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SQUARE ENIX MONTRÉAL MASTER NETWORKS WITH THE NE-ONE

Square Enix Montréal is an award-winning mobile game developer and publisher that is part of the global Square Enix Group. The studio develops high-quality entertainment experiences for smartphones and tablets.

Square Enix Montréal develops games based on original and iconic IPs such as the critically acclaimed Hitman Sniper®, Hitman GO®, Lara Croft GO® and Deus Ex GO®. The studio's games have been downloaded over 130 million times in 175 countries.



THE PROBLEM

Why did Square Enix Montréal turn to a solution like the NE-ONE Professional? To provide a secure testing environment for a yet unannounced game that would be network intensive and more vulnerable to network-induced errors than past releases.

Square Enix Montréal required a quick, cost-effective way to subject the new game to real-world network conditions within a secure and controlled QA environment. Thus, they searched for a solution that would allow them to run through the different player network and test cases.

Also, wanting to improve their studio's infrastructure to maintain its position as an industry leader, the technological team evaluated that it could benefit from network emulation technology.

"The process began with running test cases internally," explains Avinash Dev Beejan, Square Enix Montréal's QA Supervisor and Release Manager. "Following these initial tests, we realized that we required a core technology where we could offload certain network-intensive assets to a server. We also wanted to run network tests against this technology to catch all of these issues."

OTHER SOLUTIONS

Square Enix Montréal's team began by building an in-house network test setup using device applications and features to limit the test console's connection strength and encourage errors. For example, they used a test phone's 'Airplane Mode' to abruptly sever its connection and used third party 'network-conditioners' to degrade the networks supporting test consoles for QA purposes. Avinash looked to the market for a solution that would accelerate the process.

'FULLY FEATURED & EASY TO USE' - SQUARE ENIX CHOOSES THE NE-ONE

A demonstration from the iTrinegy engineering team and a successful trial demonstrated how the NE-ONE Professional's ease of use, its extensive range of features, and realistic built-in test profiles would benefit Square Enix Montreal's network testing capabilities.

"As I was doing my search, NE-ONE Professional stood out for its extensive features," explains Avinash.

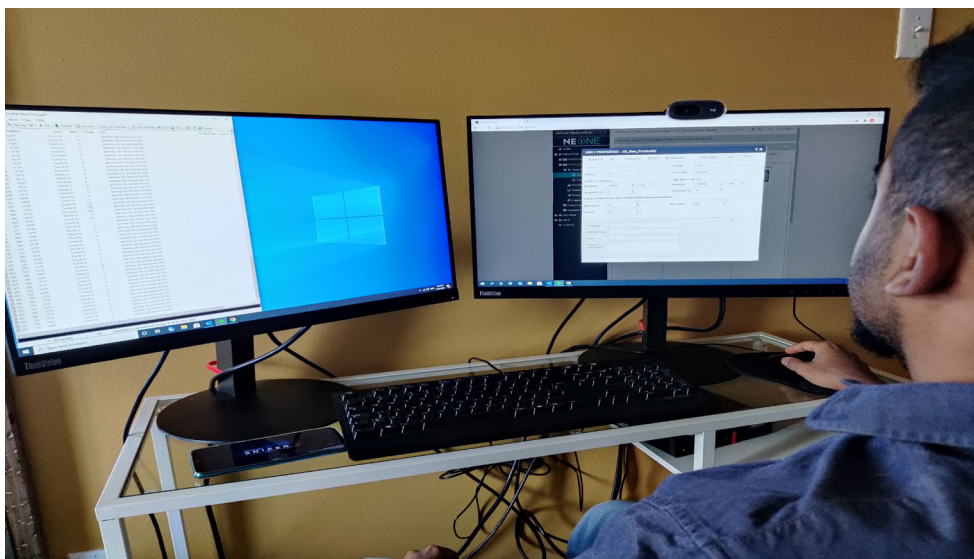
THE IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK

As soon as the NE-ONE Professional Model 20 was approved and onboarded by Square Enix Montréal, Avinash's team reaped the benefits. The NE-ONE Professional's ease of use meant that the team did not have to wait long for results. "The product can be simple for testers, but can also accommodate complexity," he said. "Meaning that the programmers can also use the product to de-bug."

"My team expressed how they enjoyed access to pre-installed scenarios. Being able to start up the box and run tests immediately is a very cool feature. They also really enjoyed using the Network Scenario Builder, which also features pre-made scenarios. Being able to play these scenarios and experience those conditions immediately without any manual setup was a plus."

With its intuitive "Drag & Drop" approach, the Network Scenario Builder lets users rapidly create a chronological network experience by combining multiple network types and conditions running over a graphically represented timeline. The realism of these test scenarios is further enhanced by selecting intelligent built-in transitions between each network segment to fully represent what happens in the real world.

"Following the installation process by our in-house IT and QA teams, we were able to immediately re-create errors that players were experiencing in different countries. We knew from our B.I. and telemetry data that there would be a drop-off in 'x' location. Using the NE-ONE Professional, we were able to re-create those errors, which was the first step towards solving them."



One of Square Enix Montreal's QA testers using the NE-ONE Professional from their home office

DIGGING DEEPER & HOW THE NE-ONE PROFESSIONAL FITS INTO THE FUTURE

In addition to the initial use case for the NE-ONE Professional, iTrinegy products could play a part in the studio's plans in the next few years. According to Avinash, "The developers are aware that we can dig deeper into the product to find solutions and ensure quality on networking, programming, and engineering levels."

CONCLUSION

When asked if he could identify design features that stood out to him and his team, Avinash confidently replied, "If I was to pick just one feature, it would be ease-of-use. I would also mention the immediate feedback. Thirdly, the product's depth. We can immediately test everything from a perfect connection to a terrible connection, which makes it a great tool to have."