Customer Success Story
A Regional Not-for-Profit Healthcare Organization

Company Profile:

Regional not-for-profit healthcare organization with over 10K employees delivering primary and specialty health services through 4 major hospitals and over two dozen clinics and urgent care facilities in Nebraska and Iowa.

Challenge:

Remove manual tools and processes, and upgrade a failing open-source solution for central network discovery, visibility, configuration, software updates, polling and device backups.

Solution:

Infoblox NetMRI Network Change and Configuration Management (NCCM) for network equipment and device inventory, software and system updates, continuing security audits, issueresolution, network policy and enforcement and reporting.

Summary:

Regional not-for-profit healthcare organizations and clinics deliver the full resources of their regional health care providers, educators and support services to communities throughout Nebraska and western Iowa to ensure that patients always have the BEST CARE they need when and where they need it.

To support service delivery, managed IT operations through an open- source network change and configuration management (NCCM) tool for device management, software updates, backups and compliance. However, with a small IT staff and the growing demands of expanding regional hospitals, two dozen urban and rural clinics, and supporting healthcare services, it was increasingly difficult to keep the on-premises open-source solution running. Keeping network gear updated was a priority, along with polling and configuration backups. Systems and devices are operationally and geographically distributed, making them harder to manage from a discovery, visibility, upgrade, audit and performance perspective. They needed a more reliable device inventory, software update and deployment engine, policy enforcement and reporting solution to ensure security, performance and regulatory compliance.

They decided to evaluate the Infoblox NetMRI with Advisor solution and started a comprehensive Proof-of-Concept (PoC) with Infoblox partner Optm. They wanted to streamline network operations, elevate device and network visibility and simplify management for greater efficiency. They also needed to ensure network endpoints met security and regulatory requirements, improve device upgrade processes and quickly detect and resolve open audit findings.

After a successful PoC, Optm deployed Infoblox NetMRI with Advisor to discover and load the network device inventory into the NetMRI database.

Benefits:

- Improved network device discovery, visibility and control
- Automated upgrade processes
- Device compliance validation, security and life cycle management
- Operational policy enforcement and best practice deployment and management
- Compliance and audit validation
- Regulatory reporting for audit and compliance

NetMRI provided visibility, simplified and automated device updates, management and workflows, supplied device alerts, improved policy enforcement, and enabled audit and compliance to save costs associated with managing regionally dispersed network assets.

The Challenge:

The regional not-for-profit healthcare organization delivers healthcare over several hundred square miles with plans for future expansion. To meet growing demands, they needed to maximize network effectiveness and efficiency without adding additional IT staff to service distributed locations. However, device visibility, configuration and backups were a growing challenge. They relied heavily on manual spreadsheets for device inventory and code-level tracking which was often error-prone, tedious and time-consuming. Data was only as good as the last manual update. Without fully automated discovery, there was no single-source-of- truth for their network database, and they could not trust their data for further automation to improve efficiency and save cost. Without visibility, techs often relied on guesswork to connect and configure cables, ports, switches, firewalls and other devices. They did not have network alerts to signify device, policy or compliance issues. It was challenging to know which switch ports were assigned to which devices.

Further, IT needed to define a unified network configuration policy, set configuration rules for switches and software code compliance, and automatically engage an enforcement engine to identify non-compliant devices for prioritization and remediation. They also needed a more efficient way to see end-of-life (EoL), end-of-service (EoS) and Product Security Incident Response Team (PSIRT) notifications to take corrective action and avoid service and security vulnerabilities.

The Situation:

To address these issues, the organization engaged Optm to start a comprehensive Infoblox NetMRI Proof-of-Concept (POC). They wanted to be confident that NetMRI would solve all of their requirements and concerns.

Optm dedicated a support team and initiated a client assessment process to identify project scope, gather requirements, determine device inventory, capture network data, perform analysis, prioritize and remediate issues and provide reporting. The PoC lasted 12 months and proved to meet all of NMHS's requirements and concerns.

The Solution:

Optm deployed Infoblox NetMRI to automate and streamline their network management functions, delivering a better management experience and many operational advantages:

- Network Auto-Discovery and IPAM Sync: NetMRI automatically discovers, displays and synchronizes multi-vendor infrastructure, IP addresses, end hosts, network constructs (L2 physical data, L3 logical data, routes, VLANs, virtual forwarding and routing) and topologies with current and historical information through a single control plane.

- Change Management: NetMRI manages change tasks with powerful but simple methods for encoding change logic. NetMRI's automatic change detection saves considerable time and delivers historical views, side-by-side comparisons and configuration searches.

- Configuration Analysis: NetMRI auto-detects and audits network updates, receives detailed analysis, and performs configuration backup, search, and date/time stamp correlation of network problems. Analysis and alerts on network performance, configuration and issues saves time and speeds resolution.

- Change and Configuration Automation: NetMRI enables and embeds variable-based jobs and scripts, customizable templates, scripting (CCS, Perl and Python), user-based role access control and job scheduling for further time-saving automation.

- Switch Port Management: NetMRI tracks free, available and unused ports. It also provides provisioning, remediates compromised endpoints, monitors connected wired and wireless end-hosts, and supports capacity planning.

- Policy and Compliance Management: Another helpful provision is automatic, continuous real-time and historical tracking of network changes against multiple security policies. Embedded compliance rules, best-practice templates, violation detection and remediation tools further assist in resolving conflicts.

- Automated Failover: NetMRI provides redundancy and resiliency for data center collectors and appliances to support network availability requirements.

Advisor Notifications: NetMRI Advisor automates continuous device security and lifecycle management, eliminates device vulnerabilities, supplies immediate, real-time PSIRT, CVE (Common Vulnerability and Exposure) and policy violation alerts, reduces security and compliance issues, provides contextual EoL and EoS insights, identifies obsolete devices and enables multi-vendor reporting and visibility.

- Reporting: Finally, the single-click, pre-built and customizable executive and granular reports, filtering, on-demand, scheduled and role-based access enables IT management the visibility to see and share network information across the ecosystem.

About Optm

Optm is a multinational technology company whose mission is to optimize your people, technology, and management of critical day-to-day business process workflows, accelerating and sustaining agility and productivity.

The Result:

Optm leveraged Infoblox's NetMRI's NCCM solution to provide the organization with discovery and visibility for all of its network devices. The solution is enabling them to streamline its software and device update process and efficiently manage device configurations without adding IT headcount. It's also helping them define and implement network and device policy, set, track, get alerts and prioritize and remediate non-compliant, EoS and EoL devices. Further, out-of-the-box reports are enabling better network insights, audit support, issue resolution and control. Most importantly, NetMRI is helping them remove many manual network management processes, replacing them with greater automation and control. NetMRI is saving money, improving efficiency, and allowing time for more critical assignments.