

Alvaka Networks

Alvaka Networks Shaves Cost and Risk Off Monitoring Services with Nimsoft Monitor

Challenge

Alvaka needed to implement a more reliable monitoring solution that would accommodate clients' mixed environments and help them meet their goal of 5-nines reliability.

Solution

Alvaka is using Nimsoft Monitor across all of its clients' infrastructures, and leverages the customized dashboards to provide 24x7 monitoring, fast reporting, and proactive troubleshooting.

Results

- Significantly cut administrative and maintenance costs.
- Helped clients achieved 5-nines reliability through proactive troubleshooting and real-time monitoring and alerts.
- Enabled staff resources to be redirected to revenue generating activities.
- Provided competitive advantage that leads to new business opportunities.

Alvaka Leverages Nimsoft Monitor to Optimize Staff Resources While Improving Uptime for Client Networks

Background

"Alvaka" is an old Icelandic word for "ever vigilant" or "always awake." Being ever vigilant is critical for Alvaka Networks, whose primary responsibility it is to monitor its clients' IT infrastructures—roughly 60 mid-sized enterprises, each ranging from 50-2,000 users. The company is dedicated to providing superior network support and changing the way networks are managed and secured.

"For many of our customers, the network infrastructure is a pivotal and critical aspect of business," said Oli Thordarson, CEO of Alvaka. "At Alvaka, we understand this and strive to provide the level of support those high demand environments require. Our commitment to constantly provide real value, and to be there when our clients need us makes our relationships successful and lasting," said Thordarson.

Alvaka operates out of a secure, highly redundant datacenter facility. The core of AlvakaNet Advanced Network Management Solutions—called AlvakaNOC—runs at this facility, supporting Alvaka's clients' critical infrastructures. To ensure this level of reliability and performance, ARC needed a monitoring system that would help them mitigate potential issues and eliminate downtime.

Challenge

Alvaka's clients have complex infrastructures that are primarily Microsoft-based, but may include implementations of Linux and Macintosh systems. They also incorporate VMware virtual systems, and MS Exchange and Oracle databases.

Alvaka had been using BMC PATROL solutions to monitor client infrastructures, but as the business expanded, the team found these solutions to be slow to evolve and incapable of handling the 3+ gigabytes of monitoring data collected daily. The team was also experiencing outages that threatened Alvaka's credibility.

"The database wasn't able to handle the volume," said Thordarson. "We had problems keeping the databases online, and it was having a negative impact on the levels of service we were providing our clients." After working for a year with BMC to resolve the issues, they were unable to do so, and the Thordarson began to look for alternative solutions.



Solution

Thordarson's team evaluated several products and chose Nimsoft Monitor. "We've been a monitoring practice since 1997, and we've used over a dozen different products," he said. "We looked long and hard at the best tools in the marketplace, and we chose Nimsoft."

According to Thordarson, his team chose Nimsoft Monitor primarily for the overall robustness of the tool, and because it is a single-platform tool. "A lot of tools are only compatible with a single OS—such as Windows or Linux—but our clients use a number of different platforms and their environments are usually mixed," he said. "Nimsoft lets us monitor all types of OSs, as well as a variety of devices and critical network appliances. It's a powerful tool for monitoring VMware virtual environments as well, and we can create custom probes to meet clients' specific needs. This is a very unique capability of Nimsoft Monitor, and it allows us to provide end-to-end monitoring."

The solution is used to monitor servers, routers and firewalls, critical databases and business-to-business ecommerce systems, many of which are global and running 24 x 7. "Most of our clients want 5-nines uptime, and while we can't control their networks unilaterally, we help them monitor and manage toward that goal," said Thordarson. "We keep a close eye on their systems, and if anything happens—even if it's in the Netherlands at 3:00 am—we're the first to know."

Alvaka's team uses Nimsoft reporting tools and APIs to create custom portals for each client. Nimsoft portals provide a single dashboard view of all monitoring data, eliminating the need for multiple logins and passwords. Alvaka's clients can use the dashboard to search for data by date range or component—hardware or software—and generate reports on-demand.

"One Nimsoft portal consolidates everything and provides a pull-down menu for choosing the necessary action," said Thordarson. "It's a single interface that's easy to use, and gives clients a snapshot of the services we're delivering to them. If there's an alert, Alvaka takes the initial action, but our clients can also keep an eye on what's happening at all times."

Results

By switching to Nimsoft Monitor from previous monitoring solutions, Alvaka has realized tremendous cost savings in administration and management. "We were able to re-assign a full-time employee from maintaining the database to a customer facing roll where he's adding value to our services," said Thordarson.

Additionally, the increased reliability of Nimsoft Monitor has enabled Alvaka's IT team to add new features for clients, leading to new revenue streams and a competitive advantage. For example, one client wanted SLA reports on availability. The BMC tool Alvaka used before Nimsoft was too unreliable for that. "We were spending a lot of time with personnel and it was affecting our credibility," he said. "With Nimsoft Monitor, we can provide genuine, credible reporting on uptime and SLAs."

Alvaka has also leveraged the features of Nimsoft Monitor to win new business. "With one account, it came down to a shoot out between Alvaka and another company, and we were able to win all the business instead of just a portion of it, because the features and capabilities we could offer with Nimsoft Monitor were superior," said Thordarson. "As a vendor, Nimsoft has been very responsive, and they've helped us customize our offerings so we can deliver true value for our clients."



About Nimsoft

Nimsoft provides integrated, IT management as service solutions for businesses and service provider customers globally, including 1&1, CDW, SoftLayer, SunGard Availability Services, Sur La Table, TriNet, and Virgin America. The company's Nimsoft Unified Manager is an industry-leading solution that helps organizations easily monitor and manage IT services in increasingly complex business environments. Nimsoft solutions integrate with existing resources from the data center to the cloud, and are available on a pay-as-you-go basis. For more information, visit www.nimsoft.com.

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