

Citrix/Mercury load testing successful at Platform Lab

Ohio IT testing resource proves successful and affordable on a national scale

Where do large companies go to figure out if their new application can handle 1000 simultaneous users in a very specific environment? If you are Milliman CareGuidelines, you come right here to Columbus, Ohio and engage a rapidly growing firm called Platform Lab.

Platform Lab, the nation's first and only non-profit IT test and training facility, has changed the entire landscape of load testing services and is quickly attracting national attention from such iconic companies as Milliman because the Lab makes such projects not only feasible but vastly more affordable.

Consider the case of Milliman -- a global, financial and health services consulting firm based in Seattle. Milliman had needed to validate a large scale web application to see if it would perform acceptably under load. Milliman came to Keane Inc, a top-tier business/IT services firm, looking for recommendations for load testing the application. Keane, in turn, looked to their consultants for insight. That insight, through a local Keane representative, produced the name of Platform Lab.

Platform Lab responded by providing a 34-server load test environment for 1000 concurrent Citrix sessions in a custom configured environment comprised of HP, Dell, Microsoft, Citrix, Mercury, Sun and Oracle.

The test was done on 20 new HP and Dell servers with 50 Citrix sessions each; plus 13 additional Intel servers with 6 gigabytes of RAM each and loaded with Mercury. The final pieces included a Sun V880 with both Oracle 8i and 9i databases. Platform Lab delivered additional computing power by providing staff members and 16 workstations from its training center in a demonstration of capability and flexibility during the peak test period.

Keane successfully evaluated the load for Milliman and got the application to ramp up and accommodate 1000 concurrent users on both the 8i and 9i databases. However, that was not the only "win" for these clients. Yes, the service was excellent and the test was a success, but Platform Lab also delivered the load test at an unheard of price when compared to a project market value that would have been approximately six times as expensive to conduct in-house.

The win for Platform Lab is that their service, ability, resources and cost have now caught national attention. On the heels of the Milliman project, Platform Lab is working with Ohio-based national firms looking to perform similar validations.

"We were very pleased that Platform Lab's value proposition can resonate with a client based in Seattle," said Steve Gruetter, Platform Lab's Director. "We hope it's a trend that continues. We look

forward to serving national clients for similar load tests and other services that Platform Lab is uniquely qualified to deliver."

Platform Lab -- a wholly owned and operated subsidiary of TechColumbus -- has recognized the importance of the Milliman test to the state of Ohio. According to Platform Lab, "The test was a significant demonstration of the potential return Ohio can realize through investments in technology resources. This example offers proof that investment in resources such as Platform Lab can bring real dollars to the Ohio technology economy."