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Industrial supply company improves network efficiency, traffic control and disaster recovery

SUMMARY

As one of Infoblox's first customers, this American industrial supply company has served customers across the globe for nearly 100 years.

Today, the company has grown into a multi-billion-dollar manufacturing, retail, distribution and services organization. It supplies more than 1.5 million maintenance, repair and operating products in 35 categories through over 350 locations in North America and exports its products to more than 120 countries in APAC, EMEA and LATAM. The company further provides services through a network of licensed emergency, energy, environmental, facility, health, inventory management, procurement and safety providers. Based on its growing global sales operations, product and service portfolios, the company needed to modernize and integrate its network operations, ensure high availability (HA) and consistency and migrate services to the cloud. It leveraged its long-standing partnership with Infoblox to address three key priorities: 1) refresh its on-premises and virtual networks to improve automation, efficiency and disaster recovery (DR); 2) reduce costs, overhead and maintenance; and 3) secure and simplify operations to provide a reliable, connected network experience at its distributed locations.

WHY CHANGE:

Modernize technology, reduce costs and secure and simplify operations

In a relationship dating back decades, the company had installed, managed and upgraded Infoblox solutions many times. By 2022, its latest NIOS DNS, DHCP and IPAM solution was still reliable but had been in place for more than six years. It needed to be modernized and unified to accommodate global expansion and standardize DNS for consistency across on-premises, virtualized and public cloud networks. Cost reduction was a key priority

> " We need global server load balancing, right? That's DNS. Why put a DNS-based solution on an F5 Local Traffic Management box? DNS belongs with DNS. Firewall belongs with firewall. Doesn't it make sense to use an integrated DTC GSLB DNS solution? And Infoblox just works, without a lot of care and feeding or support. It's reliable, efficient and makes our jobs easier. That's why we stay with Infoblox."
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> **Global Industrial Supply Company Network Admin**

for lowering capital and operating expenses (CapEx/OpEx), network management overhead and maintenance. Given its size, complexity and global footprint, the company set a goal to simplify operations and deliver reliable, consistent, resilient and secure core network services on-premises and across global hybrid and public cloud networks.

WHY NOW:

Restructuring, securing and optimizing a lower-cost global platform

Enterprise Modernization. The firm asked Infoblox for help with modernizing, "right-sizing" and consolidating its network after relocating and reducing some of its HA office locations to save costs. Critical operations (e.g., call and distribution centers) were retained as local on-premises deployments. The organization also managed multiple environments and grids for its production and SAP environments. It further ran regional operations on BlueCat Networks, so by consolidating onto a single Infoblox platform, it could integrate and centralize operations for consistency through one Infoblox control platform.

Cost Reduction—Load Balancing. Saving CapEx and OpEx was a top priority. The company's F5 load balancing contract was up for renewal, providing an opportunity to save significant money by downsizing the existing F5 footprint. Its IT team understood DNS. It knew it could use global server load balancing to cut costs and automate global network traffic management, application availability and DR. By organizing services categorically (e.g., DNS with DNS; firewall with firewall), it could replace the F5 Local Traffic Management platform with DNS Traffic Control (DTC) and expand global traffic management across on-premises, virtualized and public cloud environments. The IT team liked DTC's support for global availability and topology load balancing, its extensible attributes (customizable metatags), rich API and integrated reporting. Rather than following the F5 workflow by isolating data centers and manually pointing IP addresses to the F5 DR site, the company could save time, effort and cost by using DTC to automate DR with far less IT intervention. At the same time, DTC provided an intuitive, easy-to-use interface, network visualizations, real-time pre-production testing and templated and customizable reporting. It also offered quick, license-based deployment and scalability without adding hardware to cover multiple regions including the company's AWS public cloud environment.

IPAM Integration Efficiency. With limited IT resources, network automation and orchestration for cost reduction and efficiency were also essential for global operations. The IT team wanted better visibility and control of IPAM across virtual machines in its private cloud environment. DevOps and testing teams also needed to add and remove records for pre-production verification and to provision and deprovision instances, so the team leveraged Infoblox's templated integrations with VMware, Ansible and Terraform to improve control, efficiency and time to value.

Network Visibility. Integrated visibility was another key priority, especially to improve protection against malware-infected clients and rapid detection and mitigation of zero-day DNS attacks. The IT team specified query logging to gain forensic visibility into its rich network data. It also needed network dashboard performance monitoring, audit, compliance and executive reporting. Automating and enhancing existing security solutions with deep visibility into response policy zones and threat feed data improved early detection. Plus, immediately sharing contextual DDI data and threat

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CUSTOMER PROFILE

- A global industrial supply company providing more than 1.5 million products through over 300 U.S. and 50 Canadian locations, industrial services to a broad network of licensed providers and exports to more than 120 countries in APAC, EMEA and LATAM

WHY CHANGE

The company had three priorities:

1. refresh its on-prem and virtual networks for automation, efficiency and disaster recovery;

2. reduce costs, overhead and maintenance; and

3. secure and simplify operations to provide a consistent connected network experience at its distributed locations.

WHY NOW

- The organization needed to modernize operations, support consistency and lower costs. It removed BlueCat and F5 to standardize on Infoblox for reliable, redundant DNS/DHCP services and centralized visibility for error checking, audit and security. It needed expanded load balancing and disaster recovery. Security was also a priority for malware, zero-day DNS attack detection and mitigation, plus DDI, ecosystem and security data threat sharing.

WHY INFOBLOX

- Infoblox provides data center and hybrid cloud reliability, consistent, centralized management, DR and network security across distributed locations at lower cost to empower growth and scalability to meet operational objectives.

SOLUTIONS

- NIOS DDI with failover, DTC, R&A for query logging, BloxOne Threat Defense, Threat Insight and Ecosystem

indicators with security teams and the ecosystem provided faster response and remediation. Infoblox solved these challenges with BloxOne Threat Defense Business, Threat Insight, Security Ecosystem and Reporting and Analytics solutions.

Figure 1 shows the company's architecture before the upgrade. An architectural review and analysis by Infoblox Solution Architects helped identify network challenges and inefficiencies and showed how the company could optimize its network to improve workflows and lower costs. Figure 2 highlights the improvements, including the consolidated replacement of BlueCat and F5 services onto Infoblox. It shows the addition of DNS-based DTC global load balancing for traffic management and DR. BloxOne Threat Defense Business was also added to improve efficiency, lower costs and deliver a secure, resilient and consistent global network experience.
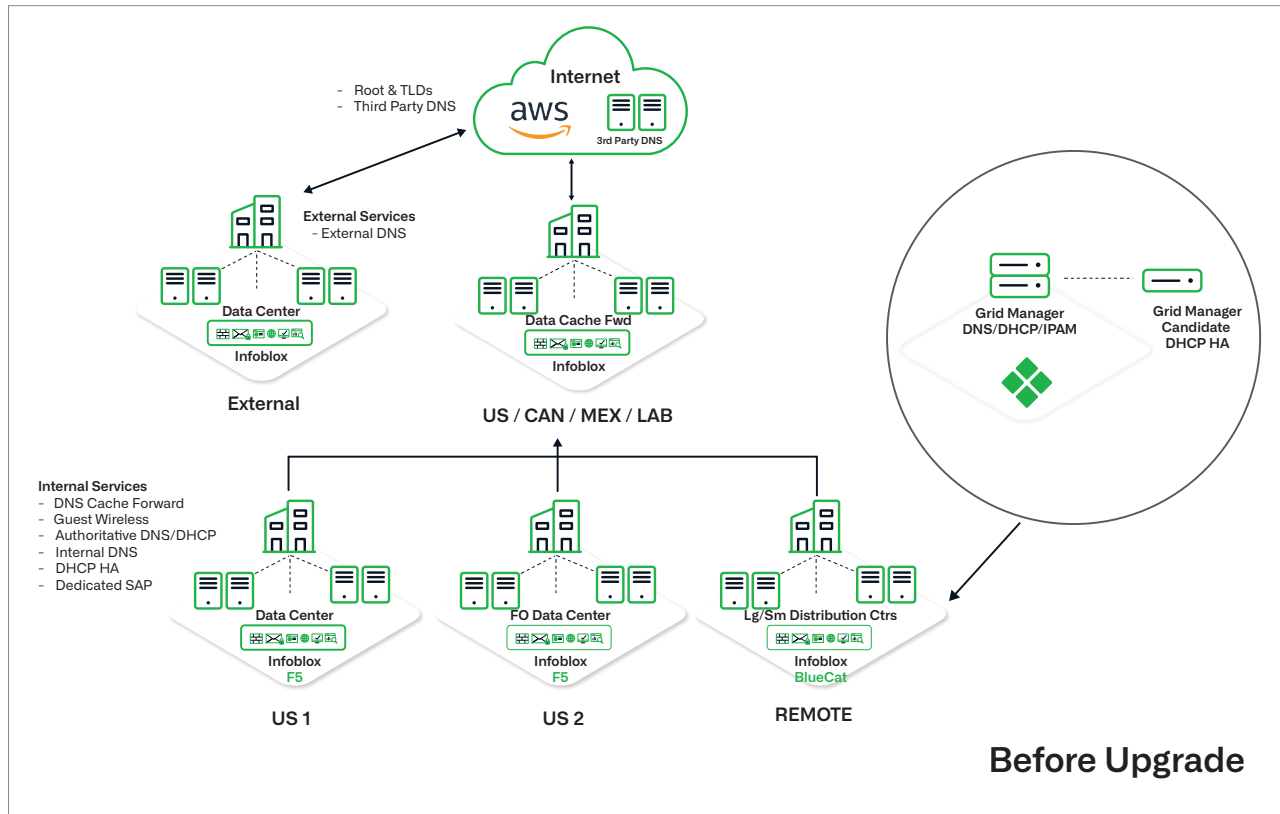

Figure 1: Global industrial supply company before the Infoblox upgrade

Pain Points

- Outdated network, inconsistency and inefficiency
- Disaster recovery (DR)
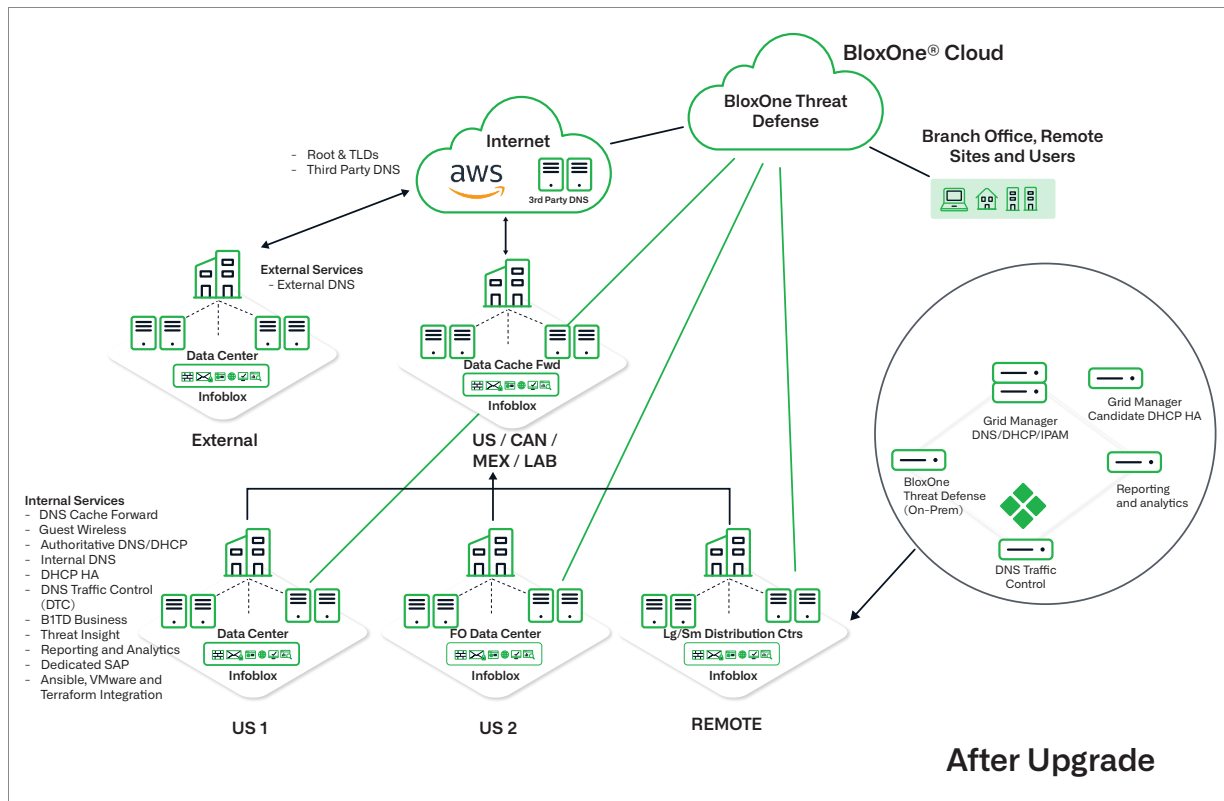- Global complexity
- High operating costs

Figure 2: Global industrial supply company after the Infoblox upgrade

Benefits

- Centralized DDI
- DHCP HA and redundancy
- Consistent, secure DNS user experience
- Operational efficiency
- Global traffic management & DR
- Lower costs

WHY INFOBLOX:

Reliability, hybrid network solutions and lower costs

The organization continued its decades-long relationship with Infoblox for mission-critical network services. By modernizing its network with Infoblox, the team enhanced the firm's data center, hybrid and public cloud reliability with consistent, centralized management, DR and network security across distributed locations. Most importantly, it helped the company lower costs and improve efficiency as it unified network visibility, automation and control and secured network operations to empower growth and continue its mission of serving industrial customers globally for many years.

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Infoblox unites networking and security to deliver unmatched performance and protection. Trusted by Fortune 100 companies and emerging innovators, we provide real-time visibility and control over who and what connects to your network, so your organization runs faster and stops threats earlier.

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