Selecting an IT monitoring solution should always come down to value and there are two sides to the value equation. Does the solution meet my needs? And does it meet my budget?

When answering these questions, it's essential to remember that the total cost of ownership of an IT monitoring solution includes the initial acquisition and installation costs, as well as any downstream upgrade and service agreement costs. The challenge is understanding and predicting these downstream costs with many of the licensing models that IT monitoring solution providers offer. To highlight these differences, we'll look at two completely different models: SolarWinds® and Ipswitch® WhatsUp® Gold.

**SolarWinds: Elements and Add-Ons**

SolarWinds' core product, Network Performance Monitor (NPM), uses element-based licensing. An element is a node, a volume, or an interface. You are required to purchase whichever is the largest of these three options. In most cases the largest will be the total number of interfaces. For example, in a 48-port switch, each port would count as an interface. Naturally, this equates to 48 interfaces for a single switch. A typical server alone would add up to four interfaces – two for data I/O, one for management and one for backup.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Routers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switches</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servers</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. Devices</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>245</strong></td>
<td><strong>$30,395</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This network with a total of 245 devices, will add up to 3090 SolarWinds elements. This will put you into SolarWinds' most expensive license, their NPM unlimited license at $30,395, with a $6,079 annual service fee.

In most cases this will exceed the budget set aside for networks of this size. To overcome this obstacle SolarWinds® will often under-configure your NPM license. They'll advise that you only need to monitor your "critical interfaces" i.e., you only need to monitor 3 to 4 interfaces per switches and one interface per server. Following this strategy will reduce your element counts to 400, putting you into an NPM 500 license at $9,995, with a $2,000 annual service fee.

The problem here is that element counts can add up very quickly. Take this example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAMPLE NETWORK</th>
<th>Routers</th>
<th>Switches</th>
<th>Servers</th>
<th>Misc. Devices</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SolarWinds NPM Unlimited License</td>
<td>$30,395</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Service Fee</td>
<td>$6,079</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cost</strong></td>
<td><strong>$36,474</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This network with a total of 245 devices, will add up to 3090 SolarWinds elements. This will put you into SolarWinds' most expensive license, their NPM unlimited license at $30,395, with a $6,079 annual service fee.

SolarWinds also uses the add-on model. Network Performance Monitor (NPM) provides core network monitoring but Network Traffic Analysis (NTA) must be purchased to monitor bandwidth utilization. Server and Application Monitor (SAM) is required to monitor servers and applications. And, Network Configuration Manager (NCM) is an add-on to manage network device configurations.

The add-on model requires that you purchase, manage, and maintain four separate licenses. Annual service agreement costs are separate and can add up quickly. Add-on business rules can also drive up costs. For example, SolarWinds requires that your NTA license always equals your NPM license. Thus, when you upgrade your NPM license to a higher tier, you must also upgrade your NTA license – a double hit on your budget.

The most costly limitation of the plug-in model is lack of flexibility. If you're over-subscribed on one of your SolarWinds licenses and under-subscribed for another, you cannot swap out licensing assets. This means wasted licensing dollars and additional downstream costs.
Ipswitch WhatsUp Gold: Points and All-in-One

By comparison, WhatsUp Gold uses the TotalView license model. TotalView is an innovative licensing model designed to:

› Deliver a low total cost of ownership (TCO)
› Provide maximum license flexibility
› Reduce license management

TotalView licensing is point based. For example a router, switch, or server would count as one point. Simply pay for the number of devices you want to monitor rather than the elements you want to monitor. You can monitor an unlimited number of interfaces and monitors on each device at no additional cost with:

› No need to compromise fault coverage to comply with your licensing tier
› No need to figure out, allot and manage “critical interfaces”
› No downstream cost surprises

In our same example network above, monitoring 245 devices would consume 245 points. This would put you into a TotalView 300 license for $7,995 with a $2,000 annual service fee.

“TotalView allows us to use and/or switch to any additional feature without spending extra money.”
– John Tai

“TotalView is an all-in-one licensing model that bundles monitoring functionality into one single license that includes network monitoring, network traffic analysis, virtual monitoring, application performance monitoring and storage monitoring. TotalView Plus adds network configuration management and two additional polling engines. Each one of these capabilities consumes points and you have the flexibility to distribute these points across the functionality available in each package. You have the flexibility to change point usage at any time, and as many times as you want — all at no additional cost.

TotalView and TotalView Plus reduces purchasing, management and maintenance down to a single license. The only business rule is selecting the correct licensing tier. And it maximizes the value WhatsUp Gold delivers by eliminating unused licenses.

Summary Comparison

WhatsUp Gold can monitor your entire environment without the need to accept under-monitoring for the sake of your budget.

Why settle for this... ...when you can have this?

Only monitor ‘critical interfaces’ with SolarWinds.
Monitor your entire environment with WhatsUp Gold.

WhatsUp Gold simplifies license management with the all-in-one TotalView license model.

In our same example network above, monitoring 245 devices would consume 245 points. This would put you into a TotalView 300 license for $7,995 with a $2,000 annual service fee.

Conclusion

WhatsUp Gold provides a simpler, more flexible and more effective monitoring solution with a lower total cost of ownership and no downstream surprises at renewal time. Which is why more and more users are choosing WhatsUp Gold over SolarWinds and why more and more SolarWinds customers are switching to WhatsUp Gold.

Want to know more?

Visit www.ipswitch.com to learn more about WhatsUp Gold and TotalView licensing.

You can also speak with an expert by emailing sales@ipswitch.com or download a free trial of WhatsUp Gold TotalView Plus at www.ipswitch.com/free-trials.