

Telegraph Optimizes Media Delivery for On-time Printing with Scalable Load Balancing



telegraphmediagroup

BACKGROUND

The Telegraph Media Group is one of the UK's leading media companies. It produces two newspapers, The Daily Telegraph and The Sunday Telegraph, with an extensive online presence. The company launched Europe's first daily online newspaper in 1994. Thousands of images flow through The Telegraph's photo desk every day at all hours. The images are sent by photographers around the world, and are often time-sensitive. When traditional load balancers failed or were too slow, the company looked for a new solution which could keep pace with breaking news. The Avi software load balancer replaced legacy appliances across two data centers and supports business-critical internal applications.

CHALLENGES

James Sharp, The Telegraph's senior infrastructure engineer, discussed the challenges that led to seeking Avi Networks as the solution:

- **Need for better load balancing infrastructure.** "Our load balancer failed not long after I joined. Our IT systems are designed to help get the newspaper printed on time with thousands of pictures coming through every day. All of the transactions need to be load balanced and our boxes were very old and the pictures were coming through slow."
- **Need for better visibility and troubleshooting.** The Telegraph team found that troubleshooting basic application issues would take them more than 30 minutes on average requiring them to collate all the information and write it down. The team had to take screenshots of everything and copy them into a log file before they could analyze what was going on and see where the bottlenecks were.

BENEFITS

- **Elastic scale.** The Telegraph needed something more scalable and user-friendly to provide application services. The team was looking to replace hardware-based solutions for every environment. James says, "We are a cloud-first company trying to get rid of as much tin as possible. We have a large virtual machine infrastructure. We didn't want to buy more tin and Avi was a perfect fit."

INDUSTRY

- Publishing

PROBLEM

- Traditional load balancers failed or were too slow. They could not handle the thousands of photos editors needed to access for publishing a print and digital newspaper.
- Concerned about application security and viruses.
- Didn't have reliable way to track performance and find bottlenecks.

WHY AVI

- Software-based load balancing for fast, scalable, and secure application experience.
- Ability to manage load balancing from a single, centralized controller.
- Less cost than traditional solutions.

RESULTS

- Reliable and quick load balancing for thousands of photos on daily basis.
- Saved time and resources when health checks could be done in minutes. Improved ability to troubleshoot and resolve problems.
- Telegraph's IT team switched to Avi seamlessly, given Avi's ease-of-use and administrator-friendly interface.

- **Application Insights.** James was impressed by the amount of data that he could get from Avi's application performance insights. The real-time insights that the team was able to get from the Avi console and the ability to get application health scores with just a few clicks simplified application troubleshooting. He says, "we could quickly see what the issues are and what's wrong, which makes it much easier to resolve issues."
- **Security and compliance.** James says, "I am concerned about security and viruses out there. Thousands of photos come into our picture bank every day. We need to know they are safe files. All those photos also have to be sorted because some require special licensing. Avi load balancers handle the security and they make the sorting of photo files easier for compliance."
- **Seamless transition.** The Telegraph team was able to run tests and get great support from the Avi team. The team completed their proof of value with Avi Networks, they were ready and were up within seconds.
- **User friendly.** James mentions, "Avi is a software-defined load balancer that is click-and-go. It is brilliant for setting things up. Avi is also great for creating specific configurations and it is easy and straightforward. I was struck by how easy it is to alter that configuration without having to reinvent the wheel."

NEXT STEPS

The Telegraph is looking to deploy applications across multi-cloud environments. Avi's multi-cloud capability with central management is of interest to James and his team. James says, "It's a benefit we never had before and I can see the way Avi will scale is superior to any other solution."

