Case study

NEC Australia optimises network management to reduce costs

NEC Australia improves system reliability and lowers costs

**Industry**
Information Technology

**Objective**
Reduce the complexity of managing the communications networks of 5,000 customers Australia-wide, improve staff productivity and meet Service Level Agreements

**Approach**
Deploy automated monitoring agents to validate that networks and devices are performing as expected; leverage real-time visibility and collected data to speed incident resolution and minimise system downtime

**IT matters**
- Automated network and device management processes
- Reduced time in executing network password changes by 95 per cent
- Decreased mean-time-to-repair and minimised network downtime
- Enhanced service, application and infrastructure agility

**Business matters**
- Achieved return on investment in just six months
- Reduced risk of network and device failure through detailed monitoring
- Realised cost savings through automation and increased productivity
- Reduced labour costs by $20,000 per annum by customising HP Operations Manager for Windows

“HP Network Automation has enabled us to standardise and consolidate our network management processes to deliver fast, reliable services to our customers. We now have a resilient, maintainable and cost-effective network that meets compliance standards and government regulations. This has translated into higher customer satisfaction, which is evidenced by our growth, as we have doubled in size since 2009.”

– Cameron Craig, network operations centres and TAC manager, NEC Australia

**HP solutions simplify network and operations management and maximise productivity**

To improve the reliability, stability and performance of its customers’ networks and associated devices, NEC Australia adopted an integrated HP solution that provides a holistic, automated approach across the network management domain of fault, availability, performance, and change, configuration, compliance and process automation.
NEC Australia is a leading technology company, delivering a complete portfolio of ICT solutions and services to large enterprise, small business and government customers. NEC Australia helps customers gain greater business value from their technology investments.

NEC Australia specialises in communications solutions and services in multi-vendor environments, including systems integration, specialist communications solutions, data networking, unified communications and collaboration, biometrics, digital signage and display solutions. Its IT solutions services comprise business and IT transformation consultancy, professional services, application and solutions development and infrastructure and applications managed services.

When NEC Australia needed to simplify the way it managed the communications networks of almost 5,000 customers nationwide, while at the same time engaging staff efficiently and meeting its service level agreements, the company turned to HP. In 2009, it adopted HP Network Automation software to automate, simplify and standardise network management. In doing so, it has reduced labour costs, automated processes, met compliance requirements and decreased mean-time-to-repair, while realising a six-month payback on its HP investment.

Since then, NEC Australia has increased the footprint of its HP solutions with the integration of HP Network Automation software, HP Network Node Manager software, HP Performance Insight software, HP Operations Manager software, HP Application Performance Manager Product and HP Business Service Management (BSM) Dashboard.
“Together, these solutions enable our IT team to improve service through faster incident resolution and closed-loop change management,” adds Cameron. “This is particularly important for some of our customers in the emergency services sector whose networks are mission-critical and can have an impact on life or death situations. HP allows us to prevent network downtime and increase stability of emergency network services like never before. If there is an issue, we can react quickly to emerging threats and vulnerabilities and undertake rapid remediation before the network is even affected.”

Additional solutions implemented by NEC Australia include HP Operations Manager, which provides comprehensive fault and performance monitoring and analysis across IT infrastructure, HP Performance Insight which delivers real-time visibility into the health of client services, and HP Application Performance Manager Product which offers a single integrated view of web infrastructures. This is all brought together with HP BSM Dashboard, which delivers a snapshot view of important information.

“Having a full complement of HP Software has broadened and deepened the services we offer to our customers,” says Cameron. “As a result, NEC Australia is more competitive in the marketplace and our operational platform is solid, robust and proven. More importantly, our customers have total confidence in our ability to support their systems, knowing we are backed by a range of HP best practice solutions.”

**Benefit**

Automation and the ability to standardise business processes has delivered considerable productivity gains to NEC Australia.

“HP allows us to do a lot more with the same amount of resources,” explains Cameron. “While we now monitor 70 per cent more elements (than three years ago), our IT resources (full time equivalent costs) have not increased even though we service more customers.”

To this end, NEC Australia recently won a large contract for a law enforcement agency, which will see the company manage networks in 500 locations and monitor more than 2,000 elements around Australia. To service this customer, NEC Australia will not have to increase staff levels due to the efficiencies and intelligence they can leverage from the HP Software.

**Cost savings**

In addition to productivity gains, NEC Australia is benefiting from significant cost savings.

“Before adopting HP, we were getting bogged down in highly-manual and time-consuming tasks,” explains Cameron. “It was an inefficient use of our people’s time and our labour costs were increasing. As a result, we examined how we could leverage technology to perform network and fault performance management more efficiently and cost-effectively.”
“HP Network Automation allows us to automate the complete operational lifecycle of network devices from provisioning to policy-based change management, compliance and security management. This feature alone has delivered incredible savings to NEC Australia. For example, the manual task of changing a client’s network passwords used to take a week. With HP Network Automation, it now takes only two hours, which is a 95 per cent reduction in time. The end-result is that we considerably reduced our labour costs, decreased scheduled after-hours changes and significantly cut down overtime charges.

“HP allows us to do a lot more with the same amount of resources. While we now monitor 70 per cent more elements than three years ago, our IT resources (full time equivalent costs) have not increased even though we service more customers.”

– Cameron Craig, network operations centres and TAC manager

“The increase in network visibility has also reduced incidents and decreased NEC Australia’s mean-time-to-repair. We now have detailed information about network devices and infrastructure, can access records of configuration changes for managed devices, receive notifications of changes in real-time and have immediate visibility into planned, unplanned and unauthorised changes. Overall, we have less downtime, less incidents and less end-user issues. Our customers continue to be delighted with this impressive outcome, as their networks are more reliable and stable, while downtime has been minimised.”

Another example of how NEC Australia is achieving costs savings is through customisation. "We recently retired our PABX monitoring solution in favour of HP Operations Manager for Windows, due to its functionality, adaptability and scaleability," explains Cameron. "By customising HP Operations Manager for Windows so it monitors our customers’ PABX systems, we have mitigated the risk of maintaining a solution that is no longer supported and reduced our ongoing labour costs by $20,000 per annum."

Looking ahead

HP will continue to play a key role as the operational backbone of NEC Australia’s IT infrastructure. The company plans to enhance integration between HP solutions to derive even more efficiency gains and will complete a range of migrations to take advantage of the latest functionality.

“We will shortly upgrade our HP solutions to better equip our team to troubleshoot and increase first call resolution or first detection resolution,” says Cameron. “This includes HP Network Node Manager i software, HP Network Node Manager iSPI software, HP Operations i software and HP Business Availability Center software. We will also deploy HP ArcSight Logger software to enhance the correlation and consolidation of logs as well as improve threat detection. Ultimately we plan to expand our services to provide a full end-to-end solution to our customer base including application and security monitoring.

“HP allows us to help our customers get the most out of their technology investment. These best-in-class solutions have greatly enhanced NEC Australia’s systems and competitive differentiation. They are also helping us to better meet our service levels and deliver robust services to our expanding customer base."

Learn more at hp.com/go/networking