

Ptak & Associates

System Management Industry Consultants

FIDELIA: Demonstrating Business Impact ***Turn operations data to competitive advantage!***

Executive Summary

The problem of access to operational data about the performance of network and IT infrastructure no longer represents a significant issue for most enterprises. Enterprises today are awash in operational data on networks, applications, user experience, processors, etc. The challenge today resides in being able to quickly interpret and react to the available data in a meaningful, actionable manner that contributes to successful business activities. Such action depends upon having quick access to a prompt, comprehensive view of the state of business operations and the status of the underlying computing and networking elements that directly influence those operations.

Managers with responsibilities ranging from business service managers to operations must be alerted to performance changes. They require detailed views and information that permit them to take appropriate action in *real time* to identify the source and resolve the problems.

Fidelia (www.fidelia.com) introduced NetVigil in mid-2002 to address infrastructure management problems for businesses dependant upon their IT and network resources. NetVigil provides for the creation of a virtual business view of the operation of the infrastructure elements critical to the delivery of a business service. These views allow prompt corrective action that can range from a re-allocation of resources to preserve timely customer access to websites to re-routing of network traffic to assure order fulfillment.

The Problem with Business Views

But surely 'business views' represent nothing new. All of the major vendors allow stringing together data about the operation of infrastructure elements and devices touched by a business service. In our opinion the business views available from other vendors typically fail in a number of areas. These include:

1. Reports based on just current state information – these provide a static view of performance and ignore valuable diagnostic and predictive information. This information can only be discovered with an analysis derived from an integration of historical reporting with real-time statistics.
2. Loose association – network and infrastructure devices are only loosely associated. Views do not account for the relationships and inter-dependencies between devices which critically impacts the delivery of business services.
3. Centralized architectures – data collected is stored and analyzed in a central location. This slows and inhibits real-time reporting, delaying awareness of the need for and execution of corrective action. It also severely limits scalability of the solution.

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Where Fidelia Stands Out

We think Fidelia NetVigil's business views actually set it apart from its competitors. Fidelia delivers a significant competitive advantage through its exploitation of four unique capabilities. NetVigil alone provides:

1. Business service monitoring built upon highly flexible, easily constructed 'container' models – NetVigil's containers are in reality virtual 'associations' of a user-defined array of network devices, elements and applications. NetVigil permits users to select the infrastructure elements that make up their particular "view" of the network.
2. Quick access views – these allow for data collected in real-time to be correlated with historical data and trending information (i.e., NetVigil performs continuous integration and aggregation of real time and historical data.)
3. Expansive, easy scalability through the uses of 'containers within containers' that allow for more complex and extensive models. With 'nesting' containers, model creation becomes both easier and more efficient in an increasingly complex operational environment.
4. Delegated-user model – which allows both the view and level of control available to the manager to be customized based on the interests, responsibilities and skills of the user (e.g., business, administrative, or operational). This also facilitates both monitoring and real-time reporting on the relationships between networked devices and applications regardless of who has the responsibility for operation or management.

Secondly, Fidelia developed their solution for enterprises that operate and KNOW they operate business critical network and IT resources. Fidelia recognizes and has designed its product to be used by individuals who implement technology to achieve business success. The network and IT resources need to be managed with the intent of optimizing their impact to contribute to business success, not any other reason.

Fidelia's management team clearly recognizes that device performance in isolation from its impact on business processes is meaningless. Fidelia understands and makes clear they understand that device and element up-down status, while interesting to the operations team, only becomes critically important to the business team in a business context. Such information becomes interesting and actionable when reported in a context that illustrates the actual operational impact of resource performance on the ability to meet business commitments.

It is for those reasons that Fidelia invests and continues to invest in providing for:

1. On-the-fly data aggregation and analysis,
2. Real-time reporting,

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3. Easy adjustment for changes in configuration and size,
4. Historical data inclusion, including trending analysis as a pro-active process,
5. An ROI resulting from ease in use, implementation, and update.

Assuming Fidelia continues to deliver on these terms, they will continue to stand out among their competitors.

The Final Word

Fidelia caught our attention with a business benefit and impact message that clearly set it apart from many of the vendors in this space. Fidelia's NetVigil product and technology provides a solution to an identifiable and pervasive business pain. They clearly described how it can be used to address business problems and describe a path forward that continually increases its utility and attractiveness to its target customers. We believe that their solution will find a receptive and rapidly growing audience in today's market.

Ptak & Associates assists enterprises in effectively evaluating and selecting system and network management strategies and solutions. Ptak & Associates assists systems and network vendors to analyze changing market conditions allowing them to tailor strategic plans accordingly. Services offered by Ptak & Associates include consulting, packaged consulting, newsletters and reports.