SolarWinds Helps Global Manufacturing Company Enhance Monitoring Across Business Units

Atlas Copco amplifies Capabilities with SolarWinds Portfolio

A collaboration between Loop1 and SolarWinds
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Atlas Copco amplifies networking monitoring capabilities with SolarWinds portfolio

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Anna Jaklova
Global Infrastructure Manager
Epiroc / Atlas Copco

We sat down with Anna Jaklova, currently the Global Infrastructure Manager for Epiroc. Anna was a part of the network operations team at Atlas Copco in 2017 when the company decided to separate its mining and infrastructure division to form what is now Epiroc. As a main decision-maker in the division process that displaced previously-used network management tools in favor of SolarWinds products, she provided valuable insight on the factors that influenced her decision.

Atlas Copco, a Stockholm-based manufacturing company, has been a leading global manufacturer of pneumatic air tools and industrial gas products for more than 100 years. Ranked No. 540 on the Forbes Global 2000, Atlas Copco employs more than 34,000 individuals managing 15,000 devices across 65 different countries worldwide.

In early 2017, Atlas Copco separated its mining and infrastructure division from the rest of the organization to form a new company, Epiroc. Establishing this new entity required dividing the two existing network infrastructures, extracting historical mining data, and architecting new isolated environments.

The company identified the need for robust network management tools during this period of considerable growth and change.

One specific area of attention was the existing deployment of Micro Focus Network Node Manager i (NNMi) at a campus outside of Stockholm. The deployment was localized to a subset of devices that were difficult to integrate into their larger network, creating unnecessary headaches for networking staff.

The Challenge: Network Monitoring During Organizational Transitions

Anna Jaklova, Atlas Copco's global infrastructure manager, used this period of rapid change as an opportunity to audit the company's existing network management tools and evaluate alternative options to ensure her teams were operating at full capacity.

Because of the challenges in Stockholm, the company recognized the need for tools that could be easily rolled out and integrated. The current Micro Focus NNMi instance provided the basic functionality required for end-to-end visibility of all devices, but Anna knew that SolarWinds offered numerous cross-stack solutions that could better meet her enterprise network needs.

Given the size and functionality of the environment, Jaklova and her colleagues identified the need for the following capabilities:

- End-to-end network monitoring
- Event / trap logging & reporting
- Event / alert correlation & ticket system integration
- Capacity reporting & forecasting
- Netflow reporting
- Backup management
- Regulatory compliance control
- Accurate detailed inventory
- Geomaps and locations
- Multi-vendor device support
- Orchestration and automation

SolarWinds Integration

After extensive research and consideration of several different solutions, Atlas Copco adopted multiple products within the SolarWinds network management product suite.

“SolarWinds has an excellent reputation in the industry, and the breadth of its product portfolio played a significant role in our decision to displace our previous deployment tool,” Jaklova said.

The company also entered into a long-term managed service contract with Loop1, an Austin-based SolarWinds professional services partner, to oversee migration and daily management of the newly deployed SolarWinds Orion® Platform. Outsourcing the day-to-day monitoring activities gave the Atlas Copco team more flexibility to be proactive and concentrate on critical daily tasks.

While SolarWinds’ out-of-the-box solutions met most of Atlas Copco’s needs, the sheer scale of the environment required network preparation and system integration. SolarWinds’ well-documented API and the expertise of the Loop1 developers enabled Atlas Copco to integrate with existing tools.

The primary objective of this engagement was the successful migration of the SolarWinds applications and database to new servers. With Loop1, Atlas Copco analyzed and performed remediation where necessary in the current SolarWinds environment, implementing best practices configuration for all products included in the SolarWinds software list, and providing hands-on training for the client’s SolarWinds administrators.

The final product provided a highly functional monitoring solution that equipped Atlas Copco with a view into the performance and status of their environment. The system also included monitoring, alerting, and reporting to keep users informed of any current or potential threats or issues.

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>
> -Anna Jaklova

These integrations helped Atlas Copco successfully navigate the company's significant transition and gave the team the support necessary to operate efficiently. The Loop1 and SolarWinds dedicated support teams also helped the Atlas Copco team through this transition. "We received outstanding service from the SolarWinds technical support team," said Jaklova. "The knowledge and guidance offered by the Loop1 team was the cherry on top for the new SolarWinds deployment."

Solutions and Results

Atlas Copco ultimately implemented SolarWinds Network Performance Monitor (NPM), Network Traffic Analyzer (NTA), and Network Configuration Manger (NCM) to displace the current solution. "Our entire networking team uses SolarWinds tools on a daily basis," says Bret Dunning, North American network operational specialist, Atlas Copco. "Custom Network Operations Center (NOC) views and reporting provide clear insights of the network and help my team build cases to more accurately track the health of their network. Without the help of SolarWinds, our entire network would be slower and less reliable— the robustness of the SolarWinds Orion® Platform meets the needs of our network team."

Bret Dunning
North American Network Operational Specialist
Atlas Copco

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Specific product integration includes:

- **Network Performance Monitor (NPM):** SolarWinds NPM is one of the most widely-used network monitoring tools in the Orion® Platform. NPM gave Atlas Copco the ability to quickly identify, diagnose, and remediate network issues and outages.

- **Network Traffic Analyzer (NTA):** With NTA, Atlas Copco collects data from multiple traffic streams across the entire environment and converts those raw data points into useable information to help Jaklova and her team gain valuable insights into their network. This provided visibility into the individuals using the corporate network and how they were using it in real-time.

- **Network Configuration Manager (NCM):** Full deployment of NCM enabled Atlas Copco to manage configurations, changes, and compliance for routers, switches, and other devices. Not only was Jaklova's team able to save time by pinpointing root cause issues quicker, they were also able to focus on mission-critical tasks without worrying about network configuration and compliance.

Atlas Copco implemented additional tools to meet new networking needs, including:

- **Additional Polling Engines (APE) Usage:** Paired with their new tools, Atlas Copco needed two additional polling engines added to their system to help with workload evaluation and capacity planning, load balancing of service device nodes, component type balancing and load balancing of network device nodes with emphasis on element type balancing and topology / route polling consideration.

- **Configuration:** After completing the installation, Jaklova still needed assistance configuring the network to work with NPM, NTA and NCM. They also needed assistance setting up custom dashboards, alerts, and reporting. Jaklova's team found it necessary for SolarWinds to integrate with ServiceNow and provide real-time NOC dashboards to keep their fingers on the pulse of the network.

Through custom development leveraging the monitoring and configuration management tools from SolarWinds, Atlas Copco centralized its event correlation and root cause analysis. Loop1 SolarWinds Certified Professionals (SCP) engineers and architects designed the correct architecture, configured custom properties, created alert nesting, customized the web portal, and provided customized training during their ten-day Professional Service Engagement. Like many organizations, Atlas Copco uses an array of tools for event correlation and root cause analysis, a practice becoming more pervasive when dealing with today's real-time operational and security threats.

Takeaways and Future Plans

The SolarWinds modular installation options are also an integral part of Atlas Copco's success story. The team values the powerful, easy-to-use tools that are simple to maintain even during large-scale deployments. The SolarWinds solutions were also easy to implement across the Atlas Copco global

network, making for efficient and valuable tools. Loop1 also provided advanced development work after the initial installation.

With a fully functional and configured environment, Atlas Copco began its journey into comprehensive monitoring. The Atlas Copco team leveraged Loop1 to provide hands-on training to understand the full potential of their SolarWinds tools and use them to their fullest capacity. Armed with the knowledge and skills to succeed, Atlas Copco achieved strong, stable growth and provide their client base with sustainable productivity solutions. Their experience taught them SolarWinds can provide insight to eliminate overlap and cut cost across the board.

Atlas Copco plans to integrate its existing tools with other software solutions used by the organization to accomplish critical tasks by utilizing the development capabilities of the Loop1 team. Because of the overwhelming success of the migration, and their favorable experience with their SolarWinds products and support team, Atlas Copco is also considering expanding its environment to include Server & Application Monitor (SAM), making SolarWinds the top software choice in numerous areas across its global technical infrastructure.

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