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Insurance giant Achmea accelerates their digital transformation with Elastic Observability

an atos business

At a glance

Proactively fix system performance issues

Achmea uses Elastic Observability to analyze its technical infrastructure and proactively resolve issues for 12,000,000 customers and 16,000 employees.

Maximize return on digital investments

As Achmea invests in innovative cloud and digital solutions, Elastic Observability is used to maintain optimal performance and help support ROI from these tools.

Leverage machine learning

Achmea uses Elastic machine learning capabilities to detect anomalies in system messages from applications, including data processing on ingest, built-in algorithms, and Data Visualizer for faster anomaly detection and to identify data fields that support machine learning. Using Elastic machine learning as an early warning system reduces Achmea's MTTR.

Overview

One of the largest suppliers of financial services in the Netherlands, Achmea, founded in 1811, started as an insurance business to protect farmers from mishaps such as flooding and crop failures. Today, the company offers a wide range of services, including car, structure, and health insurance. Achmea has 16,000 employees worldwide and serves around 12,000,000 customers.

> We can detect and resolve issues far faster than before. Elastic gives us a crystal-clear view of our integration systems, which means that we can deliver optimum performance for employees and customers at all times.
>
> **Marc Rekers, Project Coordinator Integration IIB and API Gateway, Achmea**

> We recommended Elastic to Achmea because it provides intuitive data visualization with Kibana and navigation including purpose-built interfaces that let users interact with data in a flexible way. The tools also allow Achmea to filter logs for a certain application on a specific day. It all means better observability and ultimately better system performance for employees and customers.
>
> **Mark Niemeijer, Consultant & Lead Architect Elastic Stack Atos**

Challenge

Smooth integration between these systems is crucial for day-to-day business operations and to best serve customers. For instance, when a customer logs in to their account, the customer relationship management (CRM) and policy systems must communicate well with each other. If customers can't access their information, or if the system is slow, unhappy customers and lost business can result.

Supporting the digital transformation of the business

To identify and resolve these types of issues, Achmea previously deployed a series of custom-developed observability systems that aggregated and inspected telemetry data. But over time, these tools struggled to keep up with the ever increasing volume of data, which today generates 3,000 systems messages per second and two terabytes of storage per day. The observability challenge increased with deployments of additional technologies as well as the increased workload caused by the shift to remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic. The growth of multiple customer-facing channels such as web, mobile, and chat added even more to the complexity.

Marc Rekers, Project Coordinator Integration IIB and API Gateway at Achmea, sums up the situation, "Our previous observability solutions were under-equipped to manage our growing and changing environment. We wanted something more streamlined that could also scale to meet message and data volumes."

Solution

Detailed data insights that resolve issues fast

Rekers called on Achmea's long-term IT service provider Atos to collaborate on a solution. Following an analysis of Achmea's requirements, Atos recommended the Elastic Cloud Enterprise SaaS implementation. This includes the Elastic Search Platform and a Logstash data events pipeline. Achmea also uses Kibana for data visualization, including Lens, dashboards and the Discover application for fast, detailed data insights.

Results

With Elastic, Achmea can quickly and accurately search entire databases for a specific piece of information, such as a customer relationship number or policy number. It has also added several metadata fields to these types of system messages. This includes the integration, server, and platforms associated with the message as well as performance times for fine-tuned observability. Every new service and integration that the team develops will be tracked using Elastic.

If an interface or integration creates an issue, the team can quickly investigate, analyze, and monitor performance. We can count the volume and type of messages that flow around and resolve bottlenecks where they impact performance.

– Marc Rekers, Project Coordinator Integration IIB and API Gateway, Achmea

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