

Monitor automation at VGR IT

Background

Västra Götalandsregionen is one of the largest organizations in Sweden. Its IT department provides services to 55,000 employees working in hospitals, schools and daycare centers across the county.

Challenge

In an ever-changing IT environment, monitoring systems are crucial for understanding the overall health of your IT estate. Equally important is having processes in place to review and maintain these systems. Ensuring they are up-to-date is essential and requires significant investment of time and resources.

Kent Holmblad, Technical Specialist at VGR IT: "It's a full time job to add and remove hosts and services just to keep up to speed. Without consistently reviewing and updating your system, false alerts could occur more frequently, resulting in a bad user experience and low overall trust in the monitoring platform's ability to identify what's going on."

The solution? Automation.

VGR IT has been using ITRS OP5 Monitor since 2008, with huge success, monitoring well over 4,500 network elements and 50,000 services. In an ever changing IT environment, regardless of how good or easy to use the monitoring system is, ongoing maintenance take time. Opsdis got involved to automate these processes, which previously had been carried out at VGR IT largely manually.

There was already a good foundation in place. All monitored network elements at VGR IT are managed by Cisco Prime; this combined with ITRS OP5 Monitor Rest API meant a fully automated platform was in scope.

Solution breakdown

- A module that communicates with Cisco Prime (read)
- A module that communicates with ITRS OP5 Monitor (read and write)
- A logic engine that
 1. Calculates the relations between hosts in Cisco Prime for use in parent / child relations to prevent alert storms in case of outages.
 2. Compares the data from Cisco Prime and ITRS OP5 Monitor to find changes, enabling incremental updates.

With the above, a fully automated platform was put in place, ensuring that VGR IT's monitoring system was up-to-date in real-time. Kent Holmblad added: "Not only have we removed the need for manually updating the configuration, we are now confident that what's in our monitoring system correlates with the real world. It's a big step forward for us".

Jan-Åke Hovenäs, line manager at VGR IT commented: "The cmdb2monitor solution that Opsdis helped us with in combination with ITRS OP5 Monitor gives us the monitoring we need with a close to zero maintenance cost. It has really improved how we do monitoring here. We can now spend more time improving the way we monitor instead"

Spawned from the cooperation with VGR IT, Opsdis has now created a completely new modular integration platform for communication between various data sources (CMDB's) and monitoring systems. The tricky part – figuring out what should be updated – is the same regardless of data source. Thanks to the modularity it's easy to extend to support new data sources. Currently we have created OP5 Monitor automation integrations for:

- Cisco Prime
- Cisco ACI
- HP Aruba Airwave
- Quest KACE
- Infoblox NetMRI
- NeDi

We are continuously adding to this list.

"To keep on track with today's ever changing IT environments, automation is key. We put a lot of effort into making sure that ITRS OP5 Monitor has a solid API enabling our customers to integrate and automate like VGR IT did with the help of our partner Opsdis."

Lars Eshagen,

Global Head of Professional Services at ITRS Group.

"When we were asked by VGR IT to automate the maintenance of their ITRS OP5 Monitor system we were excited. "We have a strong conviction that all repetitive tasks done by humans should be automated. Working with VGR IT, we had the potential to provide them with huge time savings and much more".

Anders Håål,

CTO at Opsdis.

Contact us

If you are interested in how you can automate your ITRS OP5 Monitor system please contact

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