

Customer Case Study

NIH Cures Performance Woes

Netuitive eliminates performance threshold administration and delivers accurate Trusted Alarms

Carl Truitt, lead IT engineer within the Monitoring and Management Group at NIH, is responsible for watching the NIH system environment, identifying performance issues and being sure any issues found are promptly resolved. However, Truitt felt that he didn't have all the tools to effectively manage the health of their IT environment. Because of normal fluctuations in system usage patterns, it seemed impossible to set reliable thresholds for NetIQ AppManager to deliver meaningful alerts.

"How could we set good thresholds when 'normal' baselines determined for yesterday are not going to be good for tomorrow? We were constantly guessing." While NetIQ AppManager was doing its job based on settings determined by the NIH staff, benign performance anomalies such as CPU spikes were triggering hundreds of false-positive alerts on a daily basis.

"The vast majority of my day was being spent going through each alert to figure out which ones needed to be addressed and which should be ignored," says Truitt. It was common for false-positive event tickets to unknowingly get passed on to system specialists for troubleshooting, even though no real problem existed. There was no reliable way to pinpoint issues with certainty.

Truitt was introduced to Netuitive SI software, which provides next-generation automation for NetIQ AppManager, as well as for other enterprise monitoring solutions. Netuitive constructs meaningful information from thousands of data inputs in real-time. It self-learns the characteristics of each server and automatically generates dynamic thresholds. When abnormalities are detected, it sends only Trusted Alarms, which are system-verified as actionable. Truitt saw that Netuitive was a way to make NIH's monitoring capability dramatically more efficient and accurate. "Netuitive learns and adjusts baselines automatically," he says. "It only sends alerts which it knows are important."

Truitt estimates that he has gained at least four hours each day to provide proactive service to users and work on strategic projects. Just recently he found the time to evaluate NIH's firewall and implement new measures to prevent intrusions. In addition, Netuitive is saving time for NIH's system administrators and help desk personnel, since dozens of false-positive trouble tickets have been eliminated on a weekly basis. "When I now send one of our system admins an alert, they're much more responsive," says Truitt.

He says that Netuitive is also helping his department meet service level agreements since they now have dependable baselines against which to measure. "Now we can promise users better performance," he says. "Netuitive increases our confidence to deliver on SLAs."



About NIH

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is one of the world's foremost medical research centers, and the Federal focal point for medical research in the United States. Their data center near Washington, DC supports nearly 5,000 doctors and staff.

"I think of Netuitive as my virtual assistant....It tells me if there is something important I need to know."

Carl Truitt
Lead Engineer, NIH