Runge ICT: A Local Team Needing Remote Reach

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>
> Vasily Shapochka, General Manager of Runge ICT

Challenge: Runge ICT, an Australian IT solutions firm, needed to monitor its customers' networks and IT infrastructures across different locations in order to provide proactive system care and performance monitoring.

Solution: Paessler's PRTG Network Monitor provided a simple, easy to use solution that offered a wide range of capabilities for remote as well as in-house monitoring, along with a scalable pricing structure and world class support team.

Results: Runge ICT now enjoys an advanced, real-time network and systems monitoring service that has reduced its systems maintenance by up to six hours every week and allows administrators to spend up to 60 percent less time running various checks on the networks.

Experts in need of an expert solution

With a highly-skilled support team of around a dozen network and system administrators and engineers in both Brisbane and Sydney, Runge ICT helps a range of SMBs and SMEs around Australia improve efficiencies and avoid costly network glitches and outages. These customers represent a variety of industries including oil and gas, mining, legal, and accounting.

About half of the work undertaken by Runge ICT is focused on supporting these customers by maintaining IT infrastructures and troubleshooting issues. In order to continue improving the company's solutions and capabilities, Vasily Shapochka, General Manager of Runge ICT, began to explore ways to more proactively mitigate client's issues or outages. Runge ICT recognised the importance of offering a network monitoring solution for its clients, but as most of the network monitoring software available is designed to monitor only in-house networks, it needed a different kind of solution that would also allow for remote monitoring of different locations and external networks. Shapochka first turned to GFI Max but quickly found he needed a more flexible solution that offered the capability to monitor devices from a wide range of vendors and protocols.

"In order to continue serving as a dynamic partner to our clients, we invest in a range of specialised software and services that allow us to establish a solid product infrastructure and significant value-add," said Shapochka. "We place a premium on industry expertise, so we wanted to make sure we were working with the best-performing products that offered a wide range of capabilities, but that also supported a service provider model with remote networks and offered a scalable pricing structure."

Shapochka decided to take advantage of a free trial of Paessler's PRTG Network Monitor, noting its reputation for providing a trusted monitoring service for more than 150,000 administrators worldwide. After experiencing the quick installation and ease of deployment, as well as the simple licensing model, cost-effective pricing and features, Shapochka was eager to extend his free trial into a full-time solution.

PRTG NETWORK MONITOR

ABOUT RUNGE ICT

Runge ICT is a full service Information Technology solutions firm with offices in Sydney and Brisbane. From network and server system design and implementation to IT support and helpdesk, Runge ICT prides itself on taking a proactive approach to managing service solutions and maximising operational efficiencies, placing an emphasis on system care and performance monitoring.

Runge ICT

New connections, new solutions

PRTG Network Monitor fit seamlessly into Runge ICT's infrastructure, allowing it to monitor not only its own network but also those of its customers.

"As a managed service provider, we need to be one step ahead at all times in order to offer proactive support for our clients' networks and infrastructure," says Shapochka. "Before PRTG, we didn't have a solution when it came to monitoring all of the different types of networks. Now, we can ensure that all of our services are available from all of the locations we're monitoring."

Keeping Runge ICT one step ahead was the fact that it could virtualise PRTG on its VMWare and Cisco UCS servers in its data centre. The software was then capable of providing instant notification of the failure of either a Windows server or its network connection, allowing IT to take immediate action to minimise the impact of the crash. PRTG's Remote Probes allow Runge ICT to effectively monitor different types of networks across a number of companies and locations. All of Runge ICT's clients are monitored from one location utilising around 40 remote probes, and the company enjoys the ability to increase the quality of service to its clients, from the central installation of PRTG.

With about 200 sensor types (measuring points) from which to choose, Runge ICT's installation also includes hundreds of sensors to cover all of the necessary aspects of network monitoring. Shapochka says while they utilise a number of different sensor types, PRTG's Probe Health sensor is utilised by all of its clients.

"The health sensor offers a quick snapshot of the overall health of the network and simplifies our maintenance checks with details on whether the server is down as well as CPU and memory utilisation," says Shapochka. "While we also utilise services to monitor particular applications and functions as well as using Netflow sensors to keep track of the bandwidth, the Probe Health sensor is used for every single network that we monitor."

Even with the advanced technical capabilities that PRTG offers, Shapochka enjoys that the software is simple to install and deploy for his customers. Runge ICT is able to get clients up and running within ten minutes and automated software updates allow for upgrades to new versions in only three clicks. The freedom to choose between five user interfaces and customise the software to match the look and feel of the company allowed Runge ICT to offer a unique, personalised solution for its customers.

"We primarily use the web interface and with customisable dashboards, it's easy to get an overview of the most important information we need to keep our clients updated of any potential issues," says Shapochka. "With the auto-discovery feature and automatic updates, we can save time on setup and installation and continuously improve our services."

Shapochka notes PRTG's customisable alerts offer further time-saving benefits, allowing Runge ICT to prevent issues from becoming emergencies. The company offers its customers flexible options for receiving alerts through PRTG, including email, SMS alerts and through the Chrome plug-in. Shapochka says these alerts help Runge ICT better implement its maintenance procedures and prevent or reduce overall downtime.

"The best thing about alerts is that our customers can choose exactly when they want to be notified, whether it's a few seconds after an issue is flagged or a few minutes. We can make sure they're on top of potential problems before their end-users realise it, which saves them time, money and reputation," says Shapochka. "The addition of PRTG smartphone apps mean our technical staff can stay connected and offer our larger clients even more flexibility in monitoring their own infrastructures." Paessler's simple licensing model also made it easy for Runge ICT to implement an efficient, cost-effective, and scalable solution for its customers. Licenses are set by the number of sensors needed, so Shapochka is able to scale up as the company's customer base grows.

"Knowing that we can add or remove sensors depending on our needs offers us great peace of mind and more importantly, we know that we will always have the entire set of features and functionality, no matter how many sensors we need," says Shapochka. "We are able to scale up to meet the needs of new clients and manage larger networks for the price of an entry-level monitoring solution, without any surprises or add-on costs."

Delivering network success

With PRTG Network Monitor, Runge ICT has been able to develop an advanced, real-time network and systems monitoring service that helps ensure that every aspect of its clients' IT environment is scrutinised for efficient performance, availability and reliability, 24 hours a day.

"Productivity hinges on how smoothly all of your networks, applications, platforms and devices operate and if one of those components is interrupted, productivity comes to a halt," says Shapochka. "It's critical to have a solution that monitors all of the different pieces, to give complete transparency needed to meet business demands – PRTG doesn't let anything slip by."

With software that continuously collects information, Runge ICT's network administrators are able to get a long-tail look at the overall health and usage of the networks, which results in more time and increased productivity. Since implementing PRTG, Runge ICT has reduced its systems maintenance by up to six hours every week and its administrators spend up to 60 percent less time running various checks on the networks, giving them more time for other tasks. Shapochka says the savings are a result of the proactive capability of PRTG.

"Often, we see that disk space is running low, which can potentially stop critical services. Now that we're alerted to those issues, we can schedule maintenance before there is downtime," says Shapochka.

Additionally, Runge ICT is now able to save its customers money, with information that helps them avoid costly bills.

"We now have the ability to track the highs and lows of internet usage – which means we can alert customers if we see a large download of data in a short period of time," says Shapochka. "Unusual network activity can lead to unexpected costs as well as security issues so it's critical to be able to keep track of the trends and to be the first to know of any potential issues."

"From identifying slow response times, uncovering potential hardware deficiencies and ensuring the effectiveness of security measures, PRTG allows our customers to meet performance objectives by improving productivity and efficiency," says Shapochka. "With one tool that can keep infrastructures on track and running healthily, our customers can stop wasting time putting out fires, and build strong foundations for growth."

Leveraging the capabilities of PRTG has helped Runge ICT's customers recognise the inherent value of proactive network monitoring. Shapochka says most of their customers did not have a monitoring system in place before PRTG. Now, they are seeing more of these customers recommend the product to their peers.

Runge ICT has also been able to leverage Paessler's world class support team, knowing that questions will be answered within 24 hours and come straight from the in-house support engineers and developer staff.

"Now that we have a proactive monitoring strategy, we can focus on optimising our network performance to create a competitive advantage and prepare for future growth. Instead of installing a solution to fit one specific problem, we are preparing for priorities still to come, with a toolkit that offers us a clear way forward."

Armed with a solution that meets its needs for effective, remote monitoring as well as a support team that offers an extensive knowledge base, Runge ICT has expanded its services and client base, growing from 100 monitoring sensors to more than 800. Shapochka is looking forward to continuing growing with PRTG.

ABOUT PAESSLER AG

Paessler AG leads the industry in providing the most powerful, affordable and easy-to-use network monitoring and testing solutions. The company's suite of just-right software products deliver peace of mind, confidence and convenience for businesses of all sizes – from Small Office/ Home Office (SOHO) to large enterprises, including more than 70% of the Fortune 100 companies. Based in Nuremberg, Germany, Paessler's global reach includes more than 150,000 active installations of its products. Founded in 1997, Paessler AG remains a privately held company and is recognized as both a member of the Cisco Developer Network and a VMware Technology Alliance Partner.

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