



About Blue Tangerine Solutions

2 LOCATIONS

Vero Beach and Melbourne, Florida

WEBSITE

www.bluetangerinesolutions.com/

BUSINESS

Web hosting and managed services provider (MSP).

INDUSTRY

Internet

EMPLOYEES

12

DEVICES MONITORED

40 VMs on 4 hosts internally plus 10 physical servers located elsewhere.

PREVIOUS MONITORING SOLUTION

Hobbit

WHY GROUNDWORK

Agent-less and configurable notifications.

BUSINESS DRIVER

Maintaining agents was time-consuming.

NEXT MONITORING IMPROVEMENT

Monitor SLAs in future phase.

When downtime spells “D-E-A-D”

Web hoster finds GroundWork Monitor Enterprise mission-critical to operations

What happens if the monitoring solution for Florida Web hosting company Blue Tangerine Solutions doesn't detect problems as they begin to develop? “If it doesn't work, we're dead,” says Joe Reinig, Senior Network Engineer. “It usually takes about 10 minutes before we get our first call from a client. Our customers pay us a lot of money not to go down.”

Although monitoring is mission-critical for Blue Tangerine Solutions, Reinig wasn't satisfied with the open source Hobbit monitoring software he inherited from his predecessor. Every machine required an agent, and maintaining the agents stretched Reinig and one other employee in the overworked network administration department—the two men standing between Blue Tangerine Solutions and business disaster.

Configuring machines in Hobbit was clunky, Reinig says, “more similar to Nagios, not as easy as GroundWork.”

After an evaluation that spanned Nagios and Dell Open Manage—and even a second look at Hobbit—Blue Tangerine Solutions switched to GroundWork Monitor.

“GroundWork Monitor Enterprise (GWME) is more powerful and has more support than our previous solution. It is also a lot more configurable and more granular. That gives me the ability to know what's happening on my network,” Reinig says.

Blue Tangerine Solutions hosts a diverse range of technologies: web sites, Ex-

change servers and SQL Server databases for Central Florida businesses, not to mention various firewalls and the company's VoIP phone system. The environment is largely Windows and entirely virtualized with VMware. Using Windows Management Instrumentation (WMI), Blue Tangerine Solutions runs GWME without agents.

In addition, Reinig must monitor customer web sites and FTP servers hosted elsewhere so that Blue Tangerine Solutions

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knows if they go down. GWME is built to monitor such applications running outside of Blue Tangerine Solutions' facility.

Blue Tangerine Solutions utilizes GroundWork's profiles to monitor Windows and SQL Server plus Web Inject, a Nagios plug-in for web site health and performance. With GWME, users can run all Nagios plug-ins natively and GWOS has created 75 exclusive profiles, including the ones Blue Tangerine Solutions uses, for added functionality.



Monitoring Summary

PREVIOUS MONITORING SOLUTION
Hobbit

ISSUES
Agents required too much maintenance, not flexible enough.

EVALUATED
Nagios, Dell Open Manage, Hobbit.

SELECTED
GroundWork Monitor Enterprise.

REASONS
Power, ease of use.

MONITORING COVERAGE
40 VMs on 4 hosts, and 10 physical servers elsewhere.

“Primarily we use GroundWork to monitor, alert, and track uptime of the range of services we offer our clients – web hosting, e-mail hosting, terminal services, FTP access. Secondly, we use GWME to track resource usage over the long term across our server farm,” says Reinig. “My deployment is far more service-oriented than it is hardware-based.”

In the future, formalizing informal SLAs (“Everyone expects to be up 100% of the

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time”) will allow Blue Tangerine Solutions to boost prices for higher service levels, and GroundWork Monitor Enterprise can monitor the planned SLAs.

Reinig relies on GWME’s highly configurable notifications, which mean he’s wakened at 2 a.m. by an SMS alert for serious issues, but not disturbed by transient problems or lesser issues that can wait until business hours. He sets the alerts himself.

Swapping out Hobbit for his GroundWork Monitor Enterprise implementation took Reinig a mere 60 minutes, speeded by GroundWork’s bundled training.

With GroundWork Monitor Enterprise, says Reinig, monitoring has gone from being a time-consuming headache to a tool that helps the business.

“When I get an alert that a customer’s internet connection was down overnight, even though we are not responsible for that connection, I call the customer when I get to the office. It’s good for customer relations,” Reinig said.

For Blue Tangerine Solutions, GWME’s ability to consolidate all the servers under management onto a single dashboard makes life much easier for Reinig and his colleague.

“The consolidated dashboard is huge for us,” said Reinig. “If we had to look at a different console for each customer, something might go down, and we’d miss it. With GWME, hopping from console to console is a thing of the past.”

ABOUT GWOS

San Francisco-based GroundWork Open Source, Inc. (GWOS) is the market leader in commercial open source network and systems management software, delivering enterprise-class network, system and application management solutions at a fraction of the cost of proprietary solutions.

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