

The entire IT infrastructure at a glance

Network monitoring is a key component in the operation and optimization of government IT systems





Background and requirements

Government agencies depend on a functioning IT infrastructure to conduct their daily operations, with similar requirements as businesses or educational institutions. Network availability and performance must be continuously ensured; and bottlenecks and failures can cause serious consequences. In addition, there are special challenges for governments that are not seen in the private sector.

Typical IT challenges for public institutions

- Support remote locations and data centers
- Manage heterogeneous IT landscapes
- Protect highly sensitive data
- Provide a high-performance IT infrastructure
- Deliver 24/7 availability of online services
- Work within a limited budget

The solution: network monitoring

Only when IT managers are continuously informed about the status of their entire network can they quickly solve existing failures and prevent impending failures.

Centrally monitoring remote locations

When it comes to monitor distributed locations, one approach is the model with satellites at the individual sites. The satellites collect monitoring data at the locations and send it (encrypted) to the central location, which is responsible for the complete evaluation and storage of the data. This way, costs and expenses for operation and maintenance are kept manageable, while at the same time you have centralized management of the entire IT system.

Monitor heterogeneous IT landscapes with one solution

Networks of public authorities are heterogeneous. Universal solutions are required to monitor both vendor-independent devices and applications as well as the integration of special solutions into the overall monitoring. It is crucial that the selected monitoring solution offers a maximum standardization to keep expenses low and on the other hand gives the flexibility to integrate existing special solutions by delivering appropriate interfaces.

Highly sensitive data requires maximum security

Authorities and agencies have a responsibility to manage their citizen's sensitive data. Firewalls, virus scanners and backup systems are the standard blocks in an integrated security concept. However, it must be ensured that these systems also work reliably. Does the firewall work? Is the antivirus software up to date? Did the backup work? A comprehensive monitoring solution can keep tabs on all these items.

Assistance and more efforts at the same time

More and more public services are offered online today. The customer / citizen is no longer tied to narrow office hours, peak hours are equalized and staff is able to work outside the office. Availability must be guaranteed outside of normal working hours (at night and on weekends). But it is not enough to control websites only for reachability. The availability of forms and downloads must be ensured, as well as support for email systems and databases.

Conclusion

Heterogeneous networks, distributed locations, budget responsibility – government IT teams are facing many challenges. Both internal processes and customer traffic depend to a large extent on a highly available, high-performance network.

To ensure this, the IT needs the correct information. Network monitoring

solutions are information gatherers. But not every monitoring solution meets the special requirements for this sensitive area. Thus, a thorough evaluation is required before the introduction of a monitoring solution. The following selection criteria are to be observed:

- Monitoring of multiple locations with a solution at reasonable efforts / costs
- Vendor-independent monitoring system, support for common standards
- Easy to extend to individual queries, integration of existing solutions (API)
- Reliable monitoring of security and other critical systems
- Long-term network optimization based on historical data
- Ability to advanced website monitoring
- Low-cost licensing without high follow-up costs

If all of this is taken into consideration for the evaluation, the selected solution can be a decisive factor both in daily operations as well as for long-term planning of IT landscapes of government agencies and can ensure stability, safety and cost efficiency.

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