

Global European Manufacturing Company Implements Infosim for Cross-Domain Monitoring

The Changing Needs and Requirements for Enterprise Network Management

The changing nature of today's IT infrastructure makes managing and operating large, globally distributed networks ever more challenging. As we move away from rigid physical IT infrastructures towards virtualized and software-based platforms, pressure builds to move away from siloed IT teams defined by individual technology types towards cross-domain teams. ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES® (EMA™) analysts have found that in many large IT organizations, the function of network monitoring has been moved to a cross-domain team that monitors IT infrastructure on a comprehensive/integrated basis. Organizations making this change are also examining their management tools and technology choices. Some continue to use existing network management platforms in the network operations center (NOC) but adopt a different platform for cross-domain monitoring while others seek to consolidate and implement a single solution. This EMA case study examines how one large European manufacturing company has swapped out its legacy network management solution for Infosim StableNet in order to meet cross-domain monitoring objectives.

Case Study: Cross-Domain Monitoring

The Challenge

Nearly ten years ago, a large European manufacturing company decided it was time to seek a solution that could be used by both network and server teams to monitor the global networking infrastructure as well as provide insights into the infrastructure supporting a mission-critical trading application. The trading application was a major revenue generator, and any downtime or degradation of performance would have had a direct impact on the corporate top line. But the IT team was having difficulty ensuring consistent and reliable operations due to a lack of coordinated, complete visibility and control over the infrastructure.

The company decided to conduct an official evaluation of network management solutions, including re-evaluating its existing deployed product against Infosim StableNet and several other solutions. Because the chosen solution was to be used globally and across the organization, it also had to be easy to deploy and easy to use to ensure adoption across disparate IT teams. At the same time, it had to be powerful enough to provide accurate, timely insights into both local and global infrastructures. Infosim StableNet was chosen because it met all of those key criteria more fully and completely than any of the other options. StableNet thus became the “go-to” monitoring and troubleshooting tool for the company's trading application as well as for its entire extended global network.

The Infosim Solution

The company is using Infosim StableNet to monitor both network and server elements. Currently there are approximately 1000 switches and routers and a large number of servers under management, comprising a total of 22,000 managed elements across 170 locations worldwide. The deployment consists of one central StableNet server with four remote StableNet agents.

There are 20 operators who use the tool on a daily basis and three to four administrators. The company uses SNMP polling, SNMP traps, and WMI for gathering monitoring data. For monitoring servers, StableNet is being used to track a number of key measures, including disk drive capacity and memory and

processor usage. The company also uses StableNet to monitor compliance with service level agreements (SLAs). The most valued capabilities are the NetFlow views. The company has NetFlow enabled on every router at all locations and uses it to maintain constant awareness of activity by application and user group. StableNet reporting features are actively used to develop reports and visual geographic views for upper management. The company also takes advantage of the StableNet configuration management and backup features.

The Benefits

The company has enjoyed a broad range of benefits as a result of the decision to go with StableNet. First, the team was able to roll out StableNet across the global organization quickly, and enjoy the rapid adoption that was anticipated, because extensive training was not required. Administrators really like that the tool allows them to simply and rapidly set up new measurements. The NetFlow features help operators to monitor top talkers and quickly recognize congestion points in the network so that appropriate corrective actions can be taken. The IT operations teams have found the configuration backup and management features particularly helpful in accelerating equipment deployment and reducing manual configuration errors, resulting in greater network stability. The company also found that Infosim is very responsive to their needs and has even incorporated new feature requests into the product. Finally, the product has been very stable itself, so the team can spend its time managing the network, servers, and applications rather than managing the management tools.

EMA Perspective

Traditional network management tools will always remain relevant, but as companies start to merge monitoring teams, it is necessary to find solutions that provide visibility across more than the networking domain alone. In parallel, broader management tools must be fully adopted by those with mixed and varying roles and backgrounds, so ease of use and short learning curves are also highly desirable. The case example presented here paints a picture of success in this regard, whereby a global organization expanded its use of Infosim StableNet to span network and systems management, enjoying rapid and effective adoption across a global operations organization.

About EMA

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