



— Sheffield Hallam University —

Sheffield Hallam is the 3rd largest University in the UK



The Need For IT Monitoring

Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) had many disconnected and separate monitoring systems covering all of their internal IT infrastructure, with no consistency of items being monitored. One of their core monitoring tools had a difficult upgrade path which required a full re-installation.

Why Opsview?

Opsview was able to meet SHU's requirement that the new monitoring software was easy to install, maintain and configure. In addition, Opsview was able to offer the best community support as well as ensure writing new checks was easy and straight forward.

Deployment and Result

After a successful implementation, Sheffield Hallam University was able to centrally monitor their many IT systems, which are spread over two campuses. With over 37,000 students SHU now have a single overview of their entire IT operations regardless of the technology, service or location.

About

Sheffield Hallam University is the third largest in the UK, with more than 37,000 students and 4,170 staff all situated over two campuses. City Campus is located in the city center, close to Sheffield railway station, and Collegiate Crescent Campus is about two miles away, adjacent to Ecclesall Road in southwest Sheffield.

IT is a vitally important part of student life, which is why the University invest in their IT facilities to make sure the students have the resources and technical support they need.



Industry: Education
Location: Sheffield
Employees: 4170



The Need for Opsview

SHU previously had many disconnected and separate monitoring systems covering all aspects of their internal IT infrastructure. The end goal was to have a single overview of their entire IT operations - regardless of the technology, service, support team or location.

Previous systems were utilizing a simple traffic light status summary and SHU wanted to maintain this simplicity for non-technical personnel to view and interpret the information.

Various tools were being used to monitor their systems health, some open source, some written in-house and some commercially licensed. There was no overall consistency of items being monitored or warning thresholds having been configured. Live monitoring information was not made available across the company and therefore the IT department's efforts were not visible to the wider business.

Why Opsview?

SHU was initially looking for a free monitoring system to complement their shareware and in-house developed tools.

Many Nagios based products were tested, but eventually Opsview was found to be the easiest to install, configure and maintain.

In addition, one of the core monitoring tools being used by SHU had a difficult upgrade path, which required a full re-installation with the deployment of each new version. This meant important data was frequently lost during upgrades, resulting in additional work for the IT department. Issues such as these eventually prompted SHU to look for a suitable replacement.

This academic environment has a large IT infrastructure spread over two campuses for Disaster Recovery purposes, comprising various versions of Windows servers, RedHat, SUSE, and Solaris, along with multiple large SQL installations including MS SQL, Oracle and MySQL. SHU also have a large SharePoint farm and numerous web servers. Adding to the complexity is an extensive VMware ESX environment, which has 50 host servers and over 600 guest servers.

It also offered the best community support and writing new custom checks was relatively straightforward. In addition, the full vendor-led support provided by Opsview as part of their subscription, justified the additional expenditure.



Deployment and Result

Following the new deployment, Sheffield Hallam University ran their existing systems alongside Opsview for a short period of testing before full replacement. Useable information was being relayed by Opsview within a day, with more in-depth monitoring information provided within only a week.

SHU attended Opsview's training courses to help give them a better understanding of implementing and developing various service checks. Now self-sufficient following training, SHU continue to add more useful custom checks as each new service is commissioned, or a new service is encountered. This in turn has allowed them to be much more proactive, as they are now alerted as soon as a problem arises rather than when a customer has already reported the problem. With Opsview, they have minimized service disruptions to their customers.



Only needing to contact Opsview's support services on a handful of occasions, SHU have found the assistance provided to be prompt and any issues were quickly resolved. SHU's monitoring strategy is now based around a single Opsview server to monitor 700 servers and 5000 services and they have found the software to be reliable and extremely efficient in supporting their IT operations.

About Opsview

Opsview makes it easier for sysadmins to do their jobs by offering comprehensive and customizable systems monitoring. The Opsview platform enables sysadmins to easily monitor the complex enterprise IT environments that support critical business services, with native support for more than 3,500 technology plugins and integrations with IT operations tools. Highly configurable dashboards allow sysadmins to effectively visualize and report on the health of their IT infrastructure, enabling proactive maintenance. Opsview is trusted by hundreds of businesses, government organizations and managed service providers globally. Customers include MIT, Sky, Cisco, IBM, Telefónica, Daimler, British Telecom, Fujitsu, AXA and VMware.

Try Opsview at www.opsview.com

