

REPORT REPRINT

Eastbound uses Blue Medora's BindPlane to help solve comprehensive monitoring challenges

NOVEMBER 27 2019

By Nancy Gohring

The small IT services provider has found that using Google's Stackdriver monitoring tool plus Blue Medora's BindPlane allows it to easily collect operations data from both cloud and on-premises environments.

THIS REPORT, LICENSED TO BLUE MEDORA, DEVELOPED AND AS PROVIDED BY 451 RESEARCH, LLC, WAS PUBLISHED AS PART OF OUR SYNDICATED MARKET INSIGHT SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE. IT SHALL BE OWNED IN ITS ENTIRETY BY 451 RESEARCH, LLC. THIS REPORT IS SOLELY INTENDED FOR USE BY THE RECIPIENT AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR RE-POSTED, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, BY THE RECIPIENT WITHOUT EXPRESS PERMISSION FROM 451 RESEARCH.



Introduction

While Google's Stackdriver monitoring tool is best known for the insight it surfaces regarding the performance of workloads running on Google Cloud Platform, a partnership with Blue Medora opens up Stackdriver for use in on-premises environments. Eastbound, a small IT services provider, has found that using Stackdriver plus Blue Medora's BindPlane is the easiest way for it to collect logs and metrics about both cloud and on-premises workloads.

Snapshot

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| COMPANY NAME | Eastbound |
| INDUSTRY | IT services |
| HEAD OFFICE | Jacksonville, Florida |
| KEY SUPPLIER | Blue Medora |

451 TAKE

Small IT services provider Eastbound faced a challenge familiar to companies of all sizes – how to collect operations data from both on-prem and cloud workloads without expending resources better spent on more mission-critical projects. Blue Medora's BindPlane, combined with Google's Stackdriver, helped Eastbound solve the problem. We're seeing other developments in the market emerging to address this challenge of achieving visibility into hybrid environments. In addition to vendors similar to Blue Medora, the continuing development of open source data collection technologies such as OpenTelemetry could help solve related issues around agent management and, for vendors, ease the burden of developing data collection technologies.

Early adopter snapshot

Eastbound delivers a number of services for W&O Supply, a company that offers marine piping, including securing and monitoring applications. To oversee applications running on-prem and in Google cloud, Eastbound turned to Stackdriver for insight into performance and security. However, since Stackdriver is best suited to monitoring cloud performance, Eastbound began to look for other ways to collect performance data about W&O's on-premises workloads. It spent more than \$30,000 on Splunk, but was frustrated by challenges achieving the utility it was looking for. Eastbound also attempted an Elastic Stack implementation, but found it too difficult to use – as a small operation, it couldn't dedicate the resources to develop the required expertise.

That's when Eastbound opened a support ticket with Stackdriver, requesting help with a way to extend Stackdriver's capabilities to on-premises servers. A Stackdriver support engineer directed Eastbound to BindPlane as an option for using Stackdriver to collect metrics and logs from an on-premises environment.

BindPlane, a product developed by Blue Medora, is essentially an integration PaaS for collecting operations data from the many technologies that might be deployed in an IT environment and then passing the data on to third-party monitoring tools. Rather than invest in building integrations in order to collect operations data from the very long list of technologies that customers might use, monitoring vendors like Google Stackdriver can partner with Blue Medora, leaving the work of building those integrations to BindPlane. Because of Stackdriver's partnership with Blue Medora, Eastbound can now collect metrics and logs about W&O's on-premises workloads and pull that data into Stackdriver.

REPORT REPRINT

However, because Stackdriver's focus isn't on on-prem workloads, it doesn't have the dashboards 'out of the box' that provide what Eastbound is looking for. Eastbound worked with an app specialist at W&O who used Google's Data Studio to build dashboards in order to track performance of the on-premises workloads.

Eastbound is currently working on building additional dashboards that would allow drill down into metrics about long-running SQL queries. The goal is to establish 'normal' performance and then discover problems leading to slow queries. Eastbound also wants to pull event logs from BindPlane into Stackdriver, and from there use Google Big Query to look for anomalies. While the custom work required to develop useful dashboards and methods for gleaning intelligence from the operations data is an added step, Eastbound reports that it's a far more efficient use of time and resources compared with previous attempts to use Splunk and the Elastic Stack for a similar implementation.

For W&O, Eastbound is managing about 100 servers total, including some 25 in Google Cloud, and with the vast majority running Windows workloads. Eastbound collects roughly 25,000 events a day, and retains the data indefinitely for compliance purposes.

As an early user of BindPlane, which launched in early 2018, Eastbound has met some speed bumps, although it is happy with the product overall. Eastbound was an alpha user of BindPlane's logging capabilities and helped guide Blue Medora toward improvements in the performance of log collection.

Monitoring all the things

The problem Eastbound faced before it stumbled on BindPlane is not unique. We hear from enterprises that are similarly grappling with collecting all the operations data they need from both cloud and on-premises environments, and doing so in a painless way. Many monitoring vendors tend to be strong in either cloud-native monitoring or more traditional environment monitoring, but most aren't equally strong in both.

BindPlane is positioned to help both vendors and end users with this problem by taking on the work of integrating with the long list of possible technologies that users need to monitor. Streamweaver is another vendor that takes a different approach but allows customers to more easily move operations data between tools, solving issues related to siloed operations data. Startup Cribl is solving for a different problem – reducing costs related to log collection – and allows users to collect logs once and efficiently distribute them to multiple monitoring and data analytics tools.

While, historically, the method of data collection and number of integrations were seen as differentiators by vendors, we expect an increasing standardization here, assuming the enthusiasm behind the OpenTelemetry project continues. The result is that businesses should find it easier to collect operations data across their technology environments, and vendors can shift resources toward developing higher-value capabilities.