

Close Brothers Premium Finance Ensures Availability with WhatsUp Gold



ENABLING CLOSE BROTHERS PREMIUM FINANCE TO:

- › Access performance and log information from key devices and be proactive in stopping security threats and maintain compliance
- › Monitor network traffic and bandwidth usage with just a few clicks
- › Group and manage flow sources together into logical units that are relevant to their architecture or business need
- › Ensure greater security and compliance with FIPS 140-2 encryption and validation
- › Discover, map and monitor networks with once click and see it all from one interface.

Close Brothers Premium Finance is the pioneering provider of premium finance products and services in the UK and Ireland. It has over 3,000 brokers and funds up to £2 billion of premiums every year, covering both commercial and personal lines insurance and processes over six million direct debits per year. Close Brothers Premium Finance was founded in 1977 and expanded to Ireland in 2000. It has been voted as the 'Premium Finance Provider of the Year' by brokers eight times in the last 11 years. Its forward thinking approach to finance, enabled Close Brothers Premium Finance to be one of the first financial organisations to harness the power of the Internet by introducing its award winning online system, i-prompt in 1999.

Close Brothers Premium Finance relies heavily on its network in the day-to-day operations. The network is the backbone of Close Brothers Premium Finance and its operations, with business-critical services relying on the constant availability of the network, Close Brothers Premium Finance relies on WhatsUp Gold from Ipswitch.

"We have been using WhatsUp Gold since 2003," says Close Brothers Premium Finance Network Support Team Leader, Dan Coffey. "We use it to monitor our network and to make sure that there are no issues that would affect the critical day-to-day activities at Close Brothers Premium Finance."

Coffey has a team of five people dedicated to look after its Cisco network. Coffey and his team use WhatsUp Gold to monitor the uptime and performance of all switches and trunks, as well as the network ports. Additionally, the team uses the WhatsUp Gold Flow Monitor to keep an eye out on bandwidth levels and utilisation.

One of the key areas that Close Brothers Premium Finance relies on network monitoring is to ensure the timely response to potential problems. "With WhatsUp Gold we are able to tell end users with confidence whether there is a network issue or not," Coffey explains. "This saves us time from having to manually go in and look at all the switches and routers to try and pinpoint a problem."

It is not only the Network Support team that saves time by using WhatsUp Gold, but the wider IT department also benefits from the intelligence it is able to gather, as Coffey explains: "Without WhatsUp Gold, if an end user reported a problem both the Network Support team and the IT team would need to look into it. WhatsUp Gold gives both of us the insight into our entire network and the confidence to tell end users that there are no faults in the network, thus saving us and the IT team from doubling up our efforts."

Staying Aware Out Of Hours

Close Brothers Premium Finance and its Network Support team are able to stay alert of the network's status 24/7, through the alerting systems built into WhatsUp Gold. The team uses smart phones to receive email alerts and SMS alerts of the network's status.



The team has taken contingency plans in case of an unlikely wider issue causing the entire network to fail. “We run WhatsUp Gold through a modem, because if there is a wider problem that would cause the network to fail, we can still access WhatsUp Gold and pinpoint the problems,” Coffey explains. “Further to this, if the email went down, we wouldn’t receive our email alerts so running WhatsUp Gold through a modem is a safer and more secure way for us to ensure that we have constant visibility of the network.”

Ipswitch WhatsUp Gold allows network administrators and engineers to discover, map and monitor their network devices, log files and flows from a single console, with a user-friendly, single click methodology. Additionally, WhatsUp Gold has enabled Close Brothers Premium Finance to let its end users know ahead of time if there is likely to be network outages. “By working together with our service desk we are able to give them detailed information on potential outages, which the service desk will then put out in bulletins to the relevant business areas,” Coffey says. “It’s not often that something does go wrong, but it is good to have the ability to forewarn end users with the latest information.”

Ensuring Availability Of Operations

Where technology has allowed Close Brothers Premium Finance to deliver market leading services to its customers, it relies heavily on its network to ensure that the services are delivered in a timely manner and with maximum uptime and availability. Ipswitch’s WhatsUp Gold allows Close Brothers Premium Finance to monitor its valuable assets within the network. From saving valuable time hunting for faults within the network, Close Brothers Premium Finance is able to pin point the exact location of a fault and rectify it without wasting an engineers’ time to go and spend hours looking for a fault in the vast network.

Through utilising the alert system built into WhatsUp Gold, the Network Support team is able to keep up-to-date on what is happening within the network in out of hours, ensuring that the end users within Close Brothers Premium Finance suffer minimal downtime.

“We have been using WhatsUp Gold for a number of years now,” Coffey says “Network uptime is paramount to the organisation and we are able to ensure that we are able to respond to any issues that could hinder the availability of services that staff and customers have come to rely upon. We will continue to look to WhatsUp Gold to keep us up to date with the happenings within the network to ensure that Close Brothers Premium Finance delivers the first class service our customers have come to expect.”

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DAN COFFEY

Network Support Team Leader, Close Brothers Premium Finance

About Ipswitch, Inc.

Ipswitch helps solve complex IT problems with simple solutions. The company’s software is trusted by millions of people worldwide to transfer files between systems, business partners and customers; and to monitor networks, applications and servers. Ipswitch was founded in 1991 and is based in Burlington, Massachusetts with offices throughout the U.S., Europe and Asia. For more information, visit www.ipswitch.com.

For a free trial please visit: www.ipswitch.com/free-trials/whatsupgold