Elkjøp

Customer Success Story

TrafficPeak | Akamai

ELKJØP

Customer Story

How a large consumer electronics retailer stopped a massive DDoS attack without any business impact.

Jonas Petersson, Team Lead for eCommerce, Elkjøp Nordic AS JANUARY 2024

With more than 400 stores in the Nordic countries and a booming online retail business, the “Black Friday Weeks” campaign, which lasts for two weeks, is the peak season for the team at Elkjøp. Every year, it’s “all hands on deck” to secure customers a smooth, fast, secure and reliable shopping experience.

Business Challenge

This peak season we wanted even more visibility into our traffic. During the past years it has been cumbersome to see traffic not hitting our origin servers. We wanted to better understand what traffic was hitting Akamai cache and protection layers, enabling us to take necessary actions to protect our services even better. In other words, we wanted a complete picture of the traffic hitting the Akamai edge. Without solid insights, we wouldn’t know where to prioritize our preparation efforts such as hardening our protection at the edge and our internal protection of our origin servers.

We needed a cost-effective solution that could show us pain points and areas to harden enabling us to mitigate them prior to the start of our “Black Friday Weeks” campaign, but also being able to tackle situations happening in real time. In addition, our requirement for a long data retention policy had to be met. At the time of assessing such a solution we were already using another provider for our applications on the backend. However, moving our log data from Akamai into the provider’s platform would make a significant hit on cost.

To achieve our goals, we needed an observability platform that allowed us to ingest, query and retain large amounts of data for a long period of time, at an affordable price point. Luckily, we found the perfect solution in TrafficPeak, and in due time before Black Friday Weeks and a massive DDoS attack.

"Within just a few months, we resolved five different issues using TrafficPeak by simply having the extra visibility and ability to query on data patterns."

The Attack

Earlier this year Akamai introduced us to TrafficPeak on Akamai Connected Cloud, its observability platform designed to ingest, monitor, query, store and analyze massive amounts of data in real time, at a much lesser cost than we could get from other providers. The platform, which is delivered as a managed service, seemed to check all our boxes so we launched a proof of concept. Within just a few months, we resolved five different issues using TrafficPeak by simply having the extra visibility and ability to query on data patterns. After a successful proof of concept, we implemented the tool in our production environment a month before the peak season.

Then, during the "Black Friday Weeks" campaign, at the highest peak traffic time, we experienced an enormous DDoS attack. It involved 3000 IP addresses across 80 countries. TrafficPeak spotted the attack immediately while Akamai's security services gave us the necessary protection to keep the attack contained. **The entire event from spotting to stopping the attack was instant. No sites went out of service and none of our customers experienced any impact whatsoever.**

We could clearly see the attack with TrafficPeak and we could see that our preparation work had paid off since the Akamai protection layer took most of the traffic, and the leftovers were handled by our origin servers.

Without TrafficPeak we wouldn't have spotted the attack this early.

TrafficPeak was also valuable to us in hindsight of the attack. Using the historical data collected by the platform, we started an in-depth investigation, which led to remediations in our protection tools, some of which were deployed directly in connection to the attacks. The data TrafficPeak collected was instrumental in piecing together what had happened. We could see that several attacks had hit different endpoints, trying to find different ways to bring down our sites. We looked at the traffic patterns and determined which actions to take to ensure a similar attack didn't happen again.

Results

Using TrafficPeak and Akamai's security services to find, contain and remediate a massive DDoS attack in a very short time, without any impact to our users or sites crashing, speaks value in and of itself, although the platform helps in other ways too.

Our sites are dynamic. Many of our team members, from developers to content creators, in different countries, are making changes. It's difficult to get technical visibility into everything. When working with Akamai to make new rules, TrafficPeak supports us in creating rules correctly.

TrafficPeak is fast and the query speed is great. We can rely on it to respond swiftly, and it has worked flawlessly since day one.

The TrafficPeak support team has also been very helpful and responsive. At first, we had questions about features in the dashboards vs. the features other providers offer. The TrafficPeak support team asked what we liked about a certain provider's dashboard features. Then that evening we received an email with a new dashboard that included many of the features we had said we enjoyed and were missing. The developers made a new dashboard quickly, just for us. We were very impressed.

TrafficPeak has become an important part of our toolbox because it enables us to make better decisions to proactively reduce the risk on performance and security, while also reactively seeing what issues occurred and why.

"TrafficPeak has been working flawlessly and their support team has been very helpful and responsive."

"We have been a customer of Akamai for several years and we are very satisfied with their service. Akamai has proven to be an efficient security partner protecting our eCommerce sites and apis. We are under continuous attack, some very large. But with Akamai in front we rarely have any impact on any of our sites or services.

Akamai is also a reliable business partner that provides excellent support and understands our needs.

The Akamai platform offers a wide array of modern features and products. And they are dedicated to continuing to develop their products to stay relevant and provide their customers with the best possible experience."

– Lars Grorud, IT Security Manager, Elkjøp

If you are interested in learning more about how TrafficPeak can help you find and fix performance and security issues before they disrupt your business, **book a meeting by clicking here.**