



Top 8 Reasons SMBs Need to Monitor their Networks

WHITE PAPER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

If you are responsible for administering the IT infrastructure at a small-to-medium size business (SMB), using network monitoring, mapping and alerting software can help you do your job better by maximizing network uptime and efficiency. These tools are generally powerful, easy to use and affordable. After you enter the most important pieces of equipment to monitor, they just run in the background—only alerting you to active or impending issues related to hardware, software or bandwidth utilization. Here are the top reasons to implement a network monitoring system.

WHY MONITOR YOUR NETWORK?

- Optimize network reliability
- Visualize network topology
- Stay in touch with your network
- Understand capacity utilization
- Troubleshoot device and traffic issues
- Save time in network administration
- Track trends
- Improve the bottom line



As a network administrator in charge of the IT infrastructure at a SMB, you need a powerful, easy to use and affordable tool to monitor your network performance with minimal management burdens. Even if you are not subject to regulatory requirements to monitor and map your network, there is still a compelling business case for the smaller organization to deploy diagnostic tools. In today's network centric world, a network outage stops everyone. The following 8 reasons show the value of an automated tool which SMB IT professionals should be using to minimize the risk of reduced network performance or even an outage.

Optimize Reliability

The most basic function of a network monitoring solution is to indicate whether a device (such as a router, switch, server, database, etc.) is working or not. You don't want to have to wait for the phone to start ringing because people are experiencing performance issues. A proactive approach to maintaining a healthy network keeps help desk requests to a minimum.

Visualize Topology

Once you map out your network topology you can identify weak spots and choke points. You will be in a better position to implement best practice network design. The ability to see your entire network at a glance whether in a geographical, physical or hierarchical view gives quick visibility to trouble spots and opportunities for improvement. Furthermore, in the event of a failure, an accurate picture of the pre-outage network helps troubleshooting.

Stay in Touch

As a busy IT professional, you are not always watching the screen to learn about performance issues. The alerting function of a monitoring system can be configured to create visual and auditory alerts, as well as sending an email to a home computer or a message to a mobile device. These alerts allow you to respond quickly to network performance issues and minimize the effect of downtime associated with any malfunctioning equipment.

Understand Capacity

As utilization of your network grows, you will want to plan for additional devices and bandwidth to stay ahead of demand. A flexible and powerful monitoring system allows you to see when performance slows. Thus, you can react to maintain adequate service levels.

Troubleshoot

Using an easy-to-understand diagram, a network map gives critical visibility by allowing you to check any individual device. Important performance statistics (such as availability, packet loss, response time, traffic, error rates, etc.) help to diagnose problems on your network.



Save Time

A comprehensive network map shows the physical connections on your network. A robust network monitoring system should give you a device inventory and show you where individual IPs are connected, by switch, vendor, and even VLAN.

It can even help find strategic locations for wireless access points.

Track Trends

Charting out trends is an important tool to understand the historical performance of a device. Reviewing basic reports helps identify intermittent problems and allows for corrective measures to be taken.

Improve the Bottom Line

Monitoring software makes you more productive by saving time on network management, while decreasing operating costs. Furthermore, because you are aware of current or impending problems, you can correct or even avert downtime, letting your colleagues work productively. In a networked world, you need to be sure that your public facing services are “open for business”.

Conclusion

These are compelling reasons why network monitoring software is essential in helping the IT professional at a SMB optimize performance. You need a network monitoring solution with a broad array of features. Choosing the right software can help you achieve these high level goals with only a minimal investment of resources into network administration.



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ABOUT DARTWARE

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