StorTech

"When it comes to alerting and notification for data centers, Enterprise Alert® is in a league of its own and a 'must have' product."

Jean Muller, Managed Services: Principle Consultant, StorTech

Background

StorTech provides adaptive information solutions that are ecologically responsible, cost effective and energy efficient. With its established track record in the South African market, StorTech offers clients an innovative portfolio of end-to-end data center solutions, underpinned with a unique understanding of the needs of the virtualized enterprise.

Business Challenges

StorTech manages the IT infrastructure on behalf of a number of clients in diverse industries. StorTech relies on Microsoft System Center Operations Manager (SCOM), EMC's Data Protection Advisor (DPA), IBM Tivoli Netcool and Oracle Enterprise Manager (OEM) to monitor the status of its client's software and hardware and over 1200 computer systems. However these monitoring systems generated thousands of alerts that were difficult to interpret and manage efficiently and there was little visibility over the status of critical incidents.

Derdack product that was selected

In order to improve the way in which it handles critical incidents in its data center, it has implemented Enterprise Alert® as a universal alerting and notification system.

How/where the product was deployed

StorTech has put Enterprise Alert® at the heart of its technical infrastructure and it now acts as a universal alerting and notification solution. Since it was first deployed, the number of IT monitoring systems that has been connected to Enterprise Alert® has been increased and IBM Tivoli Netcool is the latest.

Any events detected by SCOM, DPA and OEM together with events correlated by Netcool are sent to Enterprise Alert®. StorTech sees around 1,000 incidents per week, the notification software intelligently analyses and filters these according to priority and significance, which results in 200 incidents notified to a team of 10 engineers via a proper communication channel, e.g. SMS text messaging. Enterprise Alert® tracks delivery of such notifications and automatically logs them in StorTech's call administration system, Marval.

Once a fault has been fixed the engineer sends an SMS text message to Enterprise Alert®. If the software doesn't receive this confirmation within predetermined time limits, the alert is escalated via an automated workflow, for example to inform other engineers and managers. The system has proved itself since it was implemented and engineers appreciate the reduction in the number of unnecessary alerts and notifications that they previously had to deal with. The alarm management capability

Client

StorTech, South Africa

Industry

Data Center

Business challenge

- Manage alerts more efficiently
- Integrate with MS SCOM, IBM Tivoli and EMC's DPA
- Meet Service Level Agreements

Business benefits

- Faster, more agile response time
- Higher levels of customer service
- Greater business continuity
- 100% success rate in meeting the response time targets for its Managed Services clients

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frees up engineer time and enables them to focus on resolving the most critical incidents.

Jean Muller, Managed Services: Principle Consultant, StorTech, "I am very impressed with Enterprise Alert® as it is incredibly easy to install, configure and use. It forms a key part of our service offering and it has removed any human latency involved in meeting our SLA. Enterprise Alert® is also a highly flexible product and I am confident that we can integrate it with any future monitoring system that we deploy. The software gives us added visibility and control over our alerts and we can easily see what issues have occurred and how we were able to resolve them."

What business benefits has the client enjoyed as a result

Jean Muller could see that Enterprise Alert® could extend the scope of its existing monitoring systems by adding advanced notifications and remote incident management capabilities.

Jean commented, "Maintaining availability of the managed services that we provide is a vital part of our core business offering. Enterprise Alert® gives us the ability to respond to any issues before they can impact on the customer. We were particularly attracted to the software's closed loop, persistent notification functionality and its

ability to complement the incident monitoring that we get from SCOM, Netcool and DPA with notification and remote management capabilities. I am very happy with our decision to select Enterprise Alert® from Derdack and its local partner On Hand."

Enterprise Alert® has enabled StorTech to manage its resources more effectively. Rather than monitoring consoles out of office hours, engineers can now be notified under an on-call system which saves both time and resource and ultimately this benefit can be passed onto the customer in the form of reduced support costs. For example if an engineer receives notification that a backup has failed, they can remotely reinitiate the process and thus improve the success rate.

Jean praised the Derdack team stating, "Derdack provides a highly professional service and it is clear that they have looked at how an alerting and notification system can add value in a data center environment when it is seamlessly integrated with other monitoring systems. Having used Enterprise Alert® for some time now I can see that it is a truly awesome product and I would recommend it without hesitation to other companies that need to ensure business continuity."

The financial benefits of maintaining the service standards within the SLA can be considerable with each missed SLA costing

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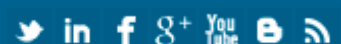
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50,000 RAND, nearly $6000. Therefore minimizing or eliminating service interruptions can provide significant ROI.

For a company with two servers and 200GB of data there are approximately 70,000 man hours of effort annually, valued at $45,000 per year. Balanced against this, the cost of deploying Enterprise Alert® is dwarfed by the benefits to be gained from preserving the data that is used to support an organization. Jean added, "When we talk through the costs and benefits with prospective customers, they very quickly see how sound the business case is for using enhanced IT monitoring."

StorTech is building a long term partnership with Derdack and expects the relationship to go from strength to strength towards a truly dynamic data center. Commenting on StorTech's future plans, Jean commented, "We are planning to upgrade to SCOM 2012 and will integrate this with Enterprise Alert®. We are also looking to use Derdack's Blackberry alerting app which will provide our engineers with a faster, more convenient method of responding to and managing alerts. This will further increase our speed of response and resolution times."

Another future initiative underway at StorTech is plans to take advantage of Enterprise Alert®'s ability to act as a centralized notification hub by integrating data and network security alerts.

Jean said, "Enterprise Alert® has helped reduce the number of critical incidents that we receive thanks to its role in our proactive incident management, we can catch problems before they become critical incidents and this ability is invaluable. 80% of our alerts relate to this type of proactive incident management (e.g. a hard drive is nearly full or failing) which enables us to respond before it becomes a critical issue. It gives us an independent method of managing alerts that is not reliant on our call logging system and I am very pleased that it has helped us achieve a 100% success rate of responding within the SLA for our managed services clients. When it comes to alerting and notification for data centers, Enterprise Alert® is in a league of its own. I consider it to be a 'must have' product and I can't see how data centers can manage without it."

Matthes Derdack, Managing Director of Derdack concluded, "A data center relies on service availability and rapid response to any critical incident and Enterprise Alert® is key to helping ensure SLAs are met. By reacting faster, problems can be settled more quickly which reduces the number of inbound support calls thus lowering the cost for the supplier."

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