

# Optimal Alert Management Strategies for System z and Beyond

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# Agenda

#### Alerts

- Why Alerts? What are the benefits?
- What are the challenges?
- Types of alerts
  - Typical sources of alert information
- How alerts may be presented
  - Visualization and notification
- How alerts may be managed and correlated
- Forging an integrated alert management methodology
  - Integration and event correlation
    - Examples using IBM OMEGAMON, TBSM and OMNIbus
- Recommendations And Road Map
  - Putting it all together



## Why Alerts? What Are The Benefits?

- If you don't measure it, you can't manage it
  - Ongoing measurement of system/application activity, availability and performance is important to consistent results
- Many issues are anecdotal
  - -What happened? Where? When?
  - How much? How often? How severe?
  - -What's the technical and business impact?
- Meaningful alert management enables fast and efficient problem isolation and root cause analysis
  - Become more proactive
- Gather measurement data and use to craft meaningful alerts
  - -Select and publish ongoing performance metrics

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#### **Islands Of Automation Complicate Management**



Optimal Alert Management Strategies for System z and Beyond



#### Common Alert Challenges Islands Of Automation

- Many technical platforms, components and core technologies to manage
  - -Often times each with it's own group of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)
  - Each with it's own set of management tools
- The problems
  - Complex SME tools with different User Interfaces
  - -SME tools that do not integrate or share information
    - More difficult to navigate
    - More difficult to do problem identification, isolation, and resolution
  - More challenging to automate corrective actions without clearly defined integration
    - More reliance on manual intervention



#### Common Alert Challenges Islands Of Automation And Tools Ownership

- Islands of automation pose challenges when trying to become more proactive
  - Sophisticated 'composite' applications drive the need for a more integrated methodology
  - Often necessary to more effectively integrate tools and technologies to become more proactive

# Tools ownership

- -Installation and management of the tools
- -Centralized management
- -Management dispersed among multiple groups
- -Recommendation where feasible try for a centralized approach



# **Categories Of Typical Alerts**



**Optimal Alert Management Strategies for System z and Beyond** 

# Alert Notification Types And Options

- Visual View Custom Views Enterprise View
  - Red/Yellow indicators and icons in a GUI interface, such as Tivoli Enterprise Portal or TBSM displays
- Console messages
  - Example Issuing messages and commands to the z/OS console
  - Use this as a mechanism to feed other automation
- Paging and emails
  - Issue commands to feed paging systems
  - Use 3<sup>rd</sup> party tools such as Postie to issue emails from the command prompt
  - Console messages may be used to feed email systems
- SNMP traps and alerts
  - Issue SNMP traps from the command prompt using situations or policies
- Event correlation engine example Netcool/OMNIbus events
  - OMNIbus may act as an event correlation engine
  - May receive events via traps or the EIF interface
- Alerts to 3<sup>rd</sup> party tools



#### Sources Of Alert Information Various Examples

- Operating System Performance monitoring technology
  - z/OS monitoring example OMEGAMON XE For z/OS
  - Distributed OS monitoring example IBM Tivoli Monitoring
- Database monitoring technology
  - z/OS Examples OMEGAMON XE For DB2, OMEGAMON XE For IMS
  - IBM Tivoli Monitoring for Distributed databases, IBM Optim
- Network monitoring technology
  - Examples OMEGAMON XE For Mainframe Networks, NetView
  - IBM Netcool OMNIbus, SNMP alert managers
- Application level monitoring
  - Examples ITCAM for Application Diagnostics, OMEGAMON XE For Messaging
  - Application error messages
- Console Automation and workload scheduling
  - Console messages and resource status
  - Job and workload status



#### Setting Alerts At The 3270 Level Example - OMEGAMON Classic Exceptions



- Each Classic OMEGAMON (MVS, IMS, DB2, CICS) has a set of pre-defined exceptions
  - Note OMEGAMON for Mainframe Networks and Storage do not have Classic interface
- Settings are stored in a profile member may have multiple profiles
- XACB command sets threshold ON or OFF or sets threshold level, enables XLF logging facility, and automated screen facility

#### Monitoring Interfaces With Automation For Alert Processing – example OMEGAMON and IBM SA



- IBM System Automation and AF/Operator provides a bi-directional interface with OMEGAMON
- Automation may detect OMEGAMON classic exceptions
- Automation may run execs to send traps to Netcool/OMNIbus

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#### Visualization Options 3270 Interface Versus GUI Interface Options

#### 3270 Interface

- 3270 green screen is high speed and detailed
- 3270 interfaces well with console automation tools
- Works well for SME deep dive analysis and problem resolution
- z/OS centric views
- GUI interfaces
  - Flexible and useful for 'big picture' views
    - Most customizable for different audiences
  - Works well for 'end to end' integrated views and methodologies
    - Incorporate Linux/UNIX/Windows platforms
    - Incorporate network, application, database and middleware
  - Works well for business application views
    - Correlate the impact of events on the business

#### | IBM Software Group | Tivoli Software



#### GUI Interface Example - Tivoli Enterprise Portal Provides An Integrated Alert Management Interface

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# Benefits Of An Integrated Alert Management Methodology

Improved ability to manage increasingly complex composite applications

 Enables an integrated approach to the management of subsystems, platforms, and application components

# Reduce time to problem resolution

Identify potential issues more rapidly

# Improved event management and problem isolation

More meaningful and useful problem alerts

# Improved event correlation and management

Eliminate the "noise" and focus on key issues



#### Important Characteristics Of An Integrated Alert Management Methodology

- Integration
  - Pull critical information together to the "single pane of glass"
    - Gather essential information from a variety of sources
  - End to end views for complex composite business applications
- Flexibility
  - Different views for different audiences
    - Management and Line of business/end users
    - Operations
    - Help desk
    - Technical Subject Matter Expert (SME) views
  - Optimize the views as the environment or requirements change
- Ease of Use
  - Eliminate the clutter and tune out the "noise"
  - Focus on critical metrics



#### **Integrate Information To Consolidate Alerts And Analysis**

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#### Forming An Alert Management Strategy

- High level analysis
  - Integrated event management and event correlation
  - Integrated business application topology analysis
- Integrated technical view
  - End to end technical analysis
  - Alerts for problem isolation and automation
- Netcool/OMNIBus Tivoli Business Service Manager (TBSM) **Drill down** OMEGAMON DE. OMEGAMON XE, & ITCAM **Drill down** OMEGAMON XE (TEP, 3270) & **ITCAM**

- Technical detail view
  - Technical deep dive analysis
  - Alerts for problem isolation and automation

#### Different Views May Be Required For Different Audiences - A Few Examples

- The integrated alert management overview
- The integrated Subject Mater Expert (SME) view
- The SME technical graphic overview
- The SME application specific view
- Management by exception view
- The Integrated technical view
- The end to end business application view
- The Integrated Operational view
- The Help Desk view
- The End User or Line of Business view



#### Example An Integrated Operational View

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# **Example - The SME Technical Graphic Overview**





# **Tivoli Enterprise Portal - The Power Of The Portal**



#### Alerts Are Defined Using Situations Boolean Logic Capability Makes Event Management More Meaningful And Powerful

#### **OMEGAMON** alerts are based upon a mechanism called a situation





#### Situations Highlight Alert Scenarios And Provide Drill Down Detail For Analysis



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# Alerts General Recommendations And Rules Of Thumb

- Make alerts Meaningful, Actionable, and Useful
- Meaningful alerts
  - Alert should be flexible make the names understandable
  - Adopt an alert naming convention
    - Makes it easier to identify customer created versus product provided situations

#### Actionable alerts

- Have appropriate notification
  - A workspace with an alert icon, command/message notification
- As a standard have expert advice
- Have pre-defined take actions where appropriate
- Useful alerts
  - Eliminate phony alert indicators tune out the noise
  - If an alert fires it should indicate an actual issue
    - An alert, an owner, and a consequence



# **Considerations For Event Correlation**

- Event correlation helps to improve the ability to manage increasingly sophisticated composite applications
  - Applications are more complex
  - Infrastructure is more complex
  - -Alerts are more complex
- Event correlation helps to eliminate the "noise" and focus on key issues
  - Tune out false alerts and focus on root cause analysis
  - Identify potential issues more rapidly
  - Reduce time to problem resolution
- Event correlation helps to enable an integrated approach to the management of subsystems, platforms, and application components



#### Components To Enable Event Correlation Example - Tivoli Netcool/OMNIbus

- IBM Tivoli Netcool/OMNIbus is the cornerstone of the IBM Tivoli Consolidated Operations Management solution
  - Delivers real-time, centralized monitoring of complex networks, IT domains
  - Event processing scalability that can exceed over 100 million events per day
- Netcool/OMNIbus includes over two hundred out-of-thebox probes (and more than 25 vendor alliances)
  - Enables the ability to include events from virtually any management system or device in the network or IT environment
- Provides manager-of-manager capabilities
  - Depth and breadth of event coverage and correlation
  - Software failover for highly available consolidated operations management
  - Event-processing efficiency resulting in cost savings and scalability

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#### An Example Of Integration And Correlation How Does Monitoring And Automation Integrate With OMNIbus?





#### The Next Phase Of Event Correlation Business Application View – What's The Impact?

- Enabling the management of performance and availability from the perspective of key business applications
- Business Application Views
  - -Manage performance and availability from an application perspective
  - Target the critical path performance and availability components of an application
    - Focus on specific components (platforms, databases, transactions)
  - Choose mission critical business applications
- How to get there
  - Start with event management and migrate to business application management



#### Alert Considerations Managing Events Versus Understanding The Business Impact



# **Business Perspective**

Determine the source of business service disruptions

#### Expanding The Perspective Business Application View

- Components of a Business Application View
  - -Availability
    - -Is the application and it's infrastructure components available?
    - -Are users able to access the application?
    - -Are SLAs being met?
  - -Performance
    - -How well is the application performing?
    - -What is the end user experience?
    - -Are Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) being met?

-Alerts

-Notification when issues occur

- -Real time and Historical information available
  - -The ability to trend and analyze over time



#### Example Of A Business Application View Using IBM TBSM



#### | IBM Software Group | Tivoli Software



#### Visualize & Inform

# What Makes Up A TBSM Solution?

- Business & Operational Dashboards
- Realtime Views & Metrics:
  - Balanced scorecards & KPIs
  - · Charts, Graphs, Maps
  - Service Topology
  - Event Views
  - SLA Metrics
  - Custom Data Views







# What's Required To Create A Business Application View?

#### Events

- Meaningful and useful alerts from a variety of sources monitoring, automation, network management, database management and more...
- Correlation
  - Correlate alerts to eliminate noise and remove duplicate events
  - Correlate events to application infrastructure
    - Discovery and mapping of application components
- Visualization
  - -KPIs and SLAs
    - Define Key Performance Indicators and Availability objectives (SLAs)
  - -Map and display KPIs and SLAs
  - Drive notification

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# The Roadmap Pulling It All Together

#### Begin with event management

- Define meaningful, actionable, useful alerts
  - Establish standards and conventions for alerts
- Determine visualization/notification of events
  - -Optimize views for target audiences
- Grow the infrastructure
  - Determine an integration approach for alert management
  - Implement event correlation
    - Expand event information sources and eliminate background noise
- Expand to business application management
  - Define KPIs and SLAs
  - Define the mapping of application infrastructure
  - Correlate events to application performance and availability





# Thank You!

Optimal Alert Management Strategies for System z and Beyond



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