ThinkHuge makes the move from Paessler PRTG to Checkmk

THE CLIENT

COMPANY: ThinkHuge Ltd.

Size: 60 employees

Location: Eyam, United Kingdom

Website: www.thinkhuge.net

ThinkHuge is a leading service provider in the forex industry. Since its launch in 2012, ThinkHuge has helped over 2,300,000 retail traders improve their performance and knowledge. An important service area are Virtual Private Servers (VPSs). Because their clients expect the best performance and low latencies at all times, ThinkHuge needs a reliable monitoring of its IT infrastructure.

KEY POINTS

As a global company, ThinkHuge runs 12 data centers located in Asia, Europe, and the USA with more than 600 hardware servers in total. Most of these are used for hosting Virtual Private Servers (VPSs) for their customers.

In 2022, the IT team made the decision to monitor all of their systems with the Checkmk Enterprise Edition and replaced Paessler PRTG as it no longer fit the company's IT strategy since it could not be hosted on Linux servers.

Nowadays, ThinkHuge monitors all of its assets in their data centers with Checkmk, including systems such as servers, switches, routers or uninterruptible power supplies. All in all, the monitoring contains more than 25,000 services.

SECURE AND RELIABLE DATA CENTERS ARE ESSENTIAL

ThinkHuge is an expert in digital innovation in the forex industry. The company runs a wide range of platforms to support traders with educational information and virtual platform services such as Virtual Private Servers (VPS). To ensure 100% uptime, redundancy and low latency, the IT team have built their own private cloud environment. The necessary hardware resources are hosted in 12 data centers around the globe at multiple locations in Asia, Europe and the USA.

To ensure customer satisfaction and a good user experience, ThinkHuge needs to monitor all of their IT assets. The monitoring has to be reliable, and also needs to work efficiently without needing management by a dedicated monitoring team. It also has to support decentralized infrastructures. In 2022 the leadership team had decided to abandon all Windows servers due to security concerns, and switch all systems to Linux. Thus, the monitoring must also use Linux as the host system.
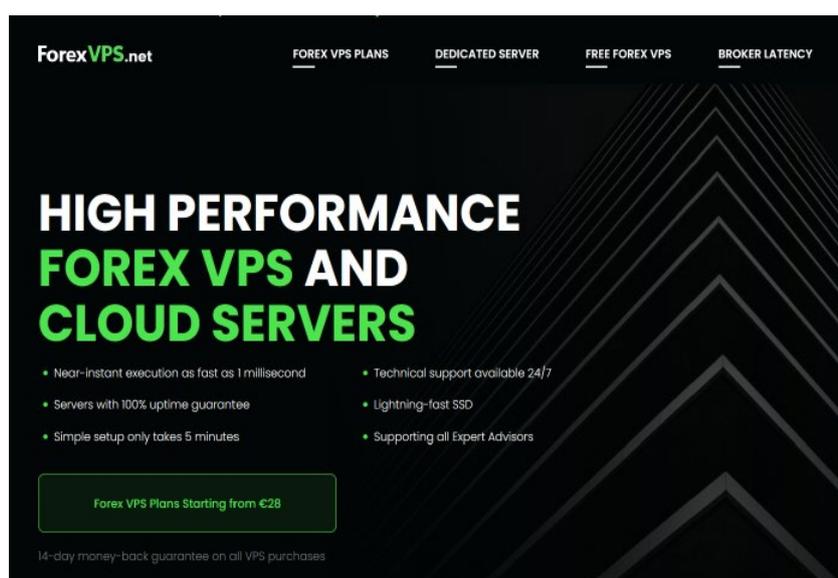

Figure 1: ForexVPS is one of the plattforms run by ThinkHuge

Because of this decision, the IT team made Checkmk their monitoring tool for all of their IT assets. By 2022, ThinkHuge had already been using the Checkmk Raw Edition for several years, but was also monitoring systems with Paessler PRTG, which had to be retired due to the fact that it relies on Windows as its host system. Given their good experience with Checkmk in the past, the leadership team decided to switch to the Checkmk Enterprise Edition and monitor their complete infrastructure with just this single tool.

THE CHALLENGE

ThinkHuge runs 12 data centers around the world to provide IT services for its international customers in the forex industry. All IT resources need to run at peak performance, and have to be monitored efficiently. The IT team not only has to make sure that the monitoring covers all assets, but also had to consolidate the number of monitoring tools without any interruption of the monitoring.

The implementation went smoothly. The IT team installed a Checkmk instance on a Linux server and added all the hosts. Checkmk's graphical user interface makes the whole implementation process very straightforward. The Checkmk user guide additionally provided guidance for specific systems. Altogether, the installation of Checkmk and the transition away from PRTG required only a few hours of work.

> *Checkmk is easy-to-use. We did not need training and just relied on the Checkmk user guide. That really helped us to get started quickly.*
>
> **Paul P.**, CTO at ThinkHuge

Because Checkmk works efficiently, all systems around the globe can be monitored from a single Checkmk instance. Compared to other monitoring tools, the footprint on the monitoring host server, as well as on the network and the monitored systems, is significantly lower.
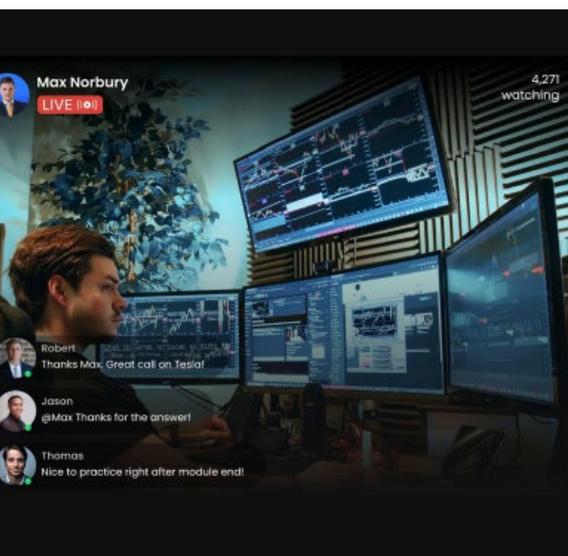

Figure 2: High-performance of IT is a must in the forex industry

Another advantage with Checkmk are its well thought-out host structures that allow ThinkHuge to address their customers' needs by adding precise dependencies between hosts. For example, ThinkHuge made sure all assets are build redundant. If there is an issue with a system, Checkmk understands this architecture and can identify the exact root-cause of a problem for the IT team, even the overall business process still runs as it should. The IT team can fix the issue without running the risk of interruption. All members of the IT team have access to the monitoring and see the current status of an issue. Thanks to Checkmk, everyone is on the same page and has a full understanding of the situation.

THE SOLUTION

In 2022, ThinkHuge switched to the Checkmk Enterprise Edition and currently monitors all of systems in its 12 data centers from a single Checkmk host. Thanks to the more than 2,000 official monitoring plug-ins most assets have been supported out-of-the-box. The transition from the previous monitoring tool was simple and fast.

checkmk

Checkmk monitors hosts such as servers, switches, uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) and other devices found in a data center. Because ThinkHuge relies on several vendors in different countries, the monitoring has to support a wide range of systems. The IT teams appreciates that Checkmk on the one hand supports many systems out-of-the-box, but also has an open core. In the case of a system without an official monitoring plug-in, the IT team can simply write their own integration with relatively little effort.

> *It is great that there are so many official plug-ins and that their number is still growing. At the same time, we must not be dependent on the vendor, but can create our own plug-ins at anytime, if needed.*
>
> **Paul P.**, CTO at ThinkHuge

ThinkHuge is pleased that they chose Checkmk. When the infrastructure grows or changes, the IT team is able to adapt the monitoring with just a few minutes work.

THE ADVANTAGES

ThinkHuge does not need to manage multiple tools for monitoring, but can use Checkmk as a single-source-of-truth. The monitoring keeps an eye on all systems and provides comprehensive, detailed information. The IT team can see issues and anomalies at an early stage and take action before these can affect the customers' user experience.

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