



# ONPAGE PROVIDES DOWNTIME INSURANCE FOR TRANSAMERICA



 TRANSAMERICA®

# ONPAGE PROVIDES DOWNTIME INSURANCE FOR TRANSAMERICA CORPORATION

## ABOUT TRANSAMERICA

Transamerica has come a long way since its founding in 1904 as the Bank of Italy in San Francisco. Today, Transamerica is a major holding company with interests in life insurance, health insurance, investment firms and retirement vehicles. Since 1999, the company has been owned by Dutch conglomerate Aegon NV, enabling Transamerica to broaden its reach into Europe, as well as other points on the globe. With over two decades on the Fortune 500 list, Transamerica currently serves 13 million customers and employs more than 29,000 people around the world.

## BUSINESS SITUATION

Transamerica, like 80% of the Fortune 500, operates on Microsoft Office. The company uses all aspects of the Office suite. However, maintaining Microsoft Office for a company with 29,000 global employees is a major operation. Moreover, ensuring 24/7 support for users across numerous time zones means the team is always on-call and always working towards resolving an incident.

Initially, the Microsoft Office Support group at Transamerica used a home-grown solution to alert engineers when an issue arose. However, the solution they created was challenging as it provided no accountability, no persistence, and frequently failed. This meant as many as 48 hours could pass during a weekend shift before an incident was responded to.

When maintaining the technology uptime of a Fortune 500 corporation, this lack of accountability was unacceptable.

## SOLUTION

OnPage Gold Package

## PRODUCT

OnPage – IT Alert Management System

## BENEFITS

- Manage downtime across the globe
- Decrease downtime by 97%
- Improve response time

## DISCUSSION

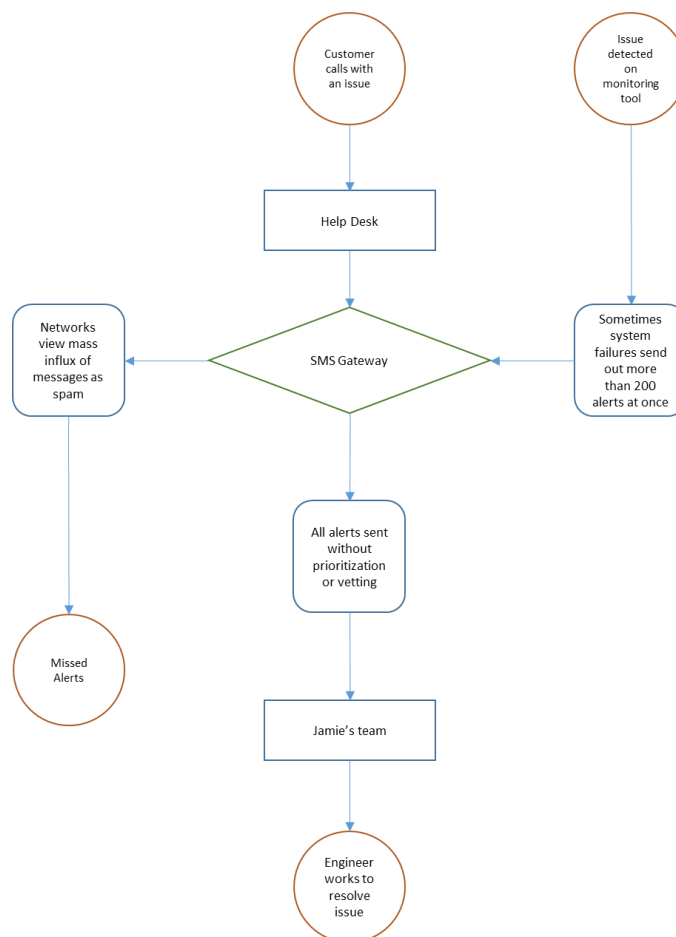
Jamie Wilson is one of Transamerica's Senior Messaging engineers for Microsoft support. His group of six engineers in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, manages support for all Microsoft Office 365 operations, messaging, deployment, engineering, design, Yammer, data protection, cloud and more. If it is anything dealing with Office 365, Jamie and his team manage and fix it.

Jamie's support team can be called at any time of the day or night, 365 days a year. Additionally, as the group is part of a global support network, they are at times supporting their colleagues on other parts of the globe.

Prior to using OnPage, Transamerica had a custom-built system where the Help Desk or monitoring systems would contact Jamie's team through their home spun technology when Microsoft support was needed. The technology involved having messages sent to engineers' cellphones through the SMS gateway as text messages. However, the use of the cellphone infrastructure was a problematic way to provide support as it often left a large backlog.

At times Jamie or his team members would be paged by monitoring systems or the help desk as many as 20-30 times in an hour. Inevitably though, the cellphone carrier (T-Mobile, Sprint, AT&T etc) would throttle the messages because there were so many of them. According to Jamie,

If we had 100 calls over a weekend, the on-call engineer might easily miss the messages because the [cellphone] carrier would treat the messages as spam

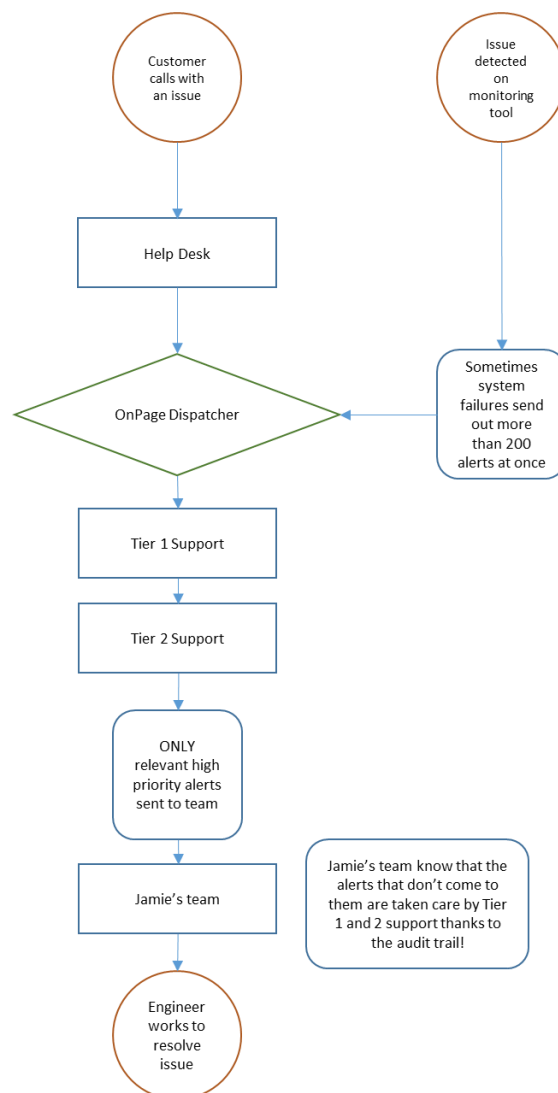


Realizing the reliability problems the legacy system caused, Transamerica looked to OnPage to provide the necessary alert and support for Jamie's team and their global Microsoft support teams.

## MICROSOFT SUPPORT WITH ONPAGE

These days, when a significant Microsoft Office outage occurs, a Transamerica employee from anywhere on the globe will contact Transamerica's Global Help Desk to report the issue or the issue will be picked up by monitoring systems. The Help Desks are located in Hungary, the Netherlands and in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

The Help Desk uses the OnPage console to alert the first Tier 1 members of Microsoft Support. In sending out the alert, the Help Desk uses the redundancy features found on the OnPage console to ensure messages are also sent to the engineer's email and SMS.



As a manager, Jamie feels confident knowing that when any issue arises with Microsoft Office, the issue will be reported directly to his team within seconds. Jamie's IT team knows that the Help Desk's alerts or those coming from monitoring systems will arrive on their smartphones through OnPage along with redundancies. There is no

longer the opportunity for messages to be throttled by carriers or for the engineering support team to miss messages with the OnPage alert. Now, accountability is ensured.

More importantly, as the engineers on Jamie's team attempt to resolve issues, they have access to the texting feature on the OnPage app to message between themselves to get advice on how to best resolve the problem. By using the OnPage platform the response time for Transamerica engineers to respond to Microsoft Office outages and other issues has gone from 45 minutes to 45 seconds. That change in response time represents over a 98% decrease in response time.

## GLOBAL ON-CALL

Part of providing IT support for a global company means that a global on-call schedule becomes a necessary evil. This means that the sun never sets on the support schedule and someone is always on-call. For example, Jamie and his team can support calls for Transamerica employees across the globe. Similarly, Jamie's Outlook support colleagues in Europe or the Far East might answer questions for their American colleagues.

When Microsoft-related issues occur, Jamie's colleagues will use the OnPage messaging features to collaborate with one another. The collaboration can occur with their colleague who lives in the same town or with their colleague who lives across the globe.

The global Microsoft Support group at Transamerica also makes sure that they support one another if one of their colleagues ever runs into a technical issue. The technical groups each have one or two product Subject Matter Experts (SME). As these SMEs are disbursed across the globe, the various offices have a gentleman's agreement to provide support and technical expertise for one another as needed.

The goal is to ensure that downtime events are negligible to the user. Realizing that on-call is a necessary evil of IT today, OnPage helps make it significantly less painful.

## SUMMARY AND BENEFITS

By switching to OnPage, Transamerica has realized significant benefits. The team no longer experiences significant delays in response time and is able to handle incidents almost immediately. According to Jamie,

**"The difference between our legacy system and what we have with OnPage is like night and day. We now have accountability, which we never had before."**

With OnPage, Jamie's team has eliminated the need for sending messages over the carrier's network. Now, all messages are sent over OnPage's infrastructure. The team knows if a message they send has been seen and read. There's no more guess work required.

In addition, using OnPage has allowed Transamerica to ensure that their global on-call system works and that alerts will not fall through the cracks. By not having calls queue up or go to spam, Transamerica is able to rapidly respond to alerts and resolve problems. This has allowed Jamie's team to more effectively serve their global team without having to increase the number of techs they need to hire.

“While the cost of technology has slightly increased for us now that we have OnPage, the return on speediness of how quickly we can respond is dramatic.”

And, knowing how quickly response time can impact productivity, Transamerica’s investment will clearly save money in the long run.

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