

# Building the Business Case for Proactive Network Monitoring



## INTRODUCTION

In today's environment of tight IT budgets, growing reliance on business uptime, and the need for scalable and flexible IT networks, it's not surprising that organizations are weighing the cost and benefits of proactive monitoring and support.

## Protecting the Lifeblood of Your Business



*"The personal touch and knowing your customer is a huge piece of network monitoring. Tracking chronic issues and managing multiple carriers through a single NOC allows us to know their network and troubleshoot effectively"*

**Albie Sternberg**  
Network Operations Manager  
and oversees MASS's Network Operation Center

Clearly, staying on top of network issues, and identifying them before they ultimately result in outages, is the key to maintaining network availability and performance, keeping your customers happy, and driving future business. Just as physicals and other health screenings find problems before they become a major medical issue, so can proactive monitoring identify the health of a company's networking infrastructure before serious breakdowns occur. Put simply, proactive network monitoring can protect the lifeblood of your business.

Regardless of how well a company's network is built, or the quality of its chosen telecom provider, there will be outages. For organizations that rely on their own IT team, the last thing they want to do is to stop working on core IT initiatives to investigate alerts on their network.

### The Cost of a Network Outage is High

Industry research finds that IT outages can cause substantial damage to organizations' reputations, staff morale, and customer loyalty, not to mention their bottom line. A survey of 200 businesses across North America and Europe by CA Technologies found that small enterprises lost, on average, more than \$55,000 in revenue due to IT failures and outages each year, while midsize companies lost more than \$91,000 and large companies lost more than \$1 million. In addition, Aberdeen Group reports that the average cost per hour of downtime is \$163,674.





### 3 Key Questions to Ask

**Below are three questions IT decision-makers should ask before deciding what level of proactive monitoring is right for them and their organization:**

- What are your critical assets internally? What systems need to be up and operational for you to function?
- Are you scaling properly in terms of capacity planning? Do you have the tools in place to give your company this long-term insight to anticipate your growth?
- Are you watching your network against malicious actors (security breaches)?

**Before turning over all your circuit monitoring to an outside vendor, whether it be a managed services provider or a carrier, you need to ask the following:**

- How well does your provider know you? Do they have a level of knowledge of your business and visibility into your infrastructure to be able to troubleshoot effectively, including ruling out certain causes of an outage? Do they know who to call inside your organization when every second counts?
- What is the experience level of NOC staff watching your circuits?
- How responsive is your vendor to you when it comes to your network needs? Are you just an account number?
- Can your provider monitor circuits from other vendors since- most companies rely on more than one carrier for their voice and data?
- Is the vendor fully staffed throughout the night, weekends and holidays?

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Companies typically fall under three categories when it comes to network management: they buy circuits with no monitoring in place, they handle their entire network monitoring themselves, or they outsource monitoring to a managed service provider. If they rely on in-house IT resources, they typically will not monitor their network 24x7 unless they are large enough to have a dedicated NOC staff. Smaller companies without the resources to cover their network all the time are left vulnerable to outages occurring throughout the day, at night or during weekends. Relying on managed service providers also has its own set of challenges if the provider uses an outsourced NOC that doesn't know your environment or if their support isn't designed for 24/7/365. In addition, managed providers often are the last to know when customers choose to add a new circuit, change their IP address or alter a configuration.



### MASS Communications' Holistic Monitoring Model

MASS Communications is one of the few network carriers to offer 24x7x365 proactive monitoring – filling the coverage gap for firms that lack the resources to track network performance and troubleshoot issues around the clock.

The MASS Communications approach differs in one important way – its singular focus on the customer. “We don't make promises unless we can keep them, we listen to our customers, and we take the extra steps to resolve customer's issues,” explains Sternberg. “We seek to look at each and every customer holistically – we don't see the single service a customer is bringing to our attention; we see their entire operation.”

Serving as an extension of the customer's IT team, MASS Communications proactively troubleshoots an outage event – so the client doesn't have to experience the direct stresses in resolving issues on their own. The company's always-operational Network Operations Center (NOC) will alert customers of a potential issue before they are aware of it, regardless of if the event occurs on a major holiday or on a Saturday night. This proactivity not only relies on MASS Communications' monitoring capabilities, but also on the staff's experience and instincts. Knowing the existence of a problem early is the best way to mitigate the impact to an organization.

“Our highest responsibility is to the customer, from dispatching a field tech, or improvising emergency solutions to save a customer (hotel out of service) on a Saturday night,” says Sternberg.

MASS Communications' partners include leading managed service providers, who rely on MASS's diagnostic capabilities and 24x7x365 NOC to quickly troubleshoot and identify outages and the root cause of the problem so that it can be resolved quickly.



Unlike many carriers that monitor performance every hour, MASS Communications pings customer networks every minute-on-the-minute 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Other major carriers don't provide this level of monitoring, notes David L. Schwed, MASS's Chief Information Officer, because national carriers don't have the IT resources to reach out to the customer when an outage occurs and they won't monitor and support their competitors' infrastructure.



### Going Beyond Circuit Performance

#### *The Power of Data to Bolster Network Security, Plan for Capacity*

Proactive Monitoring of circuits is just the tip of the iceberg of what customers need to do to safeguard their networking infrastructure. Other areas that benefit from proactive monitoring of IT assets include:

#### Security Monitoring

Monitoring for security events and from an infrastructure standpoint – where a company can identify internal and external threats by discovering types of traffic never seen before, or a certain kind of traffic coming from a certain part of the world that they don't normally see traffic, for example, China.



#### Capacity Planning

Leveraging network monitoring for capacity planning – that is, equip network planners with the traffic trends to plan for changing bandwidth demand, and add circuits where there is the greatest coverage need. For example, a global firm's network monitoring of website traffic could find a spike in traffic coming from certain countries or regions. Drilling deeper, the company could ask, "Does that mean that we have a potential market overseas? Are we positioned to be in that country?"

### Monitoring Done Right – What MASS Customers Have to Say

Below, MASS customers from a variety of industries share what proactive monitoring has meant for their business.



All of the technicians have been extremely speedy and helpful with any issues that have come up. Thank you Albie!! **Jamie, Executive Search**



MASS Comm definitely has the best response time when it comes to down time on our service line. They're quick to catch the issue and contact you even before you know about the problem. And by the way, all customer service reps are kind and very helpful. **Dan C., Retail**



First class customer service and follow through. As many have stated, they care about their customers. Thank you to Albie and the team! **Laurie, Legal**

**If you like our white paper,  
you will love our solutions.**



### More Information

Are you interested in learning more about how MASS Communications' NOC services and approach to proactive network monitoring? Contact us at (866) 791-6277 or visit [www.masscommgroup.com](http://www.masscommgroup.com) for more information.

MASS Communications, a leading connectivity and telecom management provider, takes a consultative approach to deliver a full suite of voice, data, risk management and security solutions. Founded by engineering innovators, MASS designs custom networks with best-in-class carriers across an international footprint. The New York-based Competitive Local Exchange Carrier made the Inc. 500|5000 List for three years running, 2013 to 2015.