

Control Your Service Level Agreements

This application note gives an overview of managing the challenges when outsourcing IT functions to external parties.

- **Control your outsourced IT environment**
- **Online access to direct SLA reports**
- **Prioritize your resources**
- **Proactively plan and change for a better future**

Introduction

Outsourcing parts or full functions of the IT environment is today a natural solution for many of our customers. It gives flexibility and hopefully cost control of mastering the ever changing needs for effective use of the IT systems. The challenges in the outsource scenarios are many, but generally we see that the basic technology utilized today is working ok.

The greater challenge is often more related to work of maintaining and managing the outsourced service, and thereby maximizing the quality and cost benefits. The work can be divided into:

- Everyday service and support maintenance identifying the root cause of a problem and thereby establish who is the correct owner of the problem.
- Proper and accurate Service Level Follow to assure that correct levels are met, and if not that penalty clauses are fulfilled.

A service is by nature today an integration between a multitude of network elements, programs and applications that together deliver a supporting function to your business needs.

Who owns the problem?

This seems like a simple question but in today's highly integrated network and application environment it is a challenge to quickly and accurately answer. If you can't answer this and effectively prove it you might be wasting valuable recourse and the benefits of your outsourcing are not as promised.

Part of solution	Function	Possible owner	Comment
1	Email client	User / Enterprise	
2	Local LAN connection	Enterprise	Including switches etc.
3	Active directory or similar	Enterprise	Databases, proxys etc.
4	Email server i.e. Exchange etc.	Enterprise or Outsourced	Local or remote
5	Spam filter engine	Enterprise or Outsourced	Local or remote
6	Virus engine	Enterprise or Outsourced	Local or remote
7	WAN links to O-Partner	Enterprise, O-partner or Telco	Including routers and/or VPN equipment
8	SMTP / POP3 / IMAP Gateways	Enterprise or Outsourced	
9	Firewall	Enterprise or Outsourced	

(Picture 1)

Looking at a common Email service clearly shows how a generic service cuts trough multiple layers of responsibility and possible places for errors affecting the overall performance of the service. It is imperative to service quality and cost effectiveness to quickly and automatically identify the root cause of a problem affecting the service. This enables direct ownership, response and follow up for the service and thereby decreasing downtime and spent resources.

Service Level Agreements is the vehicle for quality assurance and follow-up

As shown in the example above the actual service giving added value for the business cuts across many technical platforms and zones of responsibility. This increases the need for simple, fast and accurate SLA follow-up.

op5 Monitor SLA Monitoring gives you direct answers!

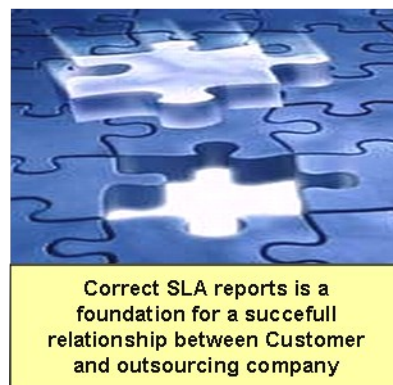
op5 Monitor supports a multitude of individually configured time schedules for service availability reports. The granularities of these reports are built up in logical steps.

- Tracking if a lack of availability is a planned or an unplanned event.
- Tracking availability versus unique service time schemes.
- Generating automatically and email distributed weekly or/and monthly availability reports.

An example: You have an Internet service provider guaranteeing you 24/7 excluding 4 hours at night before Sunday as their service window. This particular SLA scheme is configured in OP5 Monitor for this specific service. After this we enable weekly reports on the Internet service where you receive graphical and detailed reports on the availability for the service directly calculated with the 4 hours service window deducted.

Direct values for you:

- Great savings on SLA follow-up, i.e. external penalty credits.
- Planning and renegotiating existing or/and new areas for outsourcing.
 - An easy and effective way to create a plan for potential outsourcing is to set up internal SLA's and monitor the specific service before the actual outsourcing.
- Make sure that you are getting what you are paying for.
- Maximize and prioritize your own limited IT resources.



Service groups

op5 Monitor enables you to form groups of combined individual hosts and services and thereby creating a service group. As a result you can now;

1. Take all levels in **Picture 1**
2. Group them together in a service group
3. Add a unique SLA availability scheme
4. Create automatically distributed weekly or monthly reports

Summary

op5 Monitor is a perfect platform to professionally perform SLA follow-up and continuously control the effectiveness of your outsourced IT services. The solution monitors all layers of your IT, including network/infrastructure, applications and traffic flow data in to a single system.

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