

INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT

Using Data Optimization for IT Modernization

An interview with Mark Gaydos, Chief Marketing Officer at Nlyte Software, and Justin Williams, Federal Account Manager at BMC Software

It would be an understatement to say that data optimization is big in government right now. As agencies struggle to accomplish their mission with decreasing budgets and staffs, leaders are constantly looking for solutions to do more with less. By closing and consolidating under-performing datacenters, government can cut spending on underutilized infrastructure and increase efficiency with fewer datacenters to run and manage.

In an interview with GovLoop, Mark Gaydos, Chief Marketing Officer at Nlyte Software, and Justin Williams, Federal Account Manager at BMC Software, discussed the challenges of the growing number of datacenters, the benefits of data optimization, and solutions that can help agencies make the most of their data. Nlyte and BMC have partnered to offer enterprise solutions that help optimize datacenters as well as speed datacenter migration.

“There has been enormous growth in datacenters across federal agencies as well as data and applications,” Gaydos said.

Specifically, the number of federal datacenters grew from 1,000 in 2010 to close to 10,000 in 2014. Much of this growth can be attributed to growing citizen demand for real-time access to government digital services.

“With constituents becoming used to accessible, reliable and on-demand services from every other sector, government has to become more efficient in how they deliver their services,” Williams said.

Gaydos and Williams emphasized that if you want to better understand the importance of data efficiency in government, you need to look at a key piece of data legislation. Specifically, the Data Center Optimization Initiative (DCOI) requires

agencies to transition to more efficient infrastructures, such as cloud services and inter-agency shared services while reporting on their datacenter strategies.

“The DCOI helps drive agencies away from the manual collection of data and more toward systematic, automated collection,” Williams added. “This reduces human error, since you’re not relying on individuals to manually collect the data.”

Since the DCOI also highlights cost savings as a goal, more and more agencies are looking to Data Center Infrastructure Management (DCIM) tools as part of their solutions. “DCIM allows you to optimize the physical space you have,” Gaydos said. “You can also identify ‘zombie servers’ or those that have no function and consolidate accordingly.”

To put the numbers in perspective, the government spent approximately \$5.4 billion on physical datacenters in fiscal year 2014. DCOI’s goals are to reduce datacenter spending by \$270 million in 2016, by \$460 million in 2017 and by \$630 in 2018 for a total of \$1.36 billion over the next three years.

DCIM tools like Nlyte Enterprise Edition for BMC Software automates the management, processes, policies and dependencies that surround datacenter infrastructure. Such solutions can help reduce the cost for resources (such as power, servers and service contracts) while increasing the efficiency of the people who manage the actual datacenters. This allows agencies to focus on other priorities and mission needs and respond to such demands faster, without having to worry about what’s going on in their data infrastructures.

Gaydos and Williams recommended that when looking for DCIM solutions, agen-

cies should evaluate vendors by looking for comprehensive solutions that also help agencies comply with the DCOI.

“Your vendors should help you cover all the areas: power monitoring, environmental considerations and virtualization,” Gaydos said. “You want the one that covers all the DCOI initiatives, allows you to manage processes better and has the functionality you need.”

To achieve these results, look for a DCIM solution that allows you to optimize your datacenter with:

- **Workflow management:** Execute changes more efficiently down to the main data center.
- **Reports and dashboards:** Automate the measurement of your data center operations.
- **Asset management:** Know what you have and where, and optimize your tech cycles.
- **Connection management:** Avoid downtime due to human error with power and network visualization.
- **Virtualization management:** Link your visualization layer to your physical and logical layers.

Nlyte for BMC Software demonstrates how DCIM solutions can also maximize the use of datacenter space, available air condition and electrical power facilities. This allows for ease of use without heavy professional services or extensive user training, saving costs for your agency and time for your IT staff.

The increasing demands of constituents, like real-time updates from government and easy access to public digital services, require agencies to rethink their data optimization strategies. What’s certain is that, when it comes to datacenters, less is more.