:MFT MANAGED
FILE
TRANSFER

DOES YOUR MFT NEED A HEALTH CHECK?

5 Reasons to MOT Your MFT

PRODUCED BY

HANDD
BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

INTRODUCTION

Managed File Transfer (MFT) systems are often thought of as the modern incarnation of the humble File Transfer Protocol (FTP). First introduced roughly twenty years ago, they provided many benefits over the archetypal FTP daemon. Security of data at rest, ease of administration, multiple protocols all in one place, user management, the list goes on.

The reality is that an MFT system underpins large scale business operations.

Without the transfer of data that MFT supports, people do not do business and organisations don't make money. It's no longer money making the world go round, it's data!

HANDD have been supporting customers across the globe in their provision, deployment and day-to-day running of these systems for 15 years.

Throughout that time, we have seen MFT deployments of all shapes and sizes.

We've seen the good, the bad and the ugly of the MFT world...

At HANDD we find there are two types of customer:

1. **Customer A –** MFT is neglected, brought in to accomplish a business function. No less and no more. Often running out-of-date versions, on out-of-date hardware and only shown love when something goes wrong or needs addressing, such as a security mandate or move to a new datacentre.

2. **Customer B –** MFT was brought in to accomplish a business function. Word circulates of its capabilities and it spreads through the organisation like a hydra, becoming de facto standard for integration and file movements. Underpinning secure transfers to people and systems, quickly becoming a tier one platform. With that comes risk and reduced appetite for change.

What do both types of customer have in common? They are not maximising their investment in the technologies that they have purchased, and you don't need me to tell you how big of a deal ROI is!

This is just one of the many reasons that HANDD can help you maximise the potential of your MFT estate by running a health check on your behalf. Read on to find out more...

Sam Malkin

Lead Solutions Architect, HANDD Business Solutions

1 THROUGHPUT

Customers put multiple transactions through their MFT platform. We regularly see folks running hundreds of thousands of transfers in, out of and across their business via MFT every single day. The MFT applications will handle this admirably under most circumstances, but naturally with more work comes more stress.

The simple solution is to add more resource to the hardware and hope this fixes any issue. But there could quite easily be bigger troubles ahead meaning expenditure on hardware may not alleviate some of the bottlenecks.

HANDD understand what a healthy MFT application is capable of and how it should look in terms of setup. By conducting a health check on your system, our engineers can make recommendations on how to maximise the throughput of the MFT system to gain performance benefits.

Ahead of just adding more resource which may not be required.

By identifying bottlenecks and providing best practice recommendations, our engineers will provide a report containing guidance on how to maximise the performance of your MFT system.

2 BEST PRACTICE

Something I have heard from multiple customers over the years is "I've configured it, it works, but I'm not an expert". In a nutshell: can you check it is done correctly?

This is something that is more prevalent in complex environments. Where MFT is performing more than point-to-point transfers and is providing a service which is integrating multiple systems and solving many business problems. This is the realm of the automation engine; this is the realm of the workflow!

Workflows, like any kind of programming have no right or wrong, they do have best practices though and through the gained experiences of our engineers over the past decade and a half we can implement those to keep your MFT shipshape and Bristol fashion.

Maybe what you have written is actually using a metaphorical sledgehammer to crack the proverbial nut, or could be more efficient if split into separate modules, used sub routines? Would a monitor be preferable over a trigger? Perhaps this should utilise a loop? Or consider perhaps that the latest version has introduced native connectivity instead of utilising the API calls an ex-colleague wrote over half a decade ago?

HANDD engineers will identify these improvements and provide a recommendations report on implementing changes to configure your systems as efficiently as possible.

3

SECURITY

MFT provides many inherent security benefits over its competitive solutions, however, with those benefits come a raft of configuration settings to deliver this functionality. System Misconfiguration remained the #1 cause of data breaches in 2020, and I do not think that'll be changing any time soon. As systems become more complex, understanding them all and the knock-on effects of altering their configuration is a major risk to an organisation.

MFT systems act as an Ingress and Egress point of your company's network, and they're normally entrusted with moving and manipulating mission-critical information loads.

Understanding the benefits and also the overheads of implementing new security practices such as a new cipher suite, key-based authentication or MFA is not always a simple decision.

HANDD engineers will evaluate the security of your MFT deployment and highlight any quick wins for enabling/disabling security related settings. We will of course also draw your attention to any misconfigured or outdated items which could leave your system exposed to a potential breach.

4

ARCHITECTURE

Is your MFT application still performing the exact same operations as it was when you first installed it?

Chances are things have changed, and maybe you are trying to shoehorn too much onto that original footprint.

As previously mentioned, MFT can turn into a bit of hydra, with a full picture of what is trying to be accomplished by your deployment, engineers are much better placed to recommend where required things like test environments or additional nodes for increased resiliency.

Could adjustments be made to fine tune things like auditing events? How often the system polls its database for example.

Are the database tables approaching a size which could potentially present an issue?

By allowing HANDD engineers to give your system the once over, you can gain vital insight into housekeeping challenges which could safeguard your MFT into the future.

5

MANAGEMENT

In the event of an issue, would your engineers know where to start the triage? Time is of the essence in such scenarios, and when performing diagnostics and gathering the required data to make decisions about a service, just how much noise is there that needs to be waded through?

Disabled users? ROT data? Expired Keys? Expired Certificates? Disabled workflows and resources?

Not having your house in order not only prevents seeing the wood for the trees but can also present security vulnerabilities if not managed using the correct principles, such as least privilege access rights.

Are your users given the correct roles and responsibilities?

Are the right permissions applied on resources, rules, or interfaces?

SUMMARY

More often than not, many of the questions posed above go unnoticed until it is too late. By having HANDD Business Solutions provide an MOT for your MFT you are back in the driving seat when it comes to understanding your infrastructure and the transfers it supports.

For more information please visit www.mftexperts.com or call +44 (0)8456 434 063.

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HANDD Business Solutions (HANDD) is an independent specialist in global data security. Using MFT, Data Classification, DLP and more security technologies, we help organisations around the world to protect the journey of their data, whether in motion or at rest.

With over 60% of our staff dedicated to the MFT business, we've developed a reputation for unrivalled knowledge of the MFT industry.

As one of the longest-standing and largest MFT resellers in Europe, we are uniquely placed to provide expert advice on the benefits and challenges of different solutions within different corporate environments.

HANDD has deployed more than 400 MFT projects in 27 countries since 2006. Our specialist 24-hour helpdesks in the UK and Malaysia resolved more than 2,000 MFT-related support tickets in 2019, and we currently provide MFT support to over 700 organisations around the world.

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