



## UCG freed of DNS management headaches

### CHALLENGE

Changes to internal DNS had to be made twice, making admin workload unmanageable

Needed an appliance that could deliver both internal and external DNS

### SOLUTION

1x **DNSBOX** master and 1x failover master

3x **DNSBOX** slaves

### BENEFIT

Intuitive GUI with data validation and automation for simplified management

Slaves give added redundancy and faster DNS resolution

UCG provides much more reliable service as a result

UCG is a portfolio of highly focused business and professional publishing companies providing guidance, information, analysis, data and solutions to over two million clients worldwide. It distributes more than 80 subscription-supported newsletters, guidebooks and other titles, as well as delivering multi-million dollar subscription databases serving the mortgage banking, energy and telecommunications markets. Head-quartered in Gaithersburg, Maryland in the United States it has approximately 1000 employees working from offices across the country.

### A cocktail of DNS headaches

UCG had been considering updating its DNS for a while. "In order to effectively split our DNS servers across physical locations for redundancy we had to make DNS changes twice, once to the corporate firewalls and then again to another set of firewalls in another location," recalled Dan Risher, Network Manager at UCG.

"Any time we needed changes to internal DNS we'd have to make a production firewall change, not really best practice." Making duplicate changes to multiple servers was becoming a serious management headache for Risher's network administrators. And, because firewall changes had to be scheduled outside of normal working hours it was also causing unnecessary delays for his internal customers. When Symantec decided to discontinue the firewall appliance UCG had been using, it forced Risher's hand and his team began investigating alternative appliance based products that could deliver both internal and external DNS.



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### Lightening the load on administrators

UCG selected one high performance **DNSBOX300** master and three **DNSBOX200** slave appliances. All changes are made via a web based interface which supports multiple administrators, management of slave devices and comprehensive auditing for compliance purposes. "The interface makes managing multiple devices easy so we chose to deploy three slave appliances for added redundancy and faster local name resolution," comments Risher.



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In addition to simplifying and accelerating the addition and modification of DNS records, **DNSBOX**'s error checking and validation features have given Risher's team the confidence to make changes during a regular working day. "We are definitely offering a more reliable service now that we have eliminated much of the possible human-error from the updates and with administrators no longer having to work unsociable hours there has been an added bonus of higher job satisfaction."

### Scaling to meet growth

UCG revisited its DNS requirements a few years later during a standard deployment review and decided to add redundancy by deploying an additional **DNSBOX** master at a remote disaster recovery site. Now, if the active **DNSBOX** master at HQ is offline, downtime is avoided by automatically switching to the failover unit which contains up-to-date copies of UCG's DNS configuration and records.

Since the **DNSBOX** failover unit is situated off-site, UCG wanted comprehensive email, SMS and SNMP alerting for remote monitoring. In addition, it wanted to future proof its network to effectively handle IPv6. Having evaluated ApplianSys' centralised DDI management solution, UCG recognised that both of these requirements were well addressed and upgraded to it.

"The additional complexities of IPv6 addresses make automated address management essential and **DNSBOX400**'s fully integrated IPAM functionality gives UCG the tools they will need," comments Magdalena Jovanovic, Head of **DNSBOX** Sales. "**DNSBOX400** also provides the advanced alerting features that UCG required. If a unit becomes unavailable, **DNSBOX400** will immediately send email, SMS or SNMP alerts to UCG's Network Managers."

### Working with ApplianSys

"I have been impressed with what little technical support we've required to date. We had a pretty good idea of what the **DNSBOX** could do for us, but the pre-sales support we received was great answering all our remaining questions regarding functionality and deployment," adds Risher. "I've been particularly impressed with the personal nature of the client relationship. Our sales rep contacted me regularly prior to our deployment to check on how things were progressing."