

## Network Performance Monitoring — What Are the Hidden Costs?

For top network operators, network performance management and diagnostics (NPMD) is essential. NPMD-derived metrics for all IT resources, including cloud and SDN assets, enable top performance. And when things go wrong, NPMD delivers enhanced network visibility to quickly get things back-to-normal.

The best NPMD solution for any particular environment depends on a number of factors. But regardless of what features look good, you need to understand their true costs. Upfront CapEx is one thing. And long-term expenses of integrating and maintaining a solution are another.



To choose the right tool and calculate a reasonably-accurate total cost of ownership, you need to evaluate:

- **Scalability** — Most operators want to make sure a solution works in their particular environment before committing to a major capital outlay. Growing enterprises want to know that as they expand, their solution will expand with them. Maintaining a number of remote sites with unique requirements may dictate several small, local deployments rather than, or in addition to, one big one. If any of the above issues are applicable, you'll want a solution that can at least start small.
- **Add-ons** — Need application dependency mapping? Long-term or expanded data storage? Flow-based monitoring? Hybrid IT monitoring? Access for different functional groups? Don't assume they all come in the same package for one price. Or, that they don't. NPMD solutions come in many form factors. Some vendors will put solutions together based on your specific needs while others are less flexible.
- **Maintenance and Support** — Over time, recurring renewal fees for updates and important services can add up to more than the product itself. Vendors occasionally deeply discount original purchases knowing that ongoing maintenance and support charges will more than make up for it. For the right NPMD solution, it may be worth it; you just need to be aware.
- **Integration** — Successful NPMD requires aggregating multiple data sources into a cohesive reporting structure. A vendor may provide different products for managing different IT

components or systems, but they all need to talk to each other. If they don't do this off-the-shelf, making it work may have substantial costs.

- **Experience and Reputation** — Your network environment and your needs are, quite likely, unique. Nonetheless, a vendor ought to have case studies and application stories ready that clearly show their expertise with your particular requirements. As with any capital outlay, you'll want to research the vendor's history and talk to your peers about their experiences. One important resource is the [Gartner NPMD MQ\\*](#), which reviews all major NPMD vendors.

### More About NPMD

NPMD solutions help operators optimize the performance of complex networks and IT environments and resolve outage and degradation issues. They measure data collected from network instrumentation such as routers, switches, servers, clients, and storage appliances. Using sophisticated diagnostic and analytic capabilities, NPMD solutions quantify this data and report results and conclusions. The solutions also typically provide some degree of visibility into the actual end-user experience.

For a side-by-side comparison of NPMD solution costs in three different environments, download the COMPANY white paper, [NETWORK PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND DIAGNOSTICS \(NPMD\): 6 Questions Uncover the Hidden Costs of NPMD](#). And visit [company.com](#) for more information about the comprehensive COMPANY portfolio of network test, monitoring, and assurance solutions.

\* From *2016 Gartner Magic Quadrant 2016: Network Performance Monitoring & Diagnostics (NPMD)*: "Responsiveness to customer demands is demonstrated through the delivery of a software and portable edition of PRODUCT to help address limited deployment options. COMPANY's Matrix NPB is appealing to small-scale enterprises looking for NPMD and NPB capabilities from the same vendor. Packet capture and inspection (via PRODUCT) capability is well-regarded by COMPANY clients."