

Automotive Electronics Leader Improves Business Results

Panasonic Automotive is Becoming a Major Force in Automotive Entertainment, Electronics

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—Chris Wilcox, PASA's
Director of Infrastructure

Panasonic Automotive Overview

Panasonic Automotive Systems Company of America (PASA) was formed in 1987 and their ambitious goal of leading in the hyper-competitive US automotive electronics market is within reach. PASA, headquartered in Peachtree City, GA with manufacturing operations in Peachtree City, Georgia and in Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico is a division company of Panasonic Corporation of North America, which is the principal North American subsidiary of Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd. (NYSE: MC), the world's largest consumer electronics company. PASA products include automotive audio systems, DVD rear-seat entertainment systems, deck mechanisms, speakers and displays, as well as electronics components such as sensors, switches, motors and batteries.

New ERP System Mandates New Measurements

The company's IT group implemented a new ERP system and needed to monitor the systems' performance from locations in Peachtree City, GA, Southfield, MI, and Reynosa, Mexico, all of which are connected by an internal WAN. Proactive and effective service management for this application is critical to PASA and they plan to eventually deploy a solution for additional ERP transactions, applications and PASA locations. PASA requested that Indicative implement a Proof-of-Concept (POC) demonstration of tangible evidence of meeting PASA requirements.

Improving Processes and Results

Panasonic Automotive Systems Company's key objective is to adopt proactive, end to end (from infrastructure to applications and transactions) performance monitoring to improve business processes and results.

The POC was to meet the following four goals:

- Instrument and proactively monitor the infrastructure components of the ERP System
- Measure the end user experience of transactions from Manufacturing, Distribution & Finance Modules.
- Capture and record performance data from the ERP system and related infrastructure for these transactions
- Publish collected data to standard reports and Dashboard views

Refining the Requirements

During and immediately following the two day POC, the teams uncovered a few additional requirements, such as relating the directing and processing of alerts; and refined some others, for example, measuring the performance of the WAN operated by a third party. The deep and trusted technical collaboration between PASA and Indicative teams yielded tangible benefits. One of the first of these was the complete understanding of the customer's needs as they relate to managing the enterprise resources for optimal performance.

The Solution Emerges

As the new ERP system was being deployed throughout PASA, the IT team recognized the importance of monitoring the various ERP transactions. The lack of such monitoring prompted the analogy of "flying blind."

Following the remote installation of Indicative—which took less than two hours—the on-site POC team developed six test scripts and deployed nearly 900 measurements. Within just a few hours of monitoring the PASA environment, Indicative identified a network packet loss problem and also pinpointed the source of the anomaly—uploading files greater than 4 MB.

The Results

Big gains are a result of many small improvements. Such improvements were seen by PASA through rapid problem isolation and proactive monitoring of business transactions, which had an immediate, positive impact on productivity. PASA IT staff increased their Mail Server reliability using Indicative's monitoring and was able to improve network utilization between PASA's facilities. Even when no problems were found, the Indicative suite brought reassurance to PASA executives with its visibility that everything was working well.

The speed of Indicative's installation and setup amazed even PASA management. When asked if Indicative Web and Dashboard interfaces were scheduled to be installed as part of the proof, the answer was, "They are already installed running and available for use." "The team from Indicative established a strong partnership with the organization at the first meeting. This relationship allowed us to implement the solution suite quickly and make immediate improvements to our operational processes," commented Chris Wilcox, PASA's Director of Infrastructure.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

- o Application performance tests were easy to record and deploy
- o The tests can easily accommodate frequent changes in transaction content and format. PASAIT staff feels empowered to deploy tests for new transactions (using copy, modify and paste)
- o Indicative service modeling accurately reflects the health of the IT environment
- o Indicative's modeling capabilities match the requirements of PASA's critical ERP application performance monitoring
- o Indicative offers meaningful quantitative data of end-user experience
- o Indicative's automatic baselining has dramatically reduced spurious application alerts and trouble-tickets, freeing up PASA IT staff to focus on the most critical inhibitors
- o Indicative's solution costs less and will continue to yield savings in the long-term

Looking to the Future

Panasonic Automotive Systems Company of America is evaluating additional measurements for deeper LAN and WAN testing as well as expanded Application Performance Monitoring and may consider becoming a beta test site for Indicative's .NET monitoring features. The Indicative team has also learned from the experience. "We are getting faster and better," reflected Mark Smith, Indicative's Vice-President of Engineering. "The brand new (Japanese) ERP system was unfamiliar to us, yet we completed the POC in two weeks (4 days POC and 6 days of data collection) followed by six days of Professional Services for the complete implementation. Although we had no template suite for this ERP system, we learned that we have more than enough building blocks to develop the scripts. We did it all within the transaction layer. The Indicative product has the flexibility to do that."

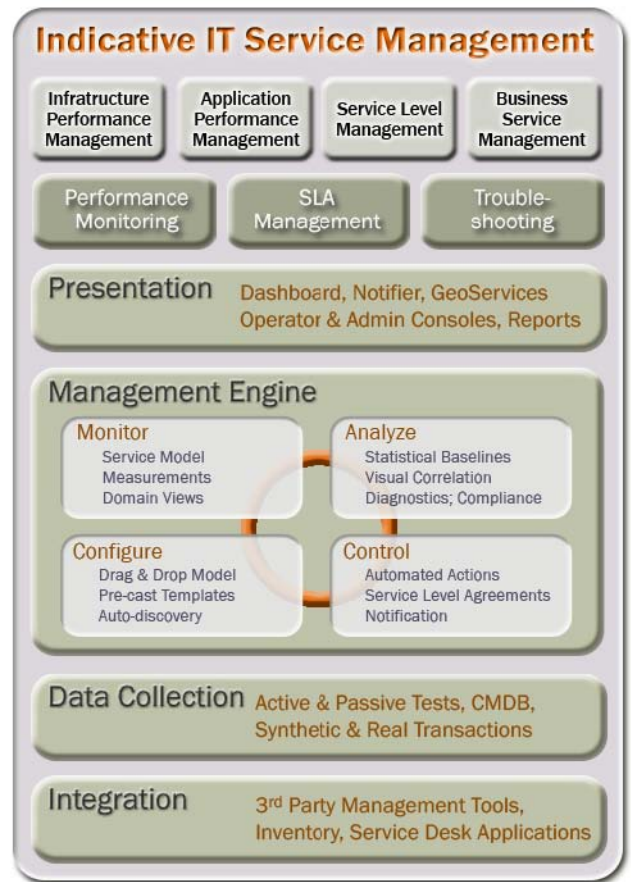


Figure: Indicative All-in-One Product Overview

About Nimsoft

Nimsoft provides next generation performance and availability monitoring solutions for the complete physical and virtualized IT infrastructure. The Nimsoft solutions redefine the standards for ease of use and speed of deployment—providing outstanding return on investment and unparalleled customer satisfaction. Over 600 customers in 30 countries rely on Nimsoft solutions to monitor their IT based business applications and services. These customers include mid-market and global organizations, such as Barclays Capital, Amway Corporation, Archstone Smith Communities, Bay Area Rapid Transit, Ladbrokes, MTU Aero Engines, TriNet, TRW Automotive, and hundreds of leading managed service providers such as CDW Berbee, Easynet and Rackspace Managed Hosting. For more information, visit www.nimsoft.com.

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