IMTECH ICT

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Berry van Hummel, Senior Engineer Telecom, Imtech

Background

Imtech ICT is an international Information Communications Technology (ICT) company that provides managed IT services for both private and public sector clients in Holland.
It supports the ICT infrastructure for Imtech N.V., a worldwide technology corporation.

Business Challenges

The Imtech NOC is responsible for monitoring the business critical ICT infrastructure for its clients on a 24x7 basis. It is staffed by four engineers who check the status of various servers, hardware and network switches using various IT monitoring system consoles between the hours of 8am and 6pm. Outside of these hours, Imtech has two NOC engineers available 'on call'.

If a problem is detected during the on call period, an alert was previously sent via an SMS text to an engineer who would then be responsible for fixing the problem. However once the SMS text had been sent there was no way to track whether it had been delivered to the engineer. It is vital that problems are acted on in the shortest period of time to ensure that there is no impact on service availability or productivity. For a power station customer, an outage that is quickly rectified could help avoid a catastrophic event or a corporate customer could prevent IT service interruption.

Derdack product that was selected

Berry van Hummel, Senior Engineer Telecom, Imtech said, "We wanted to have greater reliability and control over the distribution of our SMS text notifications, and selected Enterprise Alert® to act as an intelligent notification hub. We quickly realized it offered all of the functionality that we needed in our NOC. It provides us with 2-way closed-loop notifications with tracking and automated escalation which gives us complete confidence that notifications are being responded to in a timely manner by the NOC engineers."

How/where the product was deployed

Imtech has connected their core IT monitoring infrastructure, consisting of five installations of Ipswitch's Whatsup Gold IT, to Enterprise Alert®. If Whatsup Gold detects a problem, an alert is sent to Enterprise Alert® via email. However, the monitoring software often produces a large number of email alarm notifications for the same incident.

Enterprise Alert® intelligently analyses, filters and prioritizes the alerts which ensures that engineers are not overwhelmed with alarm notifications. The relevant alerts are sent by SMS text to the relevant on call en-

Client

Imtech ICT, Netherlands

Industry

Data Center/IT Services

Business challenge

- Meet Service Level Agreements
- Respond to alerts outside of NOC hours
- Communicate more effectively with engineers.

Business benefits

- Faster time to respond to critical incidents
- Scalable centralized notification hub
- Lower total cost of ownership

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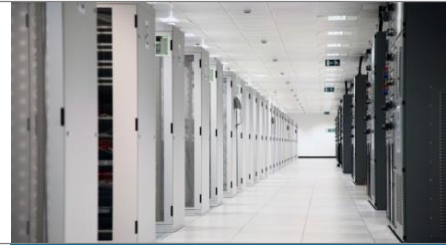
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sales@derdack.com
US: +1 202 4700885
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gineer who acknowledges the alert by return SMS text. A night time and weekend on call schedule is maintained within Enterprise Alert®.

A major improvement that Enterprise Alert® enables is the real-time tracking of SMS text delivery and that if the acknowledgement is not received within predetermined time limits for whatever reason, a second SMS text is sent to the engineer. If a response is still not received by Enterprise Alert®, then an automated escalation process begins.

A series of SMS texts are sent to the second on call engineer. If no response is again received, the notification hub will automatically contact a manager, and so on, until there is confirmation that an engineer has acknowledged the problem.

Mr. van Hummel added, "The advanced alerting functionality provided by Enterprise Alert® ensures that on call engineers are reliably and rapidly notified once a problem has occurred. We have more certainty that resolution of the issue will occur within the shortest period of time, and before it can impact on the customer. If the problem requires an onsite visit then the engineer can proactively contact the customer to arrange a convenient time for this to happen. Additionally our customers are very happy with our incident response times."

What business benefits has the client enjoyed as a result

Mr van Hummel explains the benefits that Imtech has gained: "The automated notifications with tracking and escalations are a major improvement for Imtech. We have a faster mean-time-to-respond (MTTR) which makes it easier to meet our SLA commitments. Since Enterprise Alert® went live, the NOC has not missed a single incident and this provides significant value both from a service and reputation perspective. The success of the notification hub means that it is now considered a key part of Imtech's critical infrastructure. Enterprise Alert® is a fully scalable solution, it offers us the ability to centralize management of various notifications and the scope is continually growing, as we add more users, servers and data networks.

The NOC now uses Enterprise Alert® also to manage alerts generated by AlarmTraq, for remote alarm monitoring and management for Avaya communications systems. If an event is detected, e.g. a gateway loses contact with the main server then AlarmTraq sends an email to the notification hub. Enterprise Alert® sends an SMS text to an engineer and also an SMS text to the customer. This type of customer communication extends the use of the notification hub outside of the NOC.

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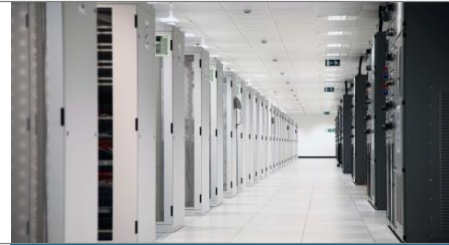US: +1 202 4700885
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Enterprise Alert is very easy to configure and use which contributes to a reduced total cost of ownership as we can perform systems maintenance with ease, for example changing the engineer schedules to take into account different shifts, public holidays or temporary changes to office hours.

The engineers are very happy with the introduction of Enterprise Alert® as they receive alert notification on their cell phones and it is quick and easy to respond. We are planning to deploy a Derdack smartphone app for push notifications and remote access to incidents which will help engineers directly initiate remedial action from within the app. This will provide engineers with more information on the incident whilst removing the requirement to log onto a monitoring system console. The next step for Imtech is to integrate Microsoft System Center Operations Manager (SCOM) into the notification hub. We are interested in exploring Microsoft Lync, and using voice for communicating alerts."

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