Progress® WhatsUp® Gold

IT Infrastructure Monitoring Buyer's Guide

GUIDE

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It's All About Empowering Your Team

Look in any organization today, and you will find a hard-working group of individuals tasked with the near impossible: navigating an increasingly complex IT environment while securely delivering virtually zero downtime. That is your IT team, and the software you choose to empower your team is critical to their ability to perform.

This guide is designed to help you make the right selection based on your specific needs. It covers some critical business issues that IT teams deal with across all regions of the world and vertical markets. The guide includes a list of requirements that will help you address those issues and asks you to decide if they are essential to you with simple yes/no answers. When complete, you will have a non-biased assessment of your unique requirements with which to compare solutions.

Critical Business Issues that Impact Productivity

Based on interactions with tens of thousands of customers, we've compiled the following "Top 5 Business Issues" directly related to the monitoring tools and approach IT teams select.

Reactive Management

All IT teams react to unplanned service interruptions. But some teams identify most issues before users report them. The degree to which your team is reactive versus proactive can be measured by the percentage of service-affecting incidents you first learn about from users. The more reactive the team, the less it is perceived as an asset to the organization.

In countless studies and analyst reports, reactive management has been correlated with silo- or point-specific monitoring deployments. The causal effect most often stems from the inability to integrate data between organizational siloes and/or gain end-to-end visibility across technology domains.

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Lengthy Troubleshooting Times

Service level disruptions trigger cross-departmental meetings and conference calls in which subject matter experts (SMEs) compare the health of their individual domains to find a likely cause. Since what passes as a "healthy" condition at one level of the service delivery stack may cause disastrous results at a higher level, the cause is all too often difficult to ascertain. This "siloed tool" monitoring approach often adds considerable delay to your mean time to repair (MTTR), especially in more complex IT environments.

Higher Incident Rates

"Have you tried turning it off and on again?" As time passes and user frustration mounts, IT teams often turn in desperation to the process of restarting suspected problem servers. While this approach may restore service (similar to the solution of "just upgrade to the latest release"), every IT professional knows it just adds another known problem to the list. Over time, an increasing number of unresolved issues resurface, resulting in higher incident rates.

Lowered Service Levels

Higher incident rates and long troubleshooting times combine to reduce service levels and impact your IT team's ability to roll out improvements. A common complaint of IT teams firmly in or entering this undesirable state is that "too many people spend too much time troubleshooting."

Wasted Manpower

Each management tool used requires some degree of dedicated labor to operate and maintain. All too often, tools are selected based on the degree to which they can be customized – without consideration to the ease of customization. As the number of tools grows, this becomes a drain on staffing resources that impacts productivity. Therefore, as IT teams mature, they often place a higher degree of emphasis on ease of automation and fewer tool vendors.

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The Advantages of a Unified Monitoring Approach

To address critical business issues, IT Teams seek flexible and unified monitoring tools to help them control complexity. In a typical multi-vendor environment, nearly all IT components support a wide range of protocols used to gather data. IT infrastructure monitoring tools use these protocols to provide end-to-end visibility of servers, storage, networks and applications, as well as their dependencies. This results in several key advantages:

A Proactive IT Posture

A single end-to-end perspective encourages a dependency-based approach to monitoring individual domain elements. For instance, knowing the scale and criticality of the virtual workload a physical server hosts will dictate the thresholds and severity you apply to key performance indicators. When IT infrastructure monitoring is based on a knowledge of dependencies, it is more likely to identify developing problems.

Thus, organizations that use a unified IT infrastructure monitoring approach are more likely to be proactive.

Faster Problem Resolution

Networking, server, storage and application teams work together more effectively when all are working with the same information. This leads to faster problem detection and resolution (MTTA, MTTR). Teams that better understand technology dependencies for delivering critical business applications and services can identify the cause of problems more quickly.

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Contract Flexibility

Every IT environment is different. Monitoring tools need the flexibility to handle a wide range of use cases, devices and protocols. Software licensing models must also be flexible to support growth and changes in your environment. IT teams want to be able to monitor new devices, services and applications without having to buy additional licenses.

Decreased Incident Rates

Of course, being able to detect developing problems and take proactive steps to avoid them lowers incident rates. As does being able to diagnose the cause of incidents. As you identify causes, you can fix problems and reduce the list of known problems.

Better Service Levels

Perhaps the largest benefit of unified infrastructure monitoring to IT teams is the impact on service levels. When teams can meet aggressive SLAs, they worry less about network availability, end-user response times and application performance. Instead, they increase their focus on overall service quality factors like faster, smoother deployment of improvements.

Lowered Costs

Finally, unified IT infrastructure monitoring goes a long way to decreasing the number of silo-specific tools needed. Not only does this translate to more productive use of labor, but it also means reduced costs related to licensing, maintenance, configuration, training, upgrading and the associated staffing.

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IT Monitoring Selection Criteria

Selecting an asset as strategic as an IT infrastructure monitoring system is made more difficult when different vendors emphasize the features they consider most important. There's only one feature set that matters: the ones required to do your job. Every IT environment is unique, and every IT team has unique needs.

Review the following checklist to help determine which of the following features is a requirement for your organization. Be sure to consider both current requirements and those future needs that are within your planning horizon. When complete, you will have a handy reference to use when selecting the best tool for your specific needs.

Discovery/Visibility Features

Automated Layer 2/3 Network Discovery
Automatically discover every asset on the network.

Automated Network Mapping
Automatically map and document physical servers and virtual machines, clusters and clouds.

End-to-End Dashboard View
Show all network components, applications and services in one window, or "single pane of glass."

Multiple/Customizable Dashboards
Support multiple out-of-the-box dashboard configurations and make it easy to develop custom dashboards for individuals or teams.

Monitoring Features

Monitor Network
Monitor anything with an IP address.

Monitor Applications
Monitor the performance and availability of business-critical applications

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Monitor Servers

Monitor the status and performance of both physical and virtual servers.

Monitor Hardware Status

Monitor hardware status to immediately know about problems with hardware health, such as physical disk failure.

Monitor Storage

Monitor storage devices and report on volume utilization, analyze storage traffic load via network interfaces and detect abnormalities in the system's temperature, fan and CPU.

Extensive/Custom Monitor Libraries

Support libraries of SNMP objects to monitor your network-attached devices, a WMI library to monitor your Windows servers and applications. Supports easy custom monitor development.

Monitor Wired & Wireless Networks

Discover and monitor the dependencies between wired and wireless networks. Support fast responses to performance problems using dynamic wireless maps displaying clients, access points and wireless LAN controllers. Proactively address trends with historical reports on access point subscription, signal strength and hardware health.

Trend Analysis

Retain historical data in order to prove SLAs are being met.

Continual Monitoring with Minimal Setup

Start collecting data, receiving alerts and analyzing reports in under an hour.

Role-Based Monitoring

Allow for easy application of role-based monitoring profiles.

Auditing/Reporting Automation

Automated, Historical & Customizable Reports

Include multiple out-of-the-box reports with historical data. Support simple customization to develop new reports. Track access and permissions changes and leverage out-of-the-box compliance reports for audits.

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Automated Inventory Reports
Quickly generate inventory reports on network assets, hardware modules, installed software and more.

Automated Log & Event Management
Automatically collect, store and archive logs. Generate out-of-the-box compliance reports for PCI, HIPAA, SOX, etc. Analyze logs to track access and permission changes typically required for compliance audits.

Configuration Reports
Automatically inventory and store configuration files in a secure repository. Use configuration change audit trails for regulatory compliance and to restore device configuration.

Automation Features

Easy Automation of Manual Tasks
Discovery, mapping, inventory reporting and compliance reporting.

Configuration Management
Automates network device configuration.

REST API
Integrate with third-party applications like Salesforce, Microsoft 365 and others. Automate your data collection and share data with other systems.

Troubleshooting Features

Proactive Problem Resolution
Use custom dashboards, alerts and automated resolution to find and fix problems before users are impacted. Analyze network bandwidth utilization to prioritize critical applications and services.

Simple Interface
Accelerate the diagnostics process with a simple, intuitive interface.

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Flexible Alerting

Support thresholding, alerting and alert suppression to eliminate alert storms for faster fault isolation. Alerts should come through phone, email, SMS, Teams, Slack – whatever method an individual prefers.

Diagnostic Reporting

Provide extensive reporting for diagnostics and SLAs.

Evaluation/Purchasing Features

Easy to Try, Buy and Use

Provide a simple evaluation process that makes it easy to try before you buy.

Simple, Flexible Licensing

Clear packaging and device-based licensing make it easy to scale without any surprises.

Effective Scaling

Include support for future needs and don't require additional plugins, licenses, etc. when your network doubles in size.

Easy Set-up

Go from download to monitoring in less than an hour.

Technical Support & Services

Support during evaluation, installation/setup and ongoing use.

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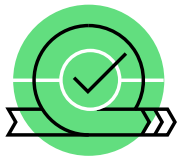

IT Infrastructure & Application Monitoring from Progress

Progress WhatsUp Gold lets you find and fix IT infrastructure problems fast – through a powerful combination of out-of-the-box functionality, intuitive workflows and system integrations. Its unique, interactive mapping interface lets you intuitively see up/down availability and performance at-a-glance for everything connected to your network, both on-premises and in the cloud.

Your IT team gets the control, insight and automated resolution needed to:

- Find and fix problems before your users are impacted
- Assure bandwidth is optimized for critical apps and services
- Automate configuration management, log monitoring and inventory and compliance audits.

Download Your Free Trial of WhatsUp Gold Today

About Progress

Dedicated to propelling business forward in a technology-driven world, Progress (NASDAQ: PRGS) helps businesses drive faster cycles of innovation, fuel momentum and accelerate their path to success. As the trusted provider of the best products to develop, deploy and manage high-impact applications, Progress enables customers to build the applications and experiences they need, deploy where and how they want and manage it all safely and securely. Hundreds of thousands of enterprises, including 1,700 software companies and 3.5 million developers, depend on Progress to achieve their goals—with confidence. Learn more at www.progress.com

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