

CASE STUDY



Service Quality Matters™

Brix Networks Helps Tellme Continually Offer Reliable, Quality Services That Its Clients Rely On

INDUSTRY

Service Provider

ORGANIZATION

Tellme Networks, Inc.®, a Microsoft® subsidiary

BUSINESS PROBLEM

Tellme needed a service assurance solution to constantly monitor the performance, reliability, and quality of its network and services to ensure it continually meets strict service level agreements (SLAs) for its Fortune 500 clients

BRIX SOLUTION

SOFTWARE:

BrixWorx™—Service assurance and performance management software correlation and reporting engine

HARDWARE:

Brix Verifiers—Supports automated testing and live call monitoring

KEY BENEFITS

With automated, scheduled active testing, the Brix System is constantly monitoring and measuring the performance, reliability, and quality of its network and services, as well as monitoring customer specific KPIs to verify SLAs are met.

Tellme Networks, Inc.®, a Microsoft® subsidiary, started by providing a voice-driven information portal to service Fortune 500 companies' call centers. By providing a voice automation assistance platform for customer service systems, Tellme helped these companies improve their customer experiences. Today, Tellme is leveraging this platform and driving over 80 percent of the automated directory assistance (411) calls in the U.S.

Powered by Internet data with a voice interface, Tellme services allow people to simply say what they want and get it. With more than 40 million unique monthly users, Tellme services are now facilitating more than 100 million voice searches from users' wire-line and wireless phones each month. To handle this volume, flexibility, scalability, and reliability are the hallmarks of the Tellme platform.

Core Values Built on Operational Excellence

Tellme's carrier and large enterprise customers depend upon its reliable services for their critical customer-facing voice portals, such as directory assistance, customer service, and e-commerce services. As a result, Tellme faces the constant challenge of maintaining its performance and quality standards and proving it.

"We have a very complicated and distributed network that handles highly sensitive, real-time IP data and voice traffic," said Rich Prillinger, network engineer. "Because our customers rely on our services, we must continually test and ensure the performance and quality of our network and services. Service quality must meet

our customers' expectations, and even more importantly the expectations of their customers."

"The Brix System is an excellent solution for making actual calls along actual routes to determine exactly where a problem maybe occurring, whether its on our network or our customer's network."

To help Tellme with its challenge and achieve operational excellence, the company chose the Brix System service assurance solution from Brix Networks to monitor performance and quality of its network and services. With geographically dispersed data centers, Tellme installed Brix Verifiers at each location and the central site BrixWorx™ software engine to correlate and analyze the collected test data and provide highly detailed actionable information reports.

"Using traditional network management tools, network performance can look good from a router perspective, but there still may be problems," added Prillinger. "The Brix System collects actual service quality data to identify issues that can have a drastic effect on performance and quality."

By placing Brix Verifiers at strategic router locations across its network, Tellme has segmented its network to quickly isolate problems when they are identified by automated, scheduled BrixWorx proactive tests. With BrixWorx, Tellme establishes unique service level agreements (SLAs)

for each individual customer based on key performance indicators (KPIs), such as conversational MOS score, packet loss, latency, delay, and jitter, that matter to them. Tellme uses the Brix System to conduct automated testing every one to five minutes depending on the customer to measure and monitor the KPIs that are critical to assuring specific SLAs.

“The BrixWorx software engine is always collecting data, and provides and stores so many metrics that we use to go back at any point in time to figure out what in the network is causing a certain issue,” stated Prillinger. “Its forensic and troubleshooting capabilities have proven valuable on multiple occasions in our mission to continually deliver high quality and very reliable services.”

Establishing Peering Relationships to Enhance Reliability

Because the performance and quality of Tellme’s directory assistance service has a direct effect on their customer experiences, a majority of Tellme’s carrier customers have chosen to establish bi-directional peering relationships to help ensure service reliability.

“For our carrier clients that have high call volumes and are sensitive to latency issues, the Internet does not provide a reliable enough environment,” said Prillinger. “By establishing direct high-bandwidth peering connections based on SIP and RTP with carriers, we can provide a more reliable service, and better manage and monitor performance and quality with the Brix System.”

Supporting both SIP and RTP, the Brix System makes real calls on the same network segment that both Tellme and its carrier customers operate on. These test calls are placed between Brix Verifiers installed on Tellme’s network and at its customers’ locations. The test metrics are then correlated and analyzed by BrixWorx to report SIP and RTP performance results, and monitor the KPIs that constitute a specific carriers SLA.

Tellme provides the results to its strategic customers via the BrixWorx portal option so that they can verify that Tellme is meeting its SLA. And, in some cases, Tellme’s carrier customers have also purchased their own BrixWorx software engine to generate their own reports to more closely monitor their performance and quality metrics.

“Service performance and quality is so important to us. When people expect a directory assistance call to average about 10–15 seconds, five seconds of dead air time can be extremely detrimental to the user experience,” added Prillinger. “The Brix System is an excellent solution for making actual calls along actual routes to determine exactly where a problem maybe occurring, whether its on our network or our customer’s network.”

Brix Networks helps contribute to Tellme’s reputation for the operational excellence of its network to continually ensure performance, reliability, and quality of its services, as well as tightly monitoring customer KPIs to guarantee strict SLAs.

ABOUT BRIX NETWORKS

Brix Networks is a global provider of converged service assurance solutions that allow the world’s largest service providers and enterprises to offer reliable and high-quality experiences in voice, video, data, and mobile services to their customers, partners, and employees. The company brings a proven heritage of IP expertise unique to the service assurance marketplace, and collaborates closely with its customers and partners to assure the delivery of any IP-based service over any network to any endpoint. For more information, visit www.brixnet.com.

The company also offers selfservice testing portals (www.TestYourIPVideo.com and www.TestYourVoIP.com) that enable users to independently measure the quality they are receiving from their interactive IP-based video and VoIP



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