



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Service Provider Uses EM7 to Simplify IT Management and Web-Based Ticketing

Apptix promises reliability to its customers: best-in-class messaging, collaboration, and productivity services hosted in its data centers that are always on and always available. ScienceLogic's EM7 Management System helps Apptix deliver on that promise with a complete solution for infrastructure monitoring and management.

Everyone wants the maximum uptime and performance from their IT infrastructure, but for service provider **Apptix ASA** of Sterling, Virginia, that's more than a goal; it's a promise. Leading service providers like IBM, HP, Bell Canada and Savvis use Apptix to deliver leading-edge hosted messaging and collaboration services to their own customers – services such as hosted Microsoft Exchange, SharePoint, and BlackBerry mobile messaging. With Apptix, they can create a full-featured offering under their own brand quickly and cost-effectively.

The Challenge

End users expect messaging services to be available 24x7 to match their demanding business schedules. To meet these requirements, Apptix delivers its services from a complex platform consisting of multiple environments in three separate data centers, located in northern Virginia, Chicago, and St. Louis. The company's investment in a top-quality messaging infrastructure has paid off with loyal customers and recognition as a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner for hosting and application services. However, monitoring and managing this complex distributed infrastructure for optimum performance and availability can be a challenge without the right tools.

According to George Velasquez, manager of engineering at Apptix, a number of systems have been used to provide the service levels and support that customers demand. Microsoft® Operations Manager (MOM) is a key piece of the monitoring puzzle, but Apptix has also used WhatsUp® Gold and NetIQ™, as well as Remydy® for managing support tickets. While each of these systems provided part of the overall monitoring solution, Velasquez says, "there was no overall view into the various systems." That made identifying problems and resolving customer issues difficult and time-consuming.

▼ OVERVIEW

Customer Profile

Apptix, a leading applications hosting company, enables service providers worldwide to offer outsourced applications and desktop services to their customers.

The Challenge Complex Service Provider Platform

- Multiple applications, environments and data centers
- Multiple point solutions managed independently, including Microsoft MOM
- About to make a substantial investment in next Remedy ticketing system

The Solution EM7

- Replace – multiple point solutions including NetIQ and Remedy
- Integration with Microsoft MOM
- Single, integrated system – network mgmt; automated alerts, ticketing and escalation; SLA management

The Results Immediate ROI

- Immediate ROI – cost avoidance
- Greater visibility and control over whole system
- Speedy, responsive IT staff for improved service levels
- Easy SLA management



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The Solution

Recognizing that a simple, unified monitoring system would help Apptix deliver the best possible services and improve support to its customers, Velasquez considered the available options. While framework solutions such as IBM® Tivoli® and HP OpenView offered many of the features that Apptix required, Velasquez felt that ScienceLogic's EM7 solution offered a distinct advantage: a cost-effective and pre-integrated appliance that combined hardware and software with rapid deployment. "Out of the box, EM7 contained almost everything we needed," he explained. "We were able to monitor and automatically escalate events for specific attributes of Sharepoint, Blackberry, Exchange and IIS application software."

Another important consideration for Apptix was the total installed cost of the solution. According to Velasquez, EM7 delivered the capabilities he wanted from a framework solution – at a fraction of the price and in a fraction of the implementation time.



Apptix was also facing a substantial re-investment in a Remedy ticketing solution. With minimal customization, EM7 delivered the Web-based event and ticketing features Apptix wanted – without the huge cost and already integrated with the other included EM7 management applications. "For each event, we can specify who to alert and how in specific, customized ways," says Velasquez. "Depending on the day, time of day, and type of event, the right person can be emailed or paged by the system. If the ticket isn't claimed, it is automatically escalated to the appropriate person. And because the system logs all events in detail, we have a complete record of activities for every incident."

The EM7 solution's out-of-the-box integration with Microsoft Operations Manager (MOM) was a particularly important feature for Apptix. "Before moving to the EM7 system, alerts from Apptix MOM servers were delivered as email messages – approximately hundreds of messages per week which had to be manually processed. Now, MOM delivers alerts into EM7, where they are organized and viewable via EM7's Web-based portal," says Velasquez.

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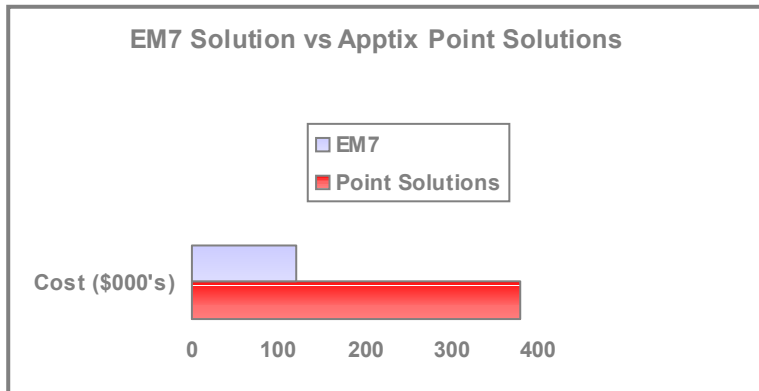


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Apptix now uses EM7 to monitor hundreds of devices; the system monitors a wide range of infrastructure elements, including Microsoft Exchange, Citrix, SQL, and Blackberry Enterprise servers. EM7 has replaced WhatsUp Gold and will also replace NetIQ.

The Results

The biggest benefit of the move to ScienceLogic’s EM7 solution, according to Velasquez, is the speed with which Apptix operations and support staff can now respond to issues. “With all the information and tools that the EM7 system provides,” says Velasquez, “we can open a ticket, research a customer issue and get all the information we need to resolve or escalate an issue on the spot.”



Further, by giving data center staff a complete view of system operations, the EM7 solution helps Apptix avoid problems that could lead to downtime. Like most service providers, Apptix operates on service level agreements (SLAs) with their customers, requiring that the company pay a financial penalty to the customer if the required level of service isn’t met. “Using EM7 reports, we can verify to our customers that we are meeting SLAs and avoid having to pay out penalties,” Velasquez says.

However, the financial benefits of using the EM7 solution are much greater than simply avoiding potential SLA payouts: by implementing ScienceLogic’s product, Apptix reduced capital expense for ticketing and monitoring by about half and lowered ongoing operating costs for immediate ROI.

Specifically, at the time of implementation, Apptix was planning to purchase a new Remedy ticketing solution. The EM7 solution provided the ticketing capabilities that Apptix required – along with its monitoring capabilities - at a price 45% lower than Remedy, not counting the additional expense of Remedy implementation and integration.

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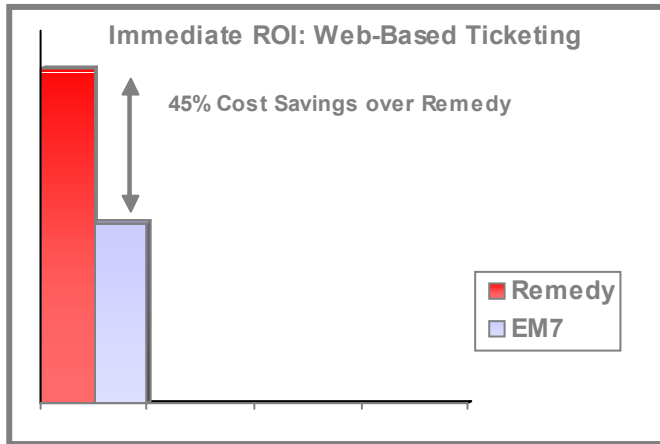
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Apptix also avoided tens of thousands of dollars in hardware costs and software maintenance fees – all while simplifying its service and monitoring procedures and freeing up staff time for other tasks.



Looking Forward

What’s next for Apptix? Based on its experience so far, Apptix plans to expand its use of EM7. Velasquez plans to roll the system out in Apptix’s third data center in St. Louis, so that it will be the primary monitoring and ticketing tool for all of Apptix’s infrastructure – managed through the US and offshore facilities.

Apptix also plans to use the EM7 solution to provide self-service options to its customers by offering them web portals through which they can access EM7 system reports directly. Because Apptix can use EM7 to define precisely what is available to customers, the company will be able to choose the right self-service options and make them available to technical contacts at customer sites - providing faster access to data while reducing support costs.

As Apptix’s business continues to grow, ScienceLogic’s EM7 solution delivers a simple, comprehensive way to monitor and manage the complex infrastructure and help service providers provide best-in-class solutions for innovative customer service and SLA management.

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