

The Value of Open Source for IT Operations Teams

White Paper

Enterprise grade solutions with no license costs.

Open-source software is already ubiquitous.

IT teams in all entities can profit now to gain savings from re-purposed budgets to prioritise service delivery and user satisfaction.



Nobius
IT MONITORING. DELIVERED.

About Nobius

Award Winning UK-based IT consultancy Nobius helps customers gain value from open-source software and hosts solutions for them.



“ Given that enterprises are often budget challenged, it just makes financial sense to explore open source solutions. ”

Source : Lee Congden, The Enterprisers Project

Why you should consider open-source software

Maybe it's time to begin transforming your IT operations?

What happened to gov.uk is a great example of how open-source tools can impact and provide value. They assist in anyone's transformation journey. Of course, there's more to it than just tools.

Decades of experience in IT solutions, prove that adoption of open-source software tools is shown to effectively simplify, facilitate solutions faster, and provide substantial savings.

This was the motivation to launch Nobius and we believe that transformational journeys using existing open-source tools can help many organisations and departments to gain this value, re-purposing budgets too often assigned to expensive proprietary solutions that don't provide enough value.

**£4.1B
savings
in 3
years**

Source : Lee Congden,
The Enterprisers Project



In a recent webinar the presenter described a major Government initiative born to provide digital transformation of government online services and their delivery at gov.uk.

That team saved £4.1B over 3 years for the uk government by transforming to adopt existing and proven open-source tools, and gov.uk won major awards.

Lowering IT costs is not an empty promise.

For some Open Source carries a poor reputation or “stigma”. Our white paper *“Open Source is the Secret Sauce for IT Monitoring”**, outlines many such technologies which have so thoroughly come of age over the last decade.

In fact such tools provide features strongly aligned to typical IT operations needs and beyond What do you think of tools that have;

- **300 000++ “known” downloads, and probably millions more unknown**
- **Out of the box configurations for over 5600 technologies, applications and typical infrastructure elements**
- **ISO 27001 certifications**
- **Federal and other military and national body security certifications**
- **Major adoption and usage by many highstreet brand names across all industries**
- **100s of cross integrations to expand into solutions for complex IT domains including Automation, ITSM, Change Management, Asset Management, DevOps,...**

Quite an impressive list and it’s not exhaustive.

If you have been eliminating open-source, maybe it’s time for you to reconsider that point of view, especially if lowering IT costs is topical for you.

Use cases where open-source IT tools have helped people to transform their IT landscape are numerous, here’s a few to illustrate their applicability.

IT Monitoring

The kernel of IT Operations is described in *“You can’t manage what you don’t measure”*, a well-known quote from Peter Drucker. It makes sense and most teams have some form of IT Monitoring, often starting with best-of-breed tools provided by the vendors of infrastructure components included in the datacentre and beyond.

Its purpose is to centralise data collected from each component and manage that data over time to generate alerts, measure status and performance, chart graphs, and allow operators to configure some of their parameters.



*You can read *Open Source is the Secret Sauce for IT Monitoring* white paper at nobius.co.uk/resources

Proprietary solutions that can address these requirements are often very expensive and create significant vendor lock in over time. They're also hard to use and administer by nature and versions change often a lot more slowly than the speed with which new technologies are required.

Although industry standards such as SNMP exist they're rarely *prioritised* by vendors who overwhelmingly promote use of their proprietary solutions instead.

The Open Source movement has given



birth to software solutions that now provide all the necessary monitoring requirements and more besides. Some have become enterprise grade meaning, they're trusted, secure, scale to large, distributed environments, and are fully supported by their creator!

As monitoring is a fundamental requirement for most IT Operations, open source tools for monitoring are now a popular basis to begin transforming the tools landscape.

If you consider the annual costs spent on your proprietary IT monitoring software it's easy to see what savings could be made. We believe that most teams can reduce their costs by 3x minimum.

IT Automation

Automation is a vital addition in any IT operator's toolbox, especially when it is integrated with IT monitoring software.

For example when there's an issue, a web site or database not working, the quickest and easiest action is to restart it. Just like your PC, when in doubt reboot. This is fine if it doesn't happen often, but really its more important to know what caused the issue.

That's where monitoring coupled with automation acts to provide value. Configured to be triggered by an alert that monitoring has raised, automation will first collect relevant data in a few seconds, and then restart the device saving data useful to analyse and prevent the issue repeating and prevent the issue recurring.

Automation is not the enemy of jobs. It frees up human beings to do higher-value work.

Andy Stern



Similarly if services have a high SLA, then a network outage may require a change to a route across the internet. Fine, but if that incurs significant cost, the reverse action is desirable as soon as possible and that can be automated.

These are simple examples. Often when such solutions exist, they're developed using expensive proprietary software.

That's not needed when open-source software can do the same thing. License free.

IT operations processes are not the only examples, where the above can be applied, and should.

Increasingly security is of major concern, and that includes environmental security. With the internet of things, practically everything is connected to the internet, or at least to an IT network. That can of course increase security hazards, but also expand the ways teams can protect themselves.

For example, CCTV is ubiquitous and a vital part of controlling security on



Automation is very powerful, but It's even more desirable when it comes with no license cost. And then even more desirable when it's integrated with IT monitoring.

Non-IT connected devices

any site, Management of the site itself is not really the domain of IT, but these are nevertheless important to management and the business.

The same IT open-source software can

easily monitor these devices. Why do that? Well, let me explain a few examples. Consider the time stamp of those cameras and the recorders they stream to. If any of those devices has the incorrect time, when events happen that are important to management, a fire, theft, burglary, access violation, then it'll be almost impossible to find the images needed, making the cause, perpetrator or fraud harder to identify and may also cause issues in a legal setting.

It's the same story with intrusion detection alarms. If a device isn't responding or is tampered with, can that impact reputation and impact services?

And don't forget it doesn't just happen to others!

Time and attendance, Heating and



Delivering Service

Many organisations exist to deliver services to users. Examples include delivery of lessons or access to teaching tools, providing access to passport or driver license assets, and of course patient records.

We all consume these and more services, and the truth is the delivery of those services is just as subject to IT issues as anything else, yet at the same time this could impact life or death.

That's why wherever a service has an impact on users, can impact their and your role and life, it's vital to measure and control it and its delivery. Constantly, and that's not all, Communicating with the impacted users is a part of the measure of the efficiency and health of that service delivery. Monitoring can help, and yes open-source software tools are available.

They can

- **constantly measure the health of the service,**
- **characterise what impacts its delivery,**
- **integrate with IT Service Management to feed service management processes.**
- **communication and report to users**



ventilation, building management are all “services” that impact people and their lives, their productivity and their security.

Yes, vendors who provide these devices and their systems, do often do provide software tools (proprietary) to manage them. Fine, but how much ££ does that cost? How many of those vendors provide you with how many tools? How many tools can you remember how to use across all your devices and assets?

Simplification of the tools in your environment should be a goal as it will drive down costs but also improve the efficiency of teams, and the delivery of those services to users. Yes, practically everything can be monitored from the same centralised open-source monitoring software, and extended through automation, service management and more.

IT Monitoring, Automation, IoT and other non-IT devices and applications and service delivery with user experience monitoring are all domains where the use of open source software will certainly lower costs, simplify the tool landscape, improve operator efficiency and improve services delivery and user satisfaction
Providing such solutions is the expertise Nobius brings to bear.



visit
nobius.co.uk and
engage with us at
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**We'll explain more on the
value of open-source**

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