University of Surrey

The University of Surrey is a leading university located within the county town of Guildford.

UNIVERSITY OF SURREY

The Need For IT Monitoring

Traditional siloed approach to monitor-ing was no longer adequate for the University, especially on service level checks of the network. There was a need for one tool that would pool all performance information together to see level of service to users rather than just infrastructure checks.

Why Opsview?

Opsviews software provides the ability to proactively alert the IT team to any performance issues. The easy to navigate dashboard lets the University quickly asses anything in the network and provides a more accurate and real time view to eliminate service outages for both faculty and students.

Deployment and Result

Following an implementation period where the University worked with Opsview to educate IT staff on the new monitoring platform, the organization has evolved from having a basic view of performance to enjoying a more streamined view. The implementation was successful and now supports services including HR, finance, and residential services.

About

The University of Surrey provides further education to just under 16,000 students and has over 2,000 staff spanning four faculties. The University relies heavily on a central IT infrastructure through which vital functions such as student registration, library applications, email services and the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) are run.

With so many end-users using so many different services, the organization's IT is under constant pressure to perform efficiently and enable students / staff to work effectively.
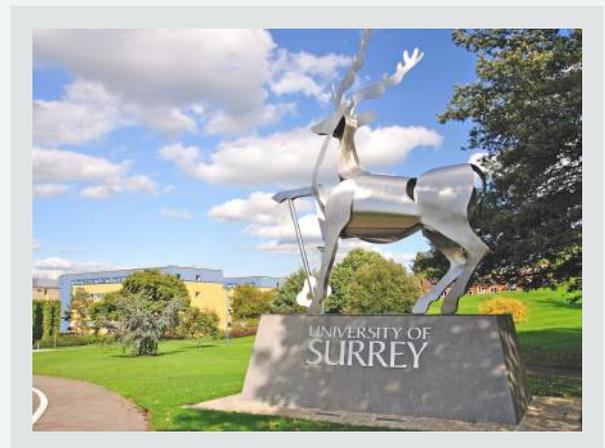
Industry: Education
Location: Guildford. Surrey
Employees: 2400

The Need for Opsview

The University of Surrey had previously relied on a number of monitoring tools that assessed the performance of specific components of the IT environment. This would tell them whether the servers were working, or whether the network was experiencing problems. However they did not provide an end-to-end view of service performance. For example, assessing email service delivery would require the team to check a number of different monitoring tools that focused on different parts of that service. The University needed an end-to-end view in order to run services more effectively. The traditional siloed approach to monitoring was no longer adequate as the University strived to provide the best learning experience in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Hilary Sherlock, Networks & Operations Team Leader at Surrey University, explains: "We manage a complex IT environment with different monitoring tools assessing different parts of the infrastructure. We needed one tool that would pool all performance information together to help us understand whether we were providing good service to end users across the various central IT functions - telling us not simply whether components such as the servers were 'up or down', but what overall service performance looked like, what response times were and highlighting potential problem areas. Effectively, we needed to move from monitoring the technologies involved in our infrastructure to monitoring overall IT service. However, the University relies on IT 24/7 so overhauling our monitoring was a huge challenge. As such, speed of implementation was a top priority to ensure IT monitoring and, ultimately, IT performance was improved without any disruption to students and staff."

Why Opsview?

With the challenges laid out and the specifications drawn up, the University began to look for a monitoring tool that would provide an in-depth, single view of all areas of the central IT estate – whether based on Windows or Linux. Vital in this search was the requirement that the new tool be able to proactively alert the IT team to any performance problems with the services it was running.

The team would then be able to remedy the problem efficiently before it escalated and affected end users.

After evaluating a number of monitoring tools, the University chose to implement Opsview Enterprise to provide this consolidated real time view of IT performance. Opsview Enterprise is a scalable and flexible platform that provides network, IT, server, application and cloud monitoring.

The software's easy to navigate dashboard let the university quickly assess the performance of all areas of IT. In the University of Surrey's case, this means monitoring central IT services 24/7 to ensure they are meeting the needs of end users.
"We chose Opsview for a number of reasons. The software itself provides exactly the right level of analysis we need to run IT effectively.

Students trying to, for example, submit essays will not care that the network is 'running' if it's running with a 5 second lag time. We knew Opsview would give us the real time insight to solve such issues before students and staff start calling us. Opsview would act as our eyes and ears on the ground – providing a central source of performance information from across the entire estate."

Deployment and Result

Following an implementation period where the University worked closely with Opsview to educate IT staff on the new monitoring platform, the organization has evolved from having a basic view of performance to enjoying a more accurate, real time, view. The implementation was completed successfully and now supports services including HR, finance, student registration, email and residential services. It also helps keep the VLE online by continually monitoring the performance of the service and its various functions such as log in, search and video streaming. As a remote learning tool for students and a major selling point for the institution, hitting SLAs on this is vital and Opsview Enterprise has dramatically improved IT's ability to meet the targets.

"We're delighted with the way the implementation went and the results we are getting from Opsview Enterprise. Not only do we have a much more in-depth view of IT, we also save time that was previously spent tracking all of the various monitoring tools separately.

We don't need to spend hours going through each monitoring tool, checking each area of IT is working correctly. Instead, we log in to Opsview and check the status from one dashboard. That saves us a lot of time that we can then spend on managing IT and improving service delivery even further. Ultimately, what we needed was a tool that helped us meet our SLAs and this is exactly what we now have in place. The result is that, since roll out, service delivery has improved to the extent that IT has been praised as an asset to the University," Sherlock concluded.

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