

Maximizing Your Network, Security, and Application Monitoring Tools In Tight Budgetary Times

■ INTRODUCTION

With a down economy comes uncertainty, and that uncertainty is not limited to just your 401k. Layoffs and budget cuts are being announced by the day. At the keynote from the 2008 Gartner Symposium ITEXPO, Gartner CEO Gene Hall announced that the company had adjusted their 2009 IT budget expectations downward, from an estimated 3.3% overall growth rate to a 2.5% reduction. Clearly, the economic situation is resonating, and executives are listening.

Gartner now recommends that the industry “use innovation to turn crisis into opportunity.” The savvy technology strategist is already thinking about ways to do “more with less”, searching for low or no cost solutions to existing problems. Regardless, we are faced with the quandary of exactly how to do more with less when application performance and reliability, security enforcement, and other important objectives simply must be achieved.

■ THE PROBLEM

With tighter budgets, organizations are being asked to do “more with less”. At the same time, networks and applications continue to increase in complexity, and monitoring is critical for securely ensuring performance, reliability, and availability metrics are sustained. Technology and security strategists are challenged to provide the appropriate monitoring coverage with limited ability to purchase additional capital equipment.

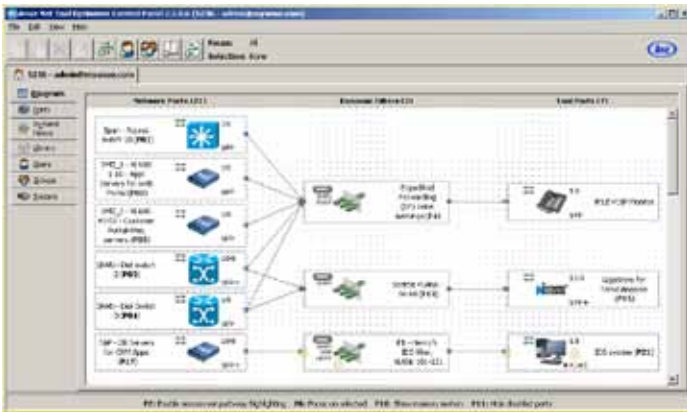
On the other end of the spectrum, network operations management find themselves with a lack of staff to handle day-to-day activities. Network operators spend a large amount of time troubleshooting, in excess of 75 days per year for nearly a quarter of network operators according to “State of the Network Global Survey”, a research summary released in April, 2008. Part of the issue lies in a lack of available SPAN ports and TAPs. Troubleshooting tools must frequently be kept offline until a problem arises, and technical staff is forced to temporarily “make & break” connections when problems appear. Not only is this process cumbersome and time consuming, but removing tools effectively results in a lack of coverage elsewhere.

In summary, IT and security groups find themselves facing increasing complexity on the network, but with reduced financial and human resources to manage that complexity.

LEVERAGE MONITORING TOOLS ACROSS THE NETWORK

- Application Performance Management (APM)
- Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS)
- Intrusion Detection/Prevention (IDP)
- Network Behavior Anomaly Detection (NBAD)
- Compliance Auditors
- Sniffers/Protocol Analyzers
- Data Recorders
- VoIP Analyzers
- Open Source Tools





The Optimization Control Panel optimizes tool usage and reduces troubleshooting time.

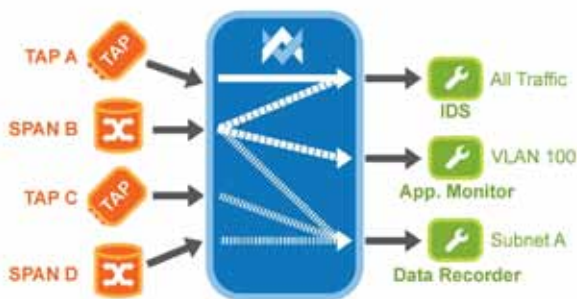
■ EXTEND YOUR COVERAGE

10G Benefits

- Use 1G tools to monitor 10G links
- Filter traffic so each tool gets only the data it needs, enabling it to operate at full efficiency, even in mixed 10G / 1G environments
- Reduce costs for deploying, managing, and operating monitoring tools

Other Key Benefits

- Share SPAN ports and TAPs so more tools can monitor different segments of the same traffic
- Aggregate traffic from many links, enabling tools to cost-effectively monitor more network segments
- Maximize coverage across network segments, providing full visibility and control over data flows to network and application monitoring tools



Monitoring Optimization filters and multicasts so that the tool gets only the data it needs.



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■ THE ANUE NET TOOL OPTIMIZER

The Anue 5200 Series Net Tool Optimizer™ was designed to address all of these issues. By aggregating SPAN ports and TAPs to a centralized tool farm, all tools have access to the network traffic that each tool needs to perform its assigned task.

The Anue 5200 Net Tool Optimizer enables you to aggregate and multicast network traffic to the right tools at full line rates. It provides the ability to filter on a variety of Layer 2/3/4 parameters and protocols, offering significant control over load balancing and tool coverage, even with a mix of 10G ports and 1G tools.

The product's Dynamic Filtering approach accurately and automatically handles overlapping packets in situations where port-sharing must send the same traffic to multiple tools. The user simply specifies which traffic to send to each tool, and all overlaps are automatically and accurately handled. Users do not have to write cryptic filter rules. Equally important, the 5200 Net Tool Optimizer's advanced filtering rules are self-maintaining. When network or tool configurations change, each tool automatically continues to get all of the data which that tool is specified to receive.

In addition, the Anue 5200 Net Tool Optimizer is very easy to use, with an intuitive GUI that provides simple, "drag 'n drop" control over all of these functions, without requiring command line coding or other cumbersome management techniques.

The Anue Net Tool Optimizer improves network visibility and maximizes return on investment for monitoring tools, even in mixed 10G and 1G environments.

■ SUMMARY

Monitoring is no longer optional, but a lack of available SPAN ports and TAPs is making it very difficult to achieve full network coverage. Fortunately, monitoring optimization can provide the abilities required to preserve existing investments in monitoring tools using advanced filtering techniques and intuitive GUI-driven operation.

Get the most out of your network, security, and application monitoring tools with the Anue 5200 Series Net Tool Optimizer.

Sources:

Gartner website, "IT and the Economy" page, October, 2008
 "Network Pros Spend Months on Troubleshooting," Shamus McGillicuddy, SearchNetworking.com. Referenced from "State of the Network Global Survey" research results, April, 2008.

