

IPAM saves time and safeguards quality for Open Line

Open Line, a mature managed service provider based at Maastricht-Airport in The Netherlands, has steadily increased the operational efficiency of its cloud solutions, project and consultancy business groups over the past seven years by using a range of SolarWinds solutions.

SolarWinds regularly enhances and updates its IT Management product portfolio which has allowed **Open Line's Managed Services business group** to safeguard its service level quality. For instance, **SolarWinds IP Address Manager** (IPAM), has allowed the company to progress from using spreadsheets to monitor customers' IP addresses, to relying on IPAM's centralised IP management. IPAM has also simplified capacity management, saving up to 10 hours a month in IT staff time.

CLIENT STATISTICS

- 3,200 IP addresses and 170-plus subnets
- Portal about for 50 customer administrators and 40 users in their own organisation
- 2,000 VMs divided over 182 physical hosts

The Customer

Founded in 2002, Open Line has 120-plus staff servicing more than 100 customers across its Projects, Consultancy, and Managed Services business divisions. Open Line provides tier-3 data centre services spread over two locations, 25 km apart and connected by high speed redundant interlinks.

Open Line Managed Services offers cloud services (SLA driven) with high availability, flexibility and transparency. The Service Desk technician-to-technician department has a first call resolution rate of over 60 percent. Currently the direct and indirect services within Managed Services have more than 30,000 end users. Partner vendors include VCE, EMC, Cisco, VMware, Microsoft, Citrix and AppSense. Open Line provides a smart cloud monitor portal for about 50 customer administrators and 40 users in their own organisations. The company's infrastructure includes some 2,000 virtual machines divided over 182 physical hosts.

IT Management Challenge

Like all successful organisations, Open Line began to feel the effects of growing pains as the business expanded steadily. When the company began to deliver services based on service level agreements (SLA), management determined that monitoring would be a key activity. Seven years ago, they selected **SolarWinds Network Performance Monitor** (NPM) after a competitive evaluation, and they have since added other SolarWinds tools to their managed service offering.

Continued expansion led to the need to automate the recording and registration of customers' IP addresses. Initially each customer kept an Excel spreadsheet for this purpose, until two years ago when the process became too complicated and inefficient.

"We are experiencing a positive return on investment (ROI) from IPAM. At present one full-time person works on capacity management for all our customers and IPAM makes his job easy. It allows him to do his job more efficiently, saving about 5-10 hours a month by automating the porting of addresses."

Solution

Since the SolarWinds NPM solution was already producing excellent results for Open Line, having allowed the firm to introduce a new service called 'Open Line Smart Cloud Monitoring,' management installed IPAM to complement it.

"We bought IPAM to use as an add-on to NPM, to automate IP management," says Marcel Huijten, Principal Consultant for Open Line.

IPAM automates IP space management. The solution manages, monitors and alerts from a central location and can report on an entire IP infrastructure, giving critical insights into IP address space through real-time views and historical tracking. IPAM also optimises IP space utilisation and avoids IP conflicts via automatic scans and preventative alerts.

In addition to NPM and IPAM, Open Line uses [SolarWinds Network Configuration Manager](#), [Netflow Traffic Analyzer](#) and [Storage Manager](#).

Results

IPAM is managing 3,200 IP addresses, more than 70 IPv4 subnets, and two IPv6 subnets.

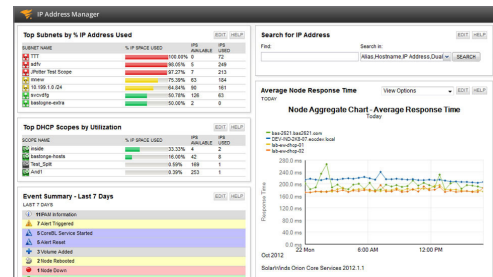
Huijten says IPAM generates IP address reports using out-of-the box templates and automates report creation and distribution. As an add-on to NPM, it shows IP address details at the top of the NPM screen. At present IPAM is configured to discover customers' needs – when it finds a new IP address, Open Line can see this and bill accordingly. Reports are sent to customers, setting out details of all the addresses they are using.

"This is a far more efficient technique than recording their IP addresses on Excel spreadsheets – a method that became too complicated for customers to control," said Huijten. "Now we are presenting the new version 3.0 of IPAM to customers, who can benefit from its additional functionality, especially delegation of control which can allow them to create their own reports."

He says the ability of IPAM 3.0 to allow administrators to manage the entire IP infrastructure from a single web console, gain detailed visibility into IP address space usage, and quickly troubleshoot any IP address problems will help to safeguard Open Line's service level quality.

Huijten sees the most important feature of IPAM as its close integration with NPM, which allows the single portal view. Using IPAM as an additional tool for IP exporting will be important, too.

He said, "We are experiencing a positive return on investment (ROI) from IPAM. At present one full-time person works on capacity management for all our customers and IPAM makes his job easy. It allows him to do his job more efficiently, saving about 5-10 hours a month by automating the porting of addresses."



IP Address Manager automates DHCP, DNS, and IP space management. It centrally manages, monitors, alerts and reports on the entire IP infrastructure; maintains Microsoft DHCP/DNS & Cisco DHCP services from a single web interface; optimises IP space utilisation and avoids IP conflicts; delivers role-based access control; and offers critical insight into IP address space through real-time views and historical tracking.

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