STABLENET®

AUTOMATED NETWORK & SERVICE MANAGEMENT

Discovery & Inventory

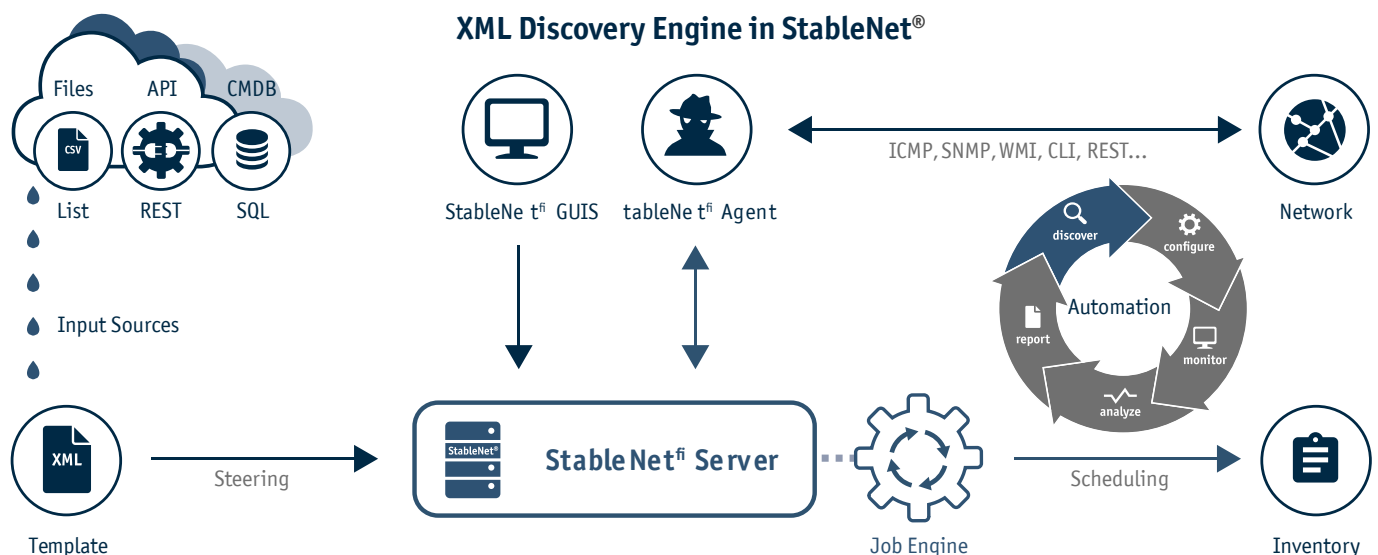# XML Discovery Engine: Building a flexible blueprint for automation and infrastructure

See how the StableNet® platform delivers a unique discovery solution that unifies and simplifies your data and facilitates customizable automation

Background & Motivation

Discovery is not just discovery. We tend to think of network management as a linear process that begins with discovery and ends with reporting. But the benefits of a unified network management and services platform truly begins with the ability to consolidate not just technical databases, but also business-related information into a single data structure. This blueprint, which can be enriched with customizable KPIs and SLA-parameters, leads to company-wide workflows that are a smarter solution to how your devices are automatically discovered, monitored, and the insights that your network software provides. If done right, it is not the beginning nor the end but a critical component, the engine that supplies power to the entire process.

Traditionally, discovery has been comprised primarily of an IP scan of network devices. Through the use of certain monitoring protocols (SNMP, ICMP, WMI, etc.), basic information can be extracted in order to provide a generic overview of your inventory along with its status according to pre-determined KPIs. A scattered system of separate modules, the software clumsily attempts to extract this data and implement it as the foundation for fault and performance management, configuration functionalities and alarm notifications.

A machine- and human-readable program language, eXtensible Markup Language (XML) does not replace monitoring protocols in discovery. Instead, if these protocols are thought of as the eyes of discovery, XML is the brain that tells them what to look at and how to organize what they see. Vision, however, is but one of many senses the brain can use to understand it's world. Through the use of tags in XML, there is a fundamental enrichment of the kinds of information that can be extracted and organized. It provides a template for future automated discoveries that give meaningful insight and builds a logic to help your network management software work for you.

XML Discovery Engine in StableNet®

Files   API   CMDB

List   REST   SQL

Input Sources

StableNe t^fi GUIS   tableNe t^fi Agent

ICMP, SNMP, WMI, CLI, REST…

Network

discover   configure

Automation

report   monitor

analyze

XML

Template   Steering   StableNet^fi Server   Job Engine   Scheduling   Inventory

StableNet® Solution

There are certain components of the discovery process that are more or less standardized. Beginning with ICMP, the StableNet® agent pings those devices you are interested in to see if they are available. The next step is to gather data through the various protocols in order to collect data, but even here, the XML blueprint begins to allow for valuable customization options or provide an impressive array of functionalities.

Automatic XML Discovery: Driven by an extremely versatile blueprint, the pre-configured XML Discovery process in StableNet® is an exceptional out-of-the-box discovery solution. Just give it a subnet or network and you can see all available devices, an inventory list and measurement tree, connectivity between devices, sensor measurements, and pre-configured alarm thresholds. The pre-configured parameters are based on years of experience and expertise.

Advanced XML Configuration: Should you decide you want a more tailored information collection, the discovery engine is a powerful toolbox which allows you to take matters into your own hands. By becoming familiar with the XML discovery engine, you can change the way your discovery works. Comprised of blocks, the XML template can be customized and enriched by a number of user-defined pre- and post-filters, including:

• Targeting only specific assets within your inventory
• Different types of measurements (e.g. IP SLA, Netflow, Interface, Script...)
• Various monitors when using KPI and SLA specific alarm thresholds
• Maintenance times, customized tags, and much, much more...

Benefits & Results

The StableNet® platform is designed from the ground up to bring customization, scalability, automation and consolidation to your network management workflows. Discovery is a key building block of this value proposition. While monitoring protocols are good at basic communication, XML Discovery gives you the ability to take command of the conversation. You learn what you need to know and when you need to know it.

By working off of a single data structure and code base, StableNet allows you to consolidate various essential databases under one umbrella. The discovery templates that you build will guarantee that new devices are incorporated into your network in a meaningful way, allowing you to get the information you need now and into the future. This provides exciting opportunities to build automated workflows incorporating business-related information in order to help you manage your network and draw insights according to the criteria that matter most to you.

Key Benefits:

• Excellent out-of-the-box performance
• Numerous options for customization of discovery process
• Time saving through automation
• Elimination of multiple modules to manage your network
• Ability to link database and business information to devices

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