



Netzperten Helps Hospital Server Rooms Keep Their Cool with InterMapper

Environmental monitoring alerts prevents network shutdowns due to overheating

CASE STUDY

“This is a very simple thing; InterMapper and a probe. It saved hundreds of thousands of dollars in equipment and a total breakdown in service.”

—Bernd Janke-Wohltmann
Netzperten

CUSTOMER:

Netzperten plans, implements and manages network infrastructures for a wide-range of clients including many hospitals and medical centers.

CHALLENGE:

When air conditioning fails, server rooms heat up fast, threatening equipment and data.

SOLUTION:

Netzperten uses InterMapper to poll server room environmental sensors and alert technicians to rising temperatures.

Snapshot

When healthcare facility server rooms heat up, hard drives age quickly, equipment fails, and data is lost. Netzperten tracks server room temperatures by polling environmental sensors with InterMapper. Rising temperatures trigger SMS alarms so that technicians can be notified to fix problems or initiate emergency shut down before hard drives crash, taking data with them.

The Challenge

As hospitals move from paper to digital data environments, network and server reliability become increasingly important. Netzperten, a network consultancy that plans, implements and manages network infrastructures, serves many healthcare facilities in Germany.

“The server room air conditioner at a customer site failed over the weekend,” says Bernd Janke-Wohltmann. “By Monday morning, the room’s temperature was 65°C. Hard drives age fast and then fail in high temperatures and the client worked hard

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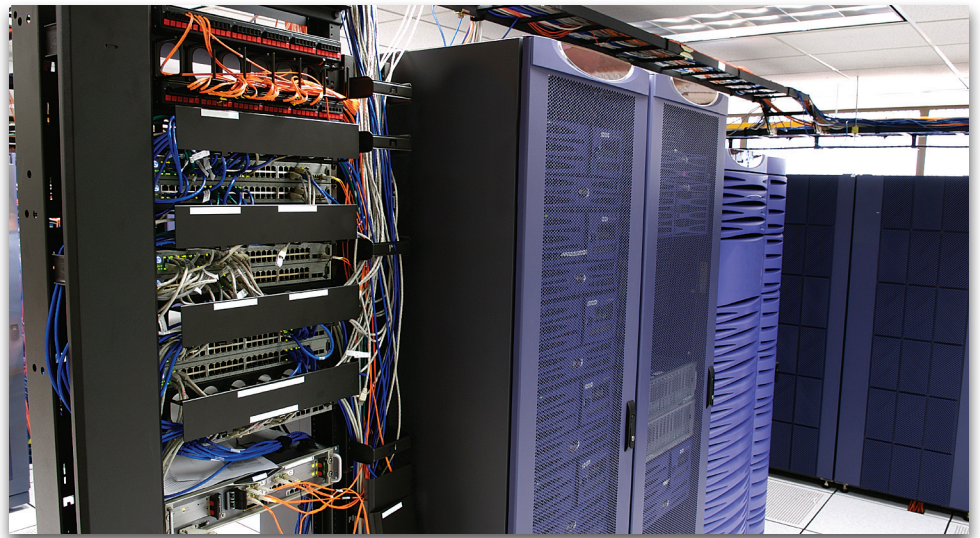
—Bernd Janke-Wohltmann
Netzperlen

to buy and replace hard drives before servers failed and data was lost. They weren't fast enough. On Tuesday the first drive failed. They lost an enormous amount of data."

From this experience, Janke-Wohltmann recognized that detecting server room temperature extremes was as critical as monitoring servers, routers and switches. He thus deployed environmental sensors at a large medical center.

Unfortunately, during this process, when normal power was restored, the air conditioning in the server room failed—in a way that did not alert the house technician.

The medical center is nearly paperless; the majority of data resides in the server room. "It's not unusual for a server room to heat up to 65°C or 70°C when the air conditioning fails and hundreds of servers are running," says Janke-Wohltmann.



ABOUT DARTWARE

Dartware is a leading developer of network monitoring, mapping and alerting software. Our flagship product, InterMapper® is an easy to configure and fully featured management tool. It is integrated with a reporting package, a Layer 2 discovery module and a robust NetFlow analyzer. Available for major operating systems, these innovative tools earn quick return-on-investment by proactively notifying administrators to potential hardware, software and bandwidth issues that could cause business interruptions. Powered by an extensive library of probes, its color-coded maps and graphical reports provide a real-time view of any device on the network. More than 25,000 IT professionals worldwide use InterMapper as a cost-effective way to maximize network uptime.



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The Solution

Janke-Wohltmann realized it would be easy to use InterMapper to monitor environmental variables like temperature along with network performance and device status. "InterMapper has a very open interface so it's easy to write our own probes," says Janke-Wohltmann.

Within four hours, he had installed InterMapper, written a probe for the environmental monitor in his client's server room, and included alerts from the probe into the alarm schema.

The Result

Two days after Netzperlen set up its client's new environmental monitoring service, there was a test of the emergency power system. German hospitals are required to test the switch from normal to back-up power once a month.

Fortunately, the data InterMapper polled from the environmental sensor indicated that the temperature in the medical center's server room had risen from 20°C to 40°C in 30 minutes. An alarm was sent out over SMS so that technicians could tend to the problem.

"This is a very simple thing; InterMapper and a probe," says Janke-Wohltmann. "It saved hundreds of thousands of dollars in equipment and a total breakdown in service."