
Events under Control



NETIKUS.NET Ltd Case Study with
Morphosys AG

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When managing an IT infrastructure at three locations with a small team for a 300-people biotech company like Morphosys, then accurate and up-to-date information about the status of all your core IT components in your infrastructure is an absolute necessity.



Morphosys scientist performing an Experiment with cell cultures

Virtually all systems, from server to network switches, produce some sort of informational, warning or error message. But this variety makes it difficult for system administrators to identify and filter out the critical messages so that appropriate action can be taken. Subsequently, tools are needed that can point out the critical messages that require immediate attention, among the countless ones processed. Another difficulty is the ability to recognize dependencies between error messages, since it happens frequently that one event triggers several other follow-up events. As such, the correlation and interpretation of all different log types is important for the availability of the infrastructure.

“In an environment like ours, with more than 200 network devices and 35 servers, it’s impossible to review all of the log files manually”, says Steffen Pohlenz, IT-Manager at Morphosys AG. It is for that very reason that he and his team have been using dedicated tools to analyze and filter log entries over the past few years. But even though the tools were able to help the system administrators, the final step – the integration of the various tools used - was still missing. “We had one system for monitoring services, one for event logs, another one for interpreting Syslog and yet another one that monitored the availability of systems and resources. Each of those tools served its purpose, but they all had a different user interface and its own separate management and reporting system. They worked completely independent from each other, making it difficult to recognize dependencies.”

So the challenge arose to find an economically-priced tool that could accomplish all the tasks the existing tools provided, but integrate all of them under one interface and still work well in a mid-size environment. The big commercial applications had to be eliminated because of their sheer license cost, whereas many free tools would result in high maintenance costs due to the missing integration capabilities. Morphosys selected EventSentry, as it integrates all tasks under one interface - at low licensing costs. With the longstanding partner Cyclestore, Morphosys also had a system integrator at its side that could support the integration and customization of the new monitoring solution.

Integration vs. Combination

Instead of having to use four different tools, as was previously the case at Morphosys, EventSentry covers all areas with one single interface. EventSentry's features include monitoring of event logs and log files (aka flat files), performance monitoring as well as monitoring of processes and services. The sysadmin can furthermore filter, correlate and process the collected data. The tool produces straight-forward web-based reports with dashboards for a quick overview, as well as detailed reports that include as much or as little information as required. "It's easy to pack everything into one interface, but what really matters is integration", Pohlenz explains. "Only integration enables us to look for problems across various instances, and see dependencies like cascaded errors." It's also easier now to find out what the source of a particular problem ultimately was.

The ability to create individual configurations was also a critical requirement for the selection of the software tool. With EventSentry you can create custom filter rules that are only active during certain hours of the day, or when a particular service on a monitored host runs. But one of EventSentry's advantages is standardization, even though it can be configured down to the smallest detail. You can create so-called packages that are applied to specific systems like Exchange Servers or Gateways, and then easily re-use those packages.

Morphosys AG

Industry: Technologies for the development of antibodies, which can be used for the research and diagnosis as well as the therapy of diseases.
Location: Martinsried, Germany (greater Munich area)
Founded: 1992
Employees: ~300
Internet: <http://www.morphosys.de/>

About NETIKUS.NET Ltd

NETIKUS.NET Ltd is a customer-oriented growing software company that has been developing system software to monitor, support and optimize IT infrastructure since 2002. NETIKUS.NET Ltd develops the award-winning server and workstation monitoring solution EventSentry© and several freeware applications as well as operates two IT community sites.

EventSentry© has won several awards since its first release in 2002, and has been reviewed up in several print and online articles.

NETIKUS.NET Ltd clients also include end-users, consultants, small businesses, government & military institutions, universities and large Fortune 500 companies¹.

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¹ http://www.eventsentry.com/background_ourclients.php