

Naviga Relies on Liquidware Stratusphere UX and FlexApp to Deliver Exceptional User Experience for AWS WorkSpaces

"A large customer that we recently brought on to AWS WorkSpaces experienced some performance issues. With Stratusphere UX, we were able to verify and identify the issues...Users now get the best possible experience from our hosted solution."

*— Joe Bewley,
Senior Advanced Windows Engineer, Naviga*

Overview

Naviga is the leading provider of software and services powering media-rich industries. Their Content Engagement Platform enables companies to create, enrich, deliver and monetize content to manage engagements from end-to-end. With headquarters in Bloomington, MN, and regional offices throughout the world, Naviga serves over 3,200 news media, broadcast, magazine, financial services and corporate clients in 45 countries.

The Challenge

Supporting their customers' 1,600 users on AWS WorkSpaces required Joe Bewley, Naviga's Senior Advanced Windows Engineer, to simplify his Windows management with AWS WorkSpaces.

"Our biggest challenge was delivering applications to users as well as keeping the applications updated. With AWS WorkSpaces, an application update required a lengthy rebuild process with potential downtime for the end-users, but with FlexApp, an application can be updated and then made available to the user through a log off and log on – minimizing the impact to the end-user," commented Mr. Bewley.

"The other challenge we faced was monitoring the AWS WorkSpaces. We have a few fleets of WorkSpaces that need the general metrics monitored – CPU, memory, disk, etc. Those particular metrics aren't made available with the AWS service. This is where Stratusphere UX fits in. We install an agent and have those metrics pushing into a centralized Stratusphere UX deployment for AWS WorkSpaces troubleshooting and performance review."

Organization:

Naviga

AWS WorkSpaces Users:

1,600

Products:

Stratusphere UX™
FlexApp™

The Solution

As an AWS WorkSpaces End User Computing partner, Liquidware was recommended to Mr. Bewley by AWS. Having identified that Liquidware solutions could be the answer to his issues, Mr. Bewley embarked on a proof of concept (PoC).

“We conducted the PoC with one customer and just 12 users to prove we could minimize downtime. The PoC took a few months to hash out all the details and we were extremely grateful to Liquidware in their assistance, as it took some planning to design how and where the FlexApp application packages should be stored, and how to centrally report Stratusphere UX metrics. But getting the rest of the pieces deployed was straight forward.”

The Results

Stratusphere UX provides Mr. Bewley with a benchmark and rating for each user. Currently, with the pandemic situation, there has been some reduction in staff, but even with fewer people, Mr. Bewley is able to fine-tune metrics against an A-F rating within Stratusphere UX and get a quick snapshot of a user’s situation.

“Stratusphere UX has greatly reduced the time to understand and validate a user’s concern. It does a great job of digging into a user’s experience if they’re suffering from a degraded performance, for example. We can quickly narrow down and verify an issue, and it probably saves us, on average, up to an hour per incident.”

“The greatest benefit we get with Stratusphere UX is the ability to monitor and troubleshoot AWS WorkSpaces, it provides a great deal of information and gives us enterprise-grade troubleshooting and monitoring.”

As an example, Mr. Bewley stated, “A large customer that we recently brought on to AWS WorkSpaces was experiencing some performance issues. With Stratusphere UX we were able to quickly verify and identify the issues, which resulted in the users needing to move to the next tier of AWS WorkSpaces. Once there, they were working well. We continue to provide them weekly reports to demonstrate they are getting the best experience possible from our hosted solution.”

From a FlexApp perspective, Mr. Bewley likes its ability to change an app footprint on each AWS WorkSpaces without impacting the users. “To push out an app across a broad group and deliver across multiple end-points, FlexApp is an amazing solution. Our business is quite fragmented in that our customers have varying workloads and apps, so we can’t always package once and push out to many, so I don’t feel we get the full value out of it. But I can see in a, say, University deployment it would be an amazing tool as it’s a highly scalable virtual app.”

Mr. Bewley also recommends contacting Liquidware support should you need them, “Do not hesitate to reach out to Liquidware’s support team. In my experience they have been excellent and responsive. In fact, the whole Liquidware team is excellent!”

In summary, Mr. Bewley says, “Our industry is moving to ‘digital first’ and away from VDI solutions. Working with AWS WorkSpaces and Liquidware means we can provide our media and publishing customers with an enterprise-grade solution that gives the best performance and results for their money.”



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