, and then there would be a conflict. It reduces errors in that sense because you have one Address Manager that provides a complete view of the organization. If I assign an IP, it’s one IP that we know about.”



**Reduction in
Human Errors**

A tech consulting company with more than 5,000 employees, had been using spreadsheets and notepads to maintain its DNS records prior to deploying BlueCat. For their DNS Lead/Senior Windows Engineer, this led to situations where, as he termed it, “We’ve had machines being built that are stepping on top of other machines. We’ve had production outages, whereas now with the IPAM capability and the real-time view into it, all those mistakes are pretty much gone. We don’t have any overlap. We don’t see any other machines taking over IP space from other machines. That’s pretty much gone.”



**Increases
Productivity**

Freed Up Staff Time

Done right, a DDI solution creates efficiencies in network management and security. This translates into staff having more time to do other work, as the insurance company’s Senior Cloud Engineer found. He said, “It helps us free up staff time. With our old DNS system, we had to engage all of our staff many times, such as at midnight, during the day, or operations. This took a lot of time for us to process the product queue. For example, if I wanted to send someone on training, I had to cancel it because of these issues.”

Schoolcraft College’s Senior Information Security Engineer put a number on BlueCat’s impact on his staff. The solution freed up around 20 percent of his staff’s time, making it easier and faster for them to manage IP addresses. One reason for this positive outcome was that the school did not have an IPAM system previously, or even use Windows. He said, “We now only use Windows for DNS integration, so having a reliable source for IP address management has been helpful.”

Conclusion

A DDI solution makes network management and security a more efficient and less stressful workload by merging DNS, DHCP, and IPAM. The right DDI solution will help network management teams become more productive while offering peace of mind. It will also reduce the chance of system outages and security risk exposure.

The maturing of the DDI category has meant that customers now have a range of options. What makes for the right DDI solution? For BlueCat Integrity customers, stability was one of the most important factors, which makes sense given the criticality of DDI to network functionality. Open standards mattered too, as they made it easier to operate the DDI solution and integrate it with other systems. Ease of use and visibility were key criteria for selecting a DDI solution, as was centralized management and the ability to deliver a “single pane of glass” and “single source of truth” user experience. Taken together, these features comprise what differentiates BlueCat from the rest. BlueCat’s embodiment of these characteristics shows that the solution has earned the respect and trust of its users.

About PeerSpot

PeerSpot is the authority on enterprise technology buying intelligence. As the world's fastest growing review platform designed exclusively for enterprise technology, with over 3.5 million enterprise technology visitors, PeerSpot enables 97 of the Fortune 100 companies in making technology buying decisions. Technology vendors understand the importance of peer reviews and encourage their customers to be part of our community. PeerSpot helps vendors capture and leverage the authentic product feedback in the most comprehensive way, to help buyers when conducting research or making purchase decisions, as well as helping vendors use their voice of customer insights in other educational ways throughout their business.

www.peerspot.com

PeerSpot does not endorse or recommend any products or services. The views and opinions of reviewers quoted in this document, PeerSpot websites, and PeerSpot materials do not reflect the opinions of PeerSpot.

About Vendor

BlueCat is the Adaptive DNS company. The company's mission is to help organizations deliver reliable and secure network access from any location and any network environment. To do this, BlueCat re-imagined DNS. The result – Adaptive DNS – is a dynamic, open, secure, scalable, and automated DDI management platform that supports the most challenging digital transformation initiatives, like adoption of hybrid cloud and rapid application development. BlueCat's DDI management platform was recognized as a market leader and outperformer in the 2022 and 2023 GigaOm Radar reports that evaluated all the vendors offering DDI management. The company is headquartered in Toronto and New York and has additional offices throughout the world, including in Germany, Iceland, Japan, Singapore, Serbia, and the United Kingdom. Learn more at bluecat.com.