

THE 5 KEY PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE IT NETWORK AND CLOUD MONITORING

About Contact Ltd.

Always On. Always Secure. Contact Ltd. works with the UK's leading organisations to help them get the most from their IT, defending against evolving cyber threats; managing their IT estate - 24x7x365 from Contact's state-of-the-art UK Network & Security Operations Centre (NOC/SOC).

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From the UK's leading SolarWinds authority

One of the most challenging tasks for IT network administrators is keeping an eye on the health of your IT infrastructure – monitoring bandwidth usage, finding and identifying problems, checking on your equipment and watching multiple monitoring applications. On top of that, you also must keep track of reports and statistics.

And with today's user expectations of IT services being 'always on', it is ever more important to ensure you and quickly detect, diagnose, and resolve network performance problems and outages – before you start getting calls asking if the network is down.

This guide outlines the effective IT monitoring principles, to help eliminate downtime and improve user experience - without the need to double your resource.



Contact's 24x7x365 UK NOC / SOC

1. Keep things simple

Overly complex monitoring can generate too many alerts, leading to an inevitable 'cry wolf' effect. This ultimately has a negative impact on systems performance, as limited resource is incorrectly allocated to troubleshooting 'false' alerts. 'Over monitoring' can also lead to excess infrastructure adjustments, as IT teams attempt to keep pace with their tuning parameters.



Greg Bishop
Operations Director

From the UK's leading SolarWinds authority

Contact Ltd. is the UK's leading authority on SolarWinds, with the largest in-house team of SolarWinds-Certified Professionals supporting and managing the network operations of some of the UK's leading organisations 24x7x365 from our Network and Security Operations Centre (NOC and SOC).

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2. Focus on what's actually going wrong

Smarter infrastructure monitoring systems eliminate the noise caused by outages, through conditional alerting, rather than over-reporting on the subsequent systems and processes that could be impacted.

Which component has actually failed?

An example of this is if you have a data centre with a WAN link. When the WAN router serving the link fails, you do not need 200 messages that each of the 200 servers in the data centre behind it are not available. Filtering through the 201 messages to find the 1 WAN router alert simply creates an unnecessary delay in responding to the fault. In this case, the conditional alert would be that the servers do not need to notify of an outage when a WAN link issue has been reported.

Your IT monitoring solution should allow critical components to be ranked with an appropriate level of importance, as well as collating data from across existing enterprise monitoring systems.

3. Optimise IT resource usage - alert the right people

With IT skills specialisation, it makes sense that the right people are tasked to fix a given issue – first time. Monitoring alerts should always be tuned to go to individuals in skills groups – Network issues go to network teams; Server issues to server teams. Note the reference to “individuals” in a skills group. As far as possible, try to keep alerts directional to avoid “bystander effect.”



To get the best possible outcome, it is often appropriate to make the alerting process a human one, employing techniques applied in Network Operation Centre (NOC) environments, whereby a responsible NOC agent will “in-person” track down fault owners to confirm issues are being addressed before standing down.

Working with the UK's leading organisations

Contact Ltd. works with the UK's leading organisations to help transform their IT to 'Always On', utilising SolarWinds' formidable IT monitoring platform helps to reduce network outages and quickly detect, diagnose, and resolve network performance issues.

- ✔ Best practice SolarWinds deployment. We've seen all the common and costly mistakes.
- ✔ Expert configuration and tuning lets you see what important - spend less time fault finding/fixing.
- ✔ 'Always On'. We help you make sure your IT works, 24x7x365.

YOU'RE THE EXPERTS.

Let us help you prove it.

Why work with Comtact?



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Spend less fault finding/fixing. We do the heavy lifting, giving you the time to drive your IT forward.



Build your own 'Always On' NOC culture with 24x7x365 support - at a fraction of the cost.



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4. Automate, wherever possible

With skilled expert support and in-depth technology remediation, issues that are prone to reoccurrence can be successfully automated.

For example, the restart of a software component on a critical finance server can be automated on detection of a process crash. In this example, the automation could become even more pre-emptive by parsing component log files for error conditions typically generated prior to a crash. Components can therefore be scheduled for a restart 'out-of-hours', preventing the crash event from happening at all.

5. Ensure monitoring parameters are adaptable for change

Through the lifecycle of any given IT infrastructure component, its utilisation pattern will change (typically increasing) and sometimes its role will modify, e.g. additional VPNs added to a firewall, leading to new ingress and egress points for networks behind it. Such changes require a review of threshold and alerting parameters for monitoring to remain 'fit for purpose'.

Beyond tuning, incorporate a regular 'big picture' review to ensure that all opportunities to hit real-time resolution and pre-emption targets have been considered. Having done something well in the past does not preclude that you are doing things well now, particularly as the features of the monitoring systems you have continually evolve.

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We help build your own teams' expertise.



Single, secure dashboard view of your entire IT estate.

See the right events at the right time.



Supported 24x7x365 from Contact's ISO27001-accredited NOC

Build your own 'Always On' NOC culture at a fraction of the cost.



We practice what we preach

SolarWinds provides the monitoring visibility we demand in Contact's own 24x7x365 Network Operations Centre.

ABOUT CONTACT

Established in 2005, Contact Ltd. is an award-winning, Government-approved service provider, supporting clients 24x7x365 from high security Network (NOC) & Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Northampton, UK.

24x7x365 SUPPORT

Contact has a multi-skilled, three-tiered professional support, providing 1st line and 2nd line support operated from our 24x7x365 high security Tier 3 data centre.

ISO27001

Contact and its operations are entirely ISO27001 accredited, providing customers with the assurance that their service solution is being supported by true professionals.

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Based in Northampton, Contact's Security (SOC), Network (NOC) and Service Delivery Centre (SDC) are located within our state-of-the-art Tier 3 data centre.



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