



CASE STUDY

Lafarge turns to BlueStripe for Virtual and Private Cloud Transaction Monitoring

“With FactFinder, our Operations team knows where transactions go and where they get stuck, making it easier to deliver high service levels.”

- IT Director, Lafarge

Executive Summary

Company Profile

- World leader in construction materials
- Complex business critical applications span physical and virtual environments
- ERP system runs on large Vblock environment

The Goals

- Monitor transaction performance across entire infrastructure & Vblock
- Maintain appropriate service levels for mission critical applications
- Quickly solve problems

The Solution: FactFinder

- Transaction and application monitoring for entire infrastructure
- Follow slow transactions right to the slow server
- Drill down the stack, even in a Vblock environment, to find the true root cause

At one of the world’s largest construction materials companies, scheduling on-site deliveries is critical. As one IT Director said: “If the cement doesn’t get delivered, we don’t get paid.” So when a new virtual application started impacting deliveries, it simply had to be fixed.

The Situation

Lafarge wanted to cut costs by virtualizing key applications. The first virtualized application was the delivery scheduling app, which would dispatch materials and trucks to customer locations.

Initial tests of the virtual application passed, but during the final rollout, transaction performance issues threatened to halt the project.

The project was put on hold until the problems were solved. After several weeks, though, the problems still persisted. Lafarge called on BlueStripe for help.

The Approach

Lafarge installed BlueStripe’s FactFinder Transaction Monitoring solution to track transactions across both the physical and virtual environments. Lafarge used FactFinder to follow the slow transactions right to the problem.

Once Lafarge knew which tier was causing transactions to get stuck,

they drilled down the server stacks with FactFinder to find the true root cause. In this particular case, the team was trying to determine whether virtual servers were truly causing the slow requests.

The Solution

FactFinder immediately showed that not all transactions were slow. Many performed as expected. FactFinder also showed that bad transactions always failed at the same tier, but only on some of the servers. Lafarge saw that all newly deployed virtual servers were slow, but servers converted from physical to virtual were not. A quick check showed that all virtual settings were the same.

When the team drilled down the server stack, though, FactFinder identified the Microsoft SMB protocol as a potential bottleneck: SMB on the new servers was misconfigured. Once the proper configuration was in place, all transactions performed as needed.

Now with confidence that applications will run properly in virtual environments, Lafarge has expanded their use of both virtual technology and FactFinder. Lafarge now uses FactFinder to monitor and manage the performance of their ERP systems running on a large Vblock environment.