

# 5 Questions You Should Ask About Your Monitoring Tools

Do your IT teams suffer from too much data and not enough insight? The problem may be that you are using too many monitoring tools. Take this short quiz...If you answer “yes” to any of these questions, it’s time to take a strategic look at your performance monitoring tools.

## 1 Do you commonly use a handful of separate monitoring tools to troubleshoot a single workflow?

A recent study from Enterprise Management Associates shows that the typical large enterprise uses between 6 and 10 network monitoring and troubleshooting tools. This number does not even include the products they have sitting on the shelf or other types of monitoring solutions like application performance or end-user experience monitoring. Astonishingly, 10% of large enterprises use more than 25 tools!<sup>1</sup>

Many of these tools are open source or custom in-house tools that have been designed for a specific function. The problem with this multi-tool approach is that it is fragmented and it is difficult to maintain and keep all the disparate tools in sync with one another. Each tool must be individually installed, configured, maintained, and supported. If possible at all, integration between tools is a manual process. Not only can this negatively affect work efficiency, but also ultimately will lead to poorer total cost efficiency.

In fact, what results is that network teams end up spending about two-thirds of their time troubleshooting and only one-third on more strategic projects.

A better option is to use one performance monitoring tool that gets you 90% of what you need, but through REST APIs and Riverbed SteelScript, gives you the flexibility to build the extensions you need to tailor the solution to your specific environment.

## 2 Is collaboration across IT silos difficult or impossible?

IT organizations evolved as teams of specialists focused on specific technology domains. When trouble strikes, IT groups circle the wagons and use their tools to prove domain innocence. Often this leads to finger pointing and a lack of collaboration with other domain groups.

Domain-specific management systems provide visibility into a single technology domain, like network, infrastructure, or application performance. They align to the skill sets of the engineers and administrators in these silos, and they fail to deliver an end-to-end view of application environment.

The key problem of silos-based monitoring is that it increases operational costs, including staff and capital costs. It slows deployment of software and the provisioning of new applications, and, the lack of centralized control also leads to increased diagnostic and troubleshooting time.

<sup>1</sup>“Network Management 2012: Megatrends in Technology, Organization, and Process,” EMA Research, February 2012.

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### 3 Does your team lack an end-to-end view of how infrastructure affects service quality and end-user experience?

The need for an integrated approach to monitoring application performance becomes pretty obvious when you take into account the following factors. In today's hybrid IT reality, staying on top of application performance is really tough.

Today, an "application" is not just the software code sitting on a server. It also consists of

- A very complex combination of multiple services called by the app;
- Data that might be in multiple databases in multiple locations;
- Physical and virtual servers hosted in on-premise datacenters and in the cloud;
- Multiple networks connecting the data and services;
- Intricate application software architectures;
- End users accessing the application on many device types from many locations

In this environment, any piece of the puzzle, any flaw in the service—from server failure to issues within the code, a problematic database, network latency, or user device compatibility—can slow the application down or cause it to fail completely.

Without visibility into each component of the application delivery chain, you lack the means to effectively troubleshoot application performance. If your visibility isn't unified or integrated, you run the risk of excessive finger pointing discussed in question 2.

### 4 Do you struggle to correlate and analyze disparate sets of infrastructure monitoring data?

According to Forrester Research, 64% of organizations use a fragmented approach to monitoring, so you are probably not alone if you struggle with this problem.<sup>2</sup>

When IT professionals can pivot from code-level application performance data to packet-level network performance data on the same event and in the same window, IT silos break down.

<sup>2</sup>"Application Performance Management is Critical to Business Success," Forrester Research, February 2014.

Only then is everyone looking at the same problem with the same data and can work together to fix it. Only then will the finger pointing and the blame game stop. Only then will the focus shift from proving domain innocence to solving problems.

Riverbed SteelCentral is a comprehensive and integrated performance management solution that provides centralized visibility and insight to ensure optimal performance of enterprise applications while maximizing IT efficiency and productivity. Whether the challenge is monitoring performance broadly across all applications, networks and infrastructure, or delving deep into mission critical application code, SteelCentral is the only end-to-end solution that combines user experience, application, infrastructure, and network monitoring for a holistic view of application performance.

### 5 Do you lack the means to demonstrate your team's effectiveness to management or share your findings with colleagues?

Effectively communication of information is one of the most important skills you need to succeed in business—regardless of your role. As an IT manager, if you have limited or ineffective reporting tools, effective communication becomes that much more difficult.

You need to be able to generate reports that are consumable by multiple constituencies:

- High-level management and line of business summaries that provide an at-a-glance view of the end-to-end performance of the complete application environment
- Detailed, technical reports for domain experts
- Daily, weekly and quarterly summary reports to expedite planning and analysis
- Ad hoc reports for sharing troubleshooting and diagnostic information across technology boundaries for accelerating problem resolution

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## What now?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, it's time for you to seriously start to think about consolidating and integrating your performance monitoring and troubleshooting tools. Having a unified, blended approach to performance monitoring will give you back the accountability, control and predictability you so desire and require.

But how do you move from today's siloed, domain centric approach to this more integrated one? How can you create a Performance Center of Excellence? The Riverbed SteelCentral Platform can bring you several steps closer to the answer.

Riverbed SteelCentral provides an integrated, cross-domain management platform that allows IT to:

- Capture data and maps application dependencies across the entire hybrid "system" that is delivering the application, cost-effectively and comprehensively. This means high-definition, continuous data capture from all infrastructure components, all networks, all application servers and databases, all users, all the time.

- Highly efficiently and extensively analyze vast amounts of data using modern big-data analysis engines, translating data to true cross-domain performance insights and intelligence
- Provide highly tailored, role-specific performance views and reports to all stakeholders and domain experts without sacrificing granularity and depth of analysis
- Facilitate and encourage collaboration between IT teams by providing seamless, contextual access to complementary performance metrics, making troubleshooting dramatically easier.
- Provide unified, service-centric performance visibility for applications via a single performance management interface that automatically, blends, correlates and calibrates all data from all the monitored components

For more information about Riverbed SteelCentral, go to [www.riverbed.com/steelcentral](http://www.riverbed.com/steelcentral).

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## About Riverbed

Riverbed, at more than \$1 billion in annual revenue, is the leader in application performance infrastructure, delivering the most complete platform for the hybrid enterprise to ensure applications perform as expected, data is always available when needed, and performance issues can be proactively detected and resolved before impacting business performance. Riverbed enables hybrid enterprises to transform application performance into a competitive advantage by maximizing employee productivity and leveraging IT to create new forms of operational agility. Riverbed's 27,000+ customers include 97% of the *Fortune* 100 and 98% of the *Forbes* Global 100. Learn more at [riverbed.com](http://riverbed.com).

The Riverbed logo consists of the word "riverbed" in a lowercase, bold, sans-serif font. The letters are a vibrant orange color.