

MSPs: It's Time for Your IT Monitoring to Grow Up

Managing IT Like an Enterprise

Growing up isn't easy. You have to shoulder new responsibilities, shed habits of the past and be prepared to take chances. But you also gain the freedom to make your own decisions and, when things go right, enjoy the fruits of your hard work.

What's true in life is also true in the IT channel. Many managed services providers (MSPs) started small. They built their own solutions and thrived by being innovative. But as the market gets increasingly competitive, many MSPs are clinging to IT practices and products they've outgrown.

Clients today have higher standards for IT. Businesses want apps, services and infrastructure that enable productivity, and these tools have to be available around the clock. MSPs need to be able to show how all of these devices and services are performing at any given time.

Can you afford to have your engineers spend time writing custom software or hacking around with cheap products?

Probably not. Your techs needs to be focused on the customer and your company needs to focus on being a true service partner. That means your IT monitoring needs to grow up.

Here's how.



51%
of IT pros say they
intend to invest in
virtualization¹



71%
of IT pros say IT is more
critical to business
strategy¹



39%
of IT pros had their IT
budget increase this
year¹



58%
of IT pros say they
intend to invest in IT
monitoring¹

“Ending the freeware era”

IT admins are used to cobbling together solutions and using freeware tools. But a mature business can't rely on technologies that can't scale.

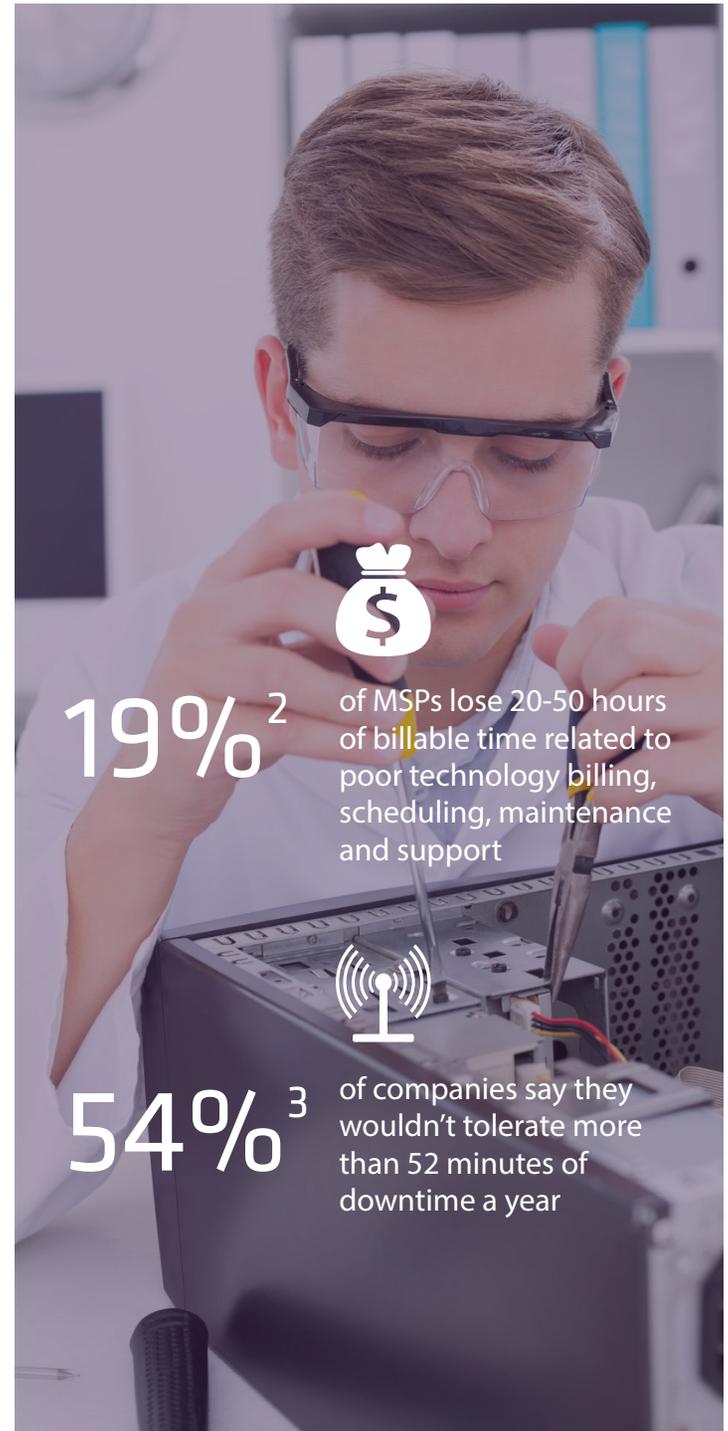
A lot of MSPs start the same way: an enterprising IT administrator strikes out to establish his or her own business. As a one-man shop trying to maintain profitable margins, it's natural to rely on freeware or lower-end solutions to support clients.

To fill in the gaps, MSPs write custom scripts or buy other low-end solutions. Before you know it, you're using a half-dozen IT monitoring solutions to cover your clients and your techs spend more time trying to duct-tape together a monitoring infrastructure than they do actually helping customers.

But you're not the lone IT guy anymore. You're a full-fledged business that needs to nimbly meet customer problems. You can make some quick improvements by investing in a unified IT monitoring solution that offers a single pane of glass to view all of your clients' environments.

By monitoring all of your customers from one flexible platform, you cut down on the amount of time wasted on inefficient technology and you save money by eliminating redundant tools.

Custom scripts & low-end solutions can help MSPs grow, but they won't help the business grow up.



GROWN-UP IT MONITORING OFFERS...

Diverse Compatibility



A platform that monitors diverse endpoints



Support for each client's preferred tools



IT tracking capabilities for each customer

Multi-Tenancy



Full visibility into all clients' systems from one view



Dashboards for each client



All client data is kept separate

Deep Integrations



Flexible plugins and integrations



A unified platform for service delivery



Integration with mgmt platform & help desk solutions

Freeware solutions can't scale with a growing business and growing businesses can't scale with freeware solutions.





IT with a View

With offices across the U.S. and U.K., Open Systems Technologies (OST) has experienced steady growth in revenue and clients since opening its doors in 2003. Much of OST's internal infrastructure runs on Linux, but the company's customers use a wide range of open and proprietary platforms. To support this wide range of technology, OST needed to step up its monitoring capabilities without being burdened with a high-dollar, inefficient enterprise solution. The free product they were using, Nagios Core, required too much customization to be practical anymore.

OST chose Opsview Enterprise, which offered broad technology coverage, easy integration with its service desk and deep reporting to enable better client conversations – without the price tag of most high-end systems. "Our commitment to using Opsview's dashboards in our new portal is a compelling proposition for existing and prospective clients and more than meets today's competitive pressures," explained Mathew Glenn, head of OST's Managed Services Division.

“proving value with reports”

Customers want to know that every dollar they spend for your service is worth it. How easily are you able to prove it?

As MSPs grow, client needs and infrastructure become more sophisticated. Especially as things get more expensive.

In your adolescent phase, you might have been able to get away with Excel sheets and charm to demonstrate how consistently you met your Service Level Agreements (SLAs).

But that doesn't work when clients want real-time visibility into their networks and hard numbers to prove that they're getting the most bang for their buck.

Business Service Monitoring (BSM) can help show value by defining which servers and applications are supporting key business components, from the website, to eCommerce, to the payroll system.

As a result, you can proactively send your client dashboards showing why a website is running slowly and propose solutions before they've even had a chance to report the problem.

That's the type of deep reporting that makes a real difference to your customers and shows them why they picked the right IT partner.

A mature IT monitoring tool can create dashboards with real-time reports for every business element.





Opsview BSM Summary dashboard showing various services and their availability. The dashboard includes a grid of service tiles and a detailed table for Business Service.

Business Service	Availability	Status	Operational Detail
CNN.com	0%	Offline	1 of 4 Component(s) failed; 2 impacted
CRM	0%	Offline	1 of 6 Component(s) failed; 2 impacted
Google Search	100%	Operational	1 of 5 Component(s) impacted
BBC London	100%	Operational	1 of 6 Component(s) impacted
Amazon.co.uk	100%	Operational	2 of 5 Component(s) impacted
Customer A	100%	Operational	3 of 4 Component(s) impacted

Know Your Audience

Business Service Monitoring (BSM) in Opsview lets you model consumable services across the business – from VoIP phone systems, to email, to the company website and more. When everything is modeled, you can create real-time visual dashboards and notifications to report back to your clients, with varying levels of sophistication.

From high-level views that offer executives a snapshot of their IT operations to detailed drilldowns to help you pinpoint problem areas for your clients' IT director, you can use Opsview Enterprise to deliver the right reporting framework no matter your audience.

By configuring Opsview for consumable business services, both in BSM and keywords, MSPs can create real-time presentations with notifications based on keywords, BSM components, BSM services and historical reporting. This allows you to capture the view of business services like never before, visualizing a history of network behavior and user trends.

“embracing the brand”

MSPs need to distinguish the company by the quality of the brand, not just the technology being sold.

At some point in your company’s development, you’ll need to step away from the service desk, let your techs handle day-to-day IT management and start focusing on the business side of being a service provider. A big step to growing up as an MSP is establishing your brand.

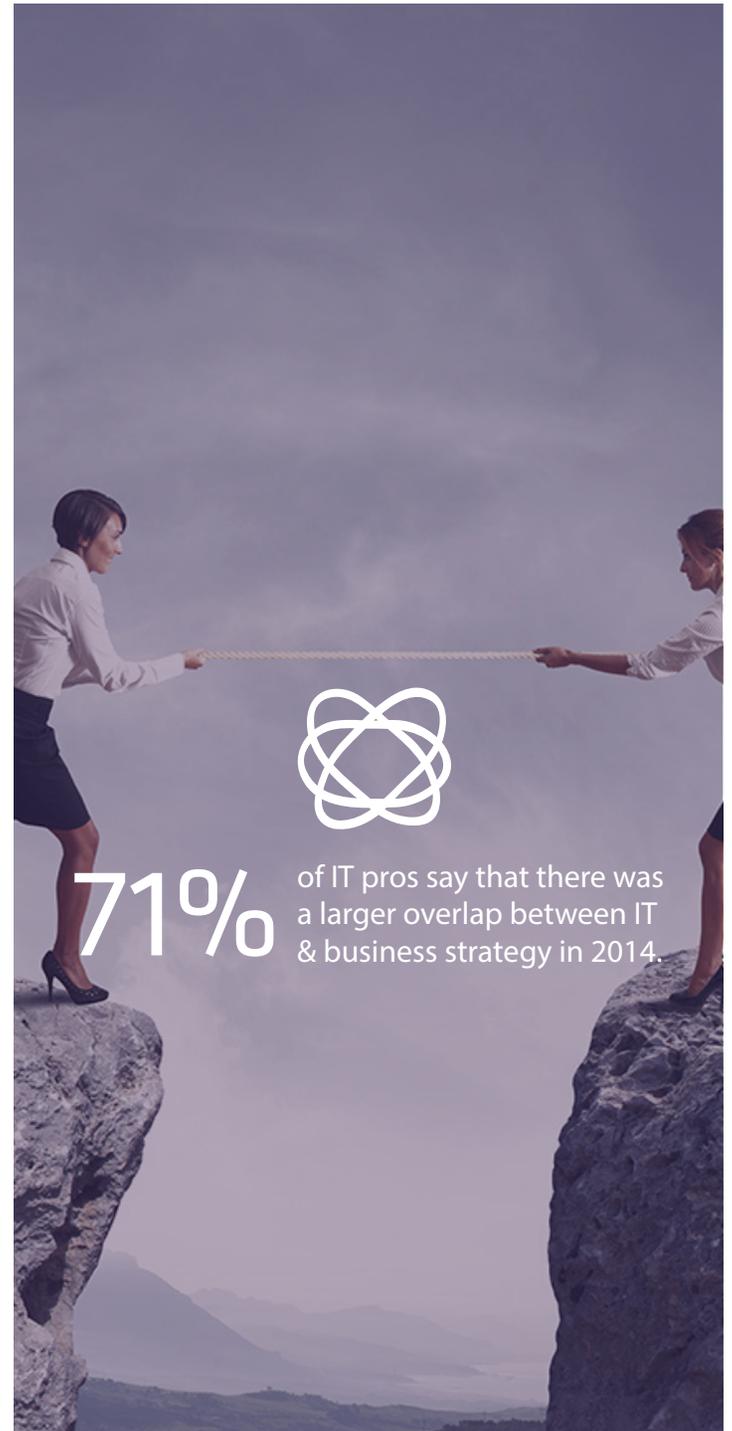
Managed services is a highly commoditized and crowded industry. One survey revealed that 37 percent ⁵ of MSPs report having seven or more direct competitors. As a result, it’s hard for clients to decide on a partner – how do you know if one MSP is better than the rest if they all offer similar services?

White-label IT monitoring allows you to recast the software and reports with your own company logos and colors, so customers identify with your branding – not your vendor’s.

And with auto-discovery capabilities, your IT monitoring platform can help drive new revenue. By proactively taking stock of a client’s technology environment, you can identify opportunities to upsell different managed services. For example, newly added servers will need to be protected, and you can approach your client about adding these machines to a data backup plan.

That’s just one example of how the right monitoring tool helps you build a mature, revenue-generating brand.

More than a third of MSPs report having seven or more direct competitors.



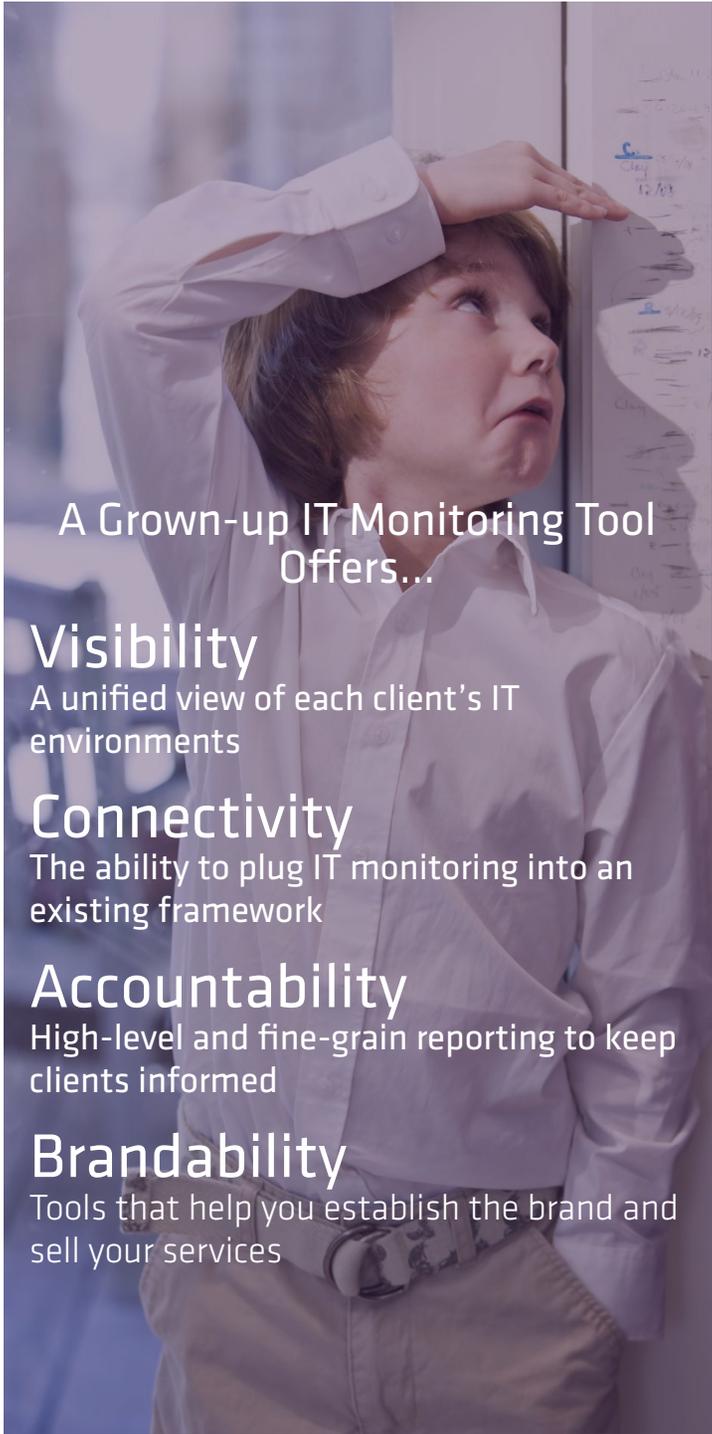
We all have to grow up eventually. Maturing in managed services means adding new revenue opportunities, engaging new clients and expanding your business.

And while being a grownup does come with more responsibilities, you can still be an established MSP without sacrificing the agility, energy and fearlessness of your company's early days.

It all comes down to the identity you build for your business. An enterprise-grade IT monitoring solution can help you establish a powerful, service-led brand by giving you the tools to start managing your clients like an enterprise and creating an unforgettable customer experience.

It's a brave world out there, and your customers expect a lot. To meet their expectations and distinguish your business in a crowded market, you need to embrace a more sophisticated approach to service delivery.

A grown-up IT monitoring solution can get you there.



A Grown-up IT Monitoring Tool Offers...

Visibility

A unified view of each client's IT environments

Connectivity

The ability to plug IT monitoring into an existing framework

Accountability

High-level and fine-grain reporting to keep clients informed

Brandability

Tools that help you establish the brand and sell your services

1. Opsview Network & IT Survey 2014
<http://www.autotask.com/lp/metrics-that-matter-2014> 2014 Metrics that Matter, Autotask, April 2014
2. "http://www.stratus.com/~media/Stratus/Files/Library/AnalystReports/ITICStratusftServer-SQLServerReliabilityReport.pdf Stratus ftServer and SQL Server Deliver Continuous Availability" Information Technology Intelligence Consulting, January 2012
3. http://www.gfi.com/documents/max_survey.pdf IT Support & Managed Service Providers Survey Analysis GFI Max, June 2009
4. <http://the2112group.com/product/2014-channel-forecast-the-shrinking-channel/> 2014 Channel Forecast: The Shrinking Channel The 2112 Group February 2014



Thanks for reading our eBook!

We're Opsview, an IT monitoring company that's helping take IT monitoring tools to the next level. We work with MSPs around the world to deliver enterprise-grade IT monitoring that delivers greater insight into their clients' environments and drives consistent recurring revenue.

We offer a flexible pricing structure to help you drive the highest profit margins from IT monitoring. Our highly configurable platform empowers you with everything you need to keep an eye on thousands of devices, from a multi-tenant architecture, to clean and detailed reports, to seamless integrations with the rest of your IT tools.

We believe that to succeed in an increasingly competitive managed services market, you need a foundation of tools that let you build a service-oriented brand. Opsview is here to help.

What We Do



**DOWNLOAD A
FREE TRIAL TODAY!**

www.opsview.com
info@opsview.com
+1.866.662.4160

800 West Cummings Park
Suite 6350
Woburn, MA
01801-7200