

Network management platforms

Company	Product	Notes
BMC Software Inc. Houston (800) 841-2031 www.bmc.com	BMC Performance Manager	Previously known as Patrol, next-generation application and server management platform combines agent and agentless approach; modules available for variety of enterprise applications and systems; can integrate with other management software such as Tivoli and OpenView
Computer Associates International Inc. Islandia, N.Y. (888) 423-1000 www.ca.com	Unicenter Network and Systems Management	Integrates tightly with the rest of CA's Unicenter operations management environment, eTrust security products and application agents, as well as with third-party agents; software can auto-discover test points for monitoring application health
	Unicenter Network Performance Management	Discovers devices, segments, links and servers, including storage area networks; collects endpoint-to-endpoint response times; supports predictive management add-on
Enterasys Networks Inc. Andover, Mass. (877) 801-7082 www.enterasys.com	Enterasys NetSight	Integrates with Enterasys network hardware and appliances, providing network bandwidth management and prioritization based on policies; also performs standards-based management in heterogeneous environments.
Hewlett-Packard Co. Palo Alto, Calif. (650) 857-1501 www.hp.com	OpenView Network Services Management	Modular, standards-based management platform can include everything from node management, to route analytics, to performance metrics; OpenView Business Process Insight provides managers a process-specific view of network events and how they impact operations
	OpenView Server Management	Manages heterogeneous blades and servers in virtual and physical environments; supports multiple operating systems
IBM Corp. White Plains, N.Y. (800) 426-4968 www.ibm.com	Tivoli NetView	Part of the Tivoli operations management platform; integrates tightly with other Tivoli components; provides Java-based console with customized view of network for each type of user; supports auto-discovery, root-cause isolation and automated problem detection and response
	Tivoli NetView Performance Monitor	Monitors, records and reports on network performance and utilization in a mainframe environment; supports OS/390 and z/OS
Micromuse Inc. San Francisco (415) 538-9090 www.micromuse.com	Netcool/Precision	Provides discovery, inventory, diagnosis and advanced correlation capabilities for layer 1, 2, and 3 networks; identifies root causes and displays impacted devices and systems on a topology map; Netcool/Visionary module collects SNMP data to provide analysis and predict problems
The OpenNMS Group Inc. Pittsboro, N.C. (919) 545-2553 www.opennms.com	OpenNMS	Open-source network management platform, based on Java, with professional installation and support programs; free acquisition and low support cost (\$99 for two supported operators); performs auto-discovery, services polling and automatic event responses
Visual Networks Inc. Rockville, Md. (301) 296.2300 www.visualnetworks.com	Visual UpTime Select	Hardware-based, modular platform focuses on network application performance management; can auto-discover applications and assess end-to-end performance; suited for tasks such as capacity planning, SLA monitoring and diagnostics in optimizing Multi-Protocol Label Switching private networks; can also integrate with OpenView, Tivoli and others

RFP checklist

Following is a list of some basic questions to help you start developing an RFP for a network management system. Depending on the size of your organization and the types of networked applications you're using, the scope of the platform you'll need to effectively manage your network will vary widely.

- ▶▶ Does the software support SNMP version 3?
- ▶▶ Does it support management of IPv6 networks?
- ▶▶ Does the software provide for automated discovery of networked devices? What types of devices can it auto-discover?
- ▶▶ Does the system provide ongoing discovery capabilities in order to alert managers of unauthorized and/or misconfigured devices?
- ▶▶ What types of software and firmware agents does the solution support and interact with? Does it provide its own agents for key applications and systems in order to perform remote diagnostics and automatic problem resolution? What type of load do these agents place on the monitored software and systems?
- ▶▶ Does it support the addition of custom agents and applications for data collection?
- ▶▶ What other types of external data can the software monitor? Does it integrate with any intrusion detection systems or other security applications? Does it integrate with key elements of distributed applications (such as enterprise resource planning and customer relationship management systems) for monitoring?
- ▶▶ How frequently does the software poll devices for network health? Is there a way to vary the polling frequency if a fault is discovered? Does the software provide a tool for optimizing polling frequency and network management traffic?
- ▶▶ Does the software use synthetic transactions to check the health of applications and services, such as domain name, Web and e-mail servers?
- ▶▶ Does the software provide event correlation capabilities to help consolidate alerts and identify a root cause? Does it perform event reduction, canceling out duplicate events? Does it correlate multiple alerts from a single device? Does it suppress alerts caused by a failure of an infrastructure element and map those alerts to the failed infrastructure element?
- ▶▶ Can the system use policies entered by an administrator to suppress, deprioritize or elevate alerts from specific systems? Does the software provide for manual correlation of dependent services and software to infrastructure elements, or the use of service models to correlate services to sets of events?
- ▶▶ What types of automated problem resolution actions can be automatically triggered by detected events?
- ▶▶ What types of configurable events are supported by the software (rule-based, policy-based, other)?
- ▶▶ Does the software allow operators to publish views of network health organized by business process, as well as by geography or type of asset?
- ▶▶ What types of historical reports can be generated by the software, and in what formats? What type of service-level-agreement reporting and enforcement features does the software have?
- ▶▶ How many network objects can be tracked by a single server?
- ▶▶ What types of event notification are supported (e-mail, instant message, pager, phone, phone text message)?