

Kwik-Fit Keeps Its Network Wheels Turning With Ipswitch WhatsUp Gold

Case Study

Company:
Kwik-Fit UK

Industry:
Automotive parts repair specialists

Business Challenge:
Required a means to monitor the network status of over 700 remote sites

Outcome:
Kwik-Fit UK chose WhatsUp Gold to provide up/down monitoring of its remote sites and bandwidth utilisation of critical offices

Kwik-Fit are experts in automotive parts repair including tyres, brakes, exhausts, MoT testing, car servicing, air conditioning recharge and windscreen repair. Kwik-Fit is the leading fast-fit supplier of tyres in the UK with over 600 branches and is part of the Kwik-Fit Group, owned by PAI, a leading European private equity firm with offices in Paris, London, Madrid and Milan. Kwik-Fit operates from almost 1,800 service points across Europe and includes Kwik-Fit Netherlands and Speedy in France as well as the UK operation. The company services the requirements of almost 7.5 million motorists a year and is Europe's largest fast-fit services provider.

“Before we installed WhatsUpGold, troubleshooting network issues was a lot harder,” said Mitchell. “It would often mean manually ploughing through router configs, device logs, etc to try to get to the bottom of an issue. Often some problems would remain unsolved.”

With a large number of remote branches, WhatsUpGold enables the IT department to quickly determine whether a device is down. With over 700 remote sites (including branches, offices, etc), Kwik-Fit required a means to monitor the network status of these sites, so they evaluated a number of different products before opting for WhatsUpGold.

“WhatsUpGold allowed us to do exactly what we wanted to do – provide up/down monitoring of all our remote sites (with alerting, etc) and bandwidth utilisation of critical offices, while also allowing us to expand our monitoring capabilities through SNMP and WMI monitoring,” said Mitchell. “We are now also monitoring things like mail queues, number of remote VPN users connected, core device environmental data, etc. The NetFlow plug-in is also being used at some of our critical offices, which enables us to see exactly what traffic is flowing in more detail. This can be very useful for troubleshooting network issues.”

“WhatsUpGold helps enormously with troubleshooting, which gives us the capability to respond to issues immediately.”

**- Neil Mitchell, Network Manager,
Kwik-Fit UK
MSP Manager**

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With WhatsUpGold installed the IT department can be much more pro-active in fault resolution. As Mitchell explained, it often knows when there is a problem before the users have even realised themselves. “We can also determine patterns, for example, if a site has gone down a number of times in a short period, it may indicate a circuit stability issue, or we can check for network problems retrospectively - if one of our overnight processes has failed we can check to see if there were any network issues at the time.”

“When our helpdesk starts to get calls with users complaining of lack of connectivity we check the live WhatsUpGold data and can determine that a number of sites are down. Quite often we are able to determine that these sites are all connected with one particular service provider. Therefore, the most likely cause is some form of ‘outage’ on the ISP network. We are then able to raise a call with the ISP and provide this information. Using the historical reports we are able to advise the ISP of exactly when and for how long a particular site was ‘down’.”

The financial advantages for the company are that the IT Department, as a whole, can spend less time troubleshooting issues, as WhatsUpGold does all the groundwork, and more time working on IT projects.

“As our business develops, the importance of network connectivity becomes more critical. WhatsUpGold certainly helps in the time taken to resolve issues,” said Mitchell. “We are making more and more use of our online presence (e.g. customers booking online) and this involves connectivity with head office resources and individual branches. In the event of problems, WhatsUpGold helps enormously with troubleshooting, which gives us the capability to respond quickly.”

“We will probably make more use of the NetFlow plug-in (e.g. increase the devices being monitored) and will also look to make more of configurable monitors for application servers that are becoming more critical to the business. We will also be looking to make use of the SMS alerting capabilities.”

The WhatsUp Gold product family provides networking professionals with more intelligence about and visibility into their networks than ever before. Network management professionals want simplicity and need rapid results. With over 25 major new features, and over 100 new sub-features, WhatsUp Gold v14.0 directly addresses these needs by delivering decreased deployment time and increased performance and productivity.

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