

# APMdigest

Where APM, BSM, Virtualization, and Cloud Computing Meet

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## **Silos of Shame: Why IT Must Learn to Work as One and Serve the Business** **By Charley Rich**

Those of us who have worked in enterprise IT know that it's important to have a dynamic view of the production environment in order to optimize system performance and visibility. It doesn't matter if you're in financial services or healthcare or retail, reactive problem solving burns both time and money. This is no secret, but I'm baffled to see the patterns of technology segregation and operational exclusivity continue, and until IT is able to break these habits, it forfeits the ability to drive value to the organization through dynamic performance monitoring.

Instead we have the "blame game" where the experts are all brought into a marathon session to solve a problem, but unfortunately are often focused on proving it isn't their department that is at fault rather than actually solving the problem. Why can't they solve the problem? Often, they just don't have the visibility or transparency cross-silo that is necessary in order to determine the root cause.

Until then, management of networks, Web server farms, applications servers, middleware messaging, databases and mainframes will remain segregated, with systems being governed by separate and exclusive administration tools. It isn't hard to see how this limits the organization's ability to proactively address problems. What's worse, these problems have the potential to grow beyond IT to impact the business from a customer service standpoint.

This reactionary approach means problems are primarily recognized by their symptoms after they've become impactful. In many cases, the service desk is notified as problems trickle down to the users and those users reach the end of their patience. Industry analysts report that, on average, 65 percent of problems are identified by customers before support ever recognizes them, resulting in falling customer satisfaction rates and a growing number of tickets opened at the service desk. Is anyone else as alarmed by this statistic as I am?

While this is going on you might wonder what the business is concerned with. CIOs are often concerned with ensuring they can handle competitive pressures, react to volatile markets and retain their customers. They are also focused on sustainable cost reductions. This often means improving the effectiveness of off-shoring and out-sourcing which can be a challenge with duplicate people, processes and tools in many enterprises. They need to do all of this and at the same time stay compliant with regulation and manage risk. And, they expect IT to enable them to do all of this.

But IT is still stuck in the era of fragmentation which does not help the CIO deliver what is necessary to the business. Somehow, IT admins know this is not good for their disks, but miss that it is just as bad for the organizational structures.

The next-generation application performance monitoring (APM) tools are the ones that deliver on the needs of the business. These are the ones that provide real-time analytics spanning across Web and legacy applications and ease competitive pressures by identifying issues that could prevent systems from handling volatility before it is too late.

As a result, they reduce the number and duration of outages. These next generation tools help enterprises avoid eyes-on-screen monitoring and assimilate the events from other tools into a single actionable analysis which can lead to a reduction in the number of tools. They help improve productivity by eliminating false-positive alerts and provide the vital insight into compliance with regulatory standards.

The importance of APM is greater now more than ever. In contemporary business, the smallest application performance deviation can mean the difference between beating competitors and losing to them.

With increased pressure on industries like finance and healthcare following the recession, reform has become a major focus, and the abundance of technology from ISVs offers a lot of potential for the perfect jumping-off point for this reform—beginning with each individual company.

The simple truth is that organizations have placed heavier scrutiny on IT budgets and needless spending. To truly enable IT to take a proactive stance on problem identification and resolution as a way of eliminating unnecessary and dangerous costs, companies have to equip themselves to recognize symptoms early enough to address these problems before they impact the user.

*Charley Rich is VP Product Management and Marketing at **Nastel Technologies**.*