ARE YOU READY TO MONITOR THE INTERNET OF THINGS?

The Internet of Things (IoT) promises to launch a new era in network monitoring, where the number of things that are connected to the network and the amount of data they generate will grow exponentially. We don't yet know if IoT will live up to the hype, but we are convinced that it will have an impact on the way we experience IT – and the way you need to monitor your IT infrastructure.

Here are **10 tips** to anticipate and prepare for monitoring in the future.

01 **Envision what the Internet of Things will mean for your business –** The Internet of Things will change some businesses more than others. A professional services firm might be concerned about integrating a smart thermostat, whereas a manufacturer will face the challenges of unifying a number of disparate systems, machinery and devices. Network administrators will be at the forefront of the integration process and play a large role in making connected devices functional and useful.

02 **Prepare to integrate –** While some connected devices will be productized and designed to fit neatly into networks, others will be homegrown and rely heavily on customization. With all these different device types, integration becomes a challenge. It is critical that all connected devices be brought under one roof so they can be accurately monitored.

03 **Understand the protocols that connect us –** There are three main protocols that are used to connect the Internet of Things: Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP), REST APIs, and XML. By gaining a stronger understanding of how devices interact, you'll be able to design more sophisticated network architectures, which make monitoring that much easier.

04 **Remember that not all "things" are new –** Not every connected device is the latest and greatest hardware from industry-leading companies. Many devices are outdated, especially in industrial settings, or are connected by small computers like Raspberry Pi. You need to understand the many different hardware requirements and identify how to connect necessary devices, even if they're from the last century.

05 **Be flexible –** The Internet of Things is likely going to be the biggest challenge network administrators have faced since cloud services and BYOD. There will certainly be pressure from leadership to tackle the "next big thing" in IT. You will have to be both patient and flexible to handle the complex challenges of monitoring a network of connected devices and deal with the pressure to "get it done."

06 **Plan proactively –** When it comes to network monitoring, planning is your friend. The advent of BYOD had major effects on networks and bandwidth, and so will the Internet of Things. To maintain uptime and availability, be sure to plan for bandwidth usage from connected devices.

07 **Recognize that anything with an IP address can be hacked –** Today's hackers are both fearless and creative, a dangerous combination for IT departments. Anything with an IP address can be hacked, and the Internet of Things widens the threat vector. Before you connect the refrigerator to central IT, be sure to have a security plan in place.

08 **Customize, customize, customize –** One of the most exciting aspects of the Internet of Things is that there is seemingly no limit to what can be connected. In terms of monitoring, that creates challenges that can be solved by creating new sensors and custom reports. This is especially exciting in industrial settings, where data extracted from devices can be used to make business processes smarter and more efficient. You can take advantage of this opportunity to show off your creative side and build custom solutions for these monitoring problems.

09 **Keep every "thing" in order –** Modern IT systems are often chaotic. It has become incredibly easy to spin up a virtual machine, download and run cloud software, or now, connect a device. Mapping and tracking every "thing" that is added to the network as it happens will save you plenty of headaches in the long run.

10 **Think two steps ahead –** Connected device projects likely start small in most businesses, and many will not be of great consequence. But, eventually, the connected world will deliver new data and information about how businesses operate that will become drivers of key decisions. You will be responsible for collecting and analyzing that data and turning it into insights. Having a plan in place for what's next is crucial, even if there's less happening at the present.

Unified monitoring to the rescue!

A unified monitoring solution is especially helpful in developing a network architecture that can accommodate the Internet of Things. Find out how Paessler's PRTG Network Monitor can help you by downloading our FREE TRIAL HERE.

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