

Network monitoring with Nagios

WATCHING THE WIRES

Are your systems behaving? Is your newest workstation too busy for its memory? Stay ahead of problems on your network with the free and versatile monitoring tool known as Nagios. **BY JOE CASAD**

If you are responsible for more than a few PCs, you may have noticed that it would be nice to monitor the status of your network automatically. In fact, you may have already implemented such a system. Why devote a cover story to Nagios? Professional admins already have their own favorite monitoring tools, and home users don't need to bother with network monitoring. Or is there more to this?

The IT world is full of commercial monitoring tools. In fact, a large portion of the show floor at a conference such as LinuxWorld is devoted to tools for monitoring and managing network resources. Many of these tools are quite effective, and we don't discourage anyone from using a commercial solution if it is the right tool for the job. However, you really can go a long way in Linux using free products, and Nagios is an example of an extremely effective tool you don't have to pay for. If you are thinking about purchasing a commercial solution, you need to know what you're comparing it with. If you stop by those booths at LinuxWorld, you'll find countless brochures, white papers, and technical documents on the commercial monitoring solutions. We thought we would offer a similarly technical look at Nagios.

If you think you have no need for Nagios because you only use Linux at home, think again. In our June issue, for example, Perlmeister Mike Schilli showed how to put Nagios to work on a small scale

with homegrown scripts for checking temperatures and sending alerts with status information (http://www.linux-magazine.com/issue/67/Perl_Nagios_Plugins.pdf).

For readers who are looking for easier configuration and a tidier user interface, this month's cover story also includes an article on GroundWork, a Nagios-based

commercial monitoring tool with a no-cost GPL version. Of course, if you're one of those readers who has already solved all your monitoring problems, you'll still find much to like in this issue. Read on for more on the Ext4 file-system, Netfilter's Recent module, and the lush graphic splendor of Project Looking Glass. ■

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