

CASE STUDY:

PwC South Africa uses the targeted alerts and reports in GSX Monitor to safeguard mail delivery, application availability, and replication.

About PwC South Africa



PwC firms worldwide provide industry-focused assurance, tax, and advisory services to enhance value for their clients. More than 163,000 people in 151 countries in firms across the PwC network share their thinking, experience, and solutions to develop fresh perspectives and practical advice.

PwC South Africa is just one of the many PwC firms operating throughout the world. It has approximately 5,500 system users based across 7 countries throughout Southern Africa.

Replication and Remote Access are Vital

PwC South Africa uses Lotus Notes and Domino to facilitate communications and provide essential business applications. In total, there are 47 Domino servers, with 2,500 users based at the Johannesburg office, and a further 3,000 users based at 20 remote offices. Due to the nature of PwC's work, consultants spend most of their time working on-site with their clients, rather than at their base office. Remote access to the Lotus Notes and Domino infrastructure provides a vital line of communication with the base office, which is critical for business success. Prompt, reliable access to up-to-date information, via email and applications, is essential to the way PwC consultants work. It is also vital that consultants can collaborate, and share information quickly, in order to meet their deadlines, and provide the high standard of service expected by clients.

The Key Challenges for IT Support

One of the key challenges for the support team is ensuring that data is replicated to remote sites in a timely manner to facilitate the business. If replication fails, or exceeds agreed timescales, consultants cannot access the latest information when they need it, and the quality of service provided to clients is compromised. Consequently, it is vital that the service is proactively managed to ensure that applications and key business databases are available, and that replication occurs within agreed time limits. Another key challenge for the support team is to ensure that consultants can access their email and applications while working away from their base office. Reliable remote access to the Lotus Notes and Domino based systems is vital for consultants to maintain contact with their clients and colleagues, and to work on audits, proposals, or tax consulting. Internally, PwC South Africa has high expectations for up-time and availability. The potential monetary impact of an outage is of the order of tens of thousands of euros per hour of system downtime. Therefore the PwC support team strive to safeguard the high quality of service delivery by monitoring services proactively, while at the same time identifying opportunities to reduce overheads and gain efficiencies wherever possible.

The GSX Solution

The IT support team chose **GSX Monitor** as the solution for automating the proactive monitoring of business-critical replication and communications services. **GSX Monitor** is used to automatically monitor key databases and ensure that they have replicated to their spokes in the specified time frame. The team use the *Database View* monitoring features of **GSX Monitor** to ensure that key databases are responding in the expected time frame. Alerts are

set to automatically notify the team if the expected response times or replication cycles are not met.

To safeguard the quality and performance of communication services, **GSX Monitor** is used to monitor mail routing, pending mail, dead mail, the log.nsf file, and disk space. A key advantage of **GSX Monitor** is that it can differentiate between a server being down and the network being down, so WAN connectivity is also monitored.

GSX Monitor generates targeted alerts, based on key performance indicators, to warn the support team of impending issues before service delivery is affected. This enables the support team to proactively manage any incidents and ensure that service levels are consistently achieved. Alert profiles have been configured so that after hours alerts are sent to Blackberry handsets, ensuring that service delivery is protected, even outside of official hours. If problems do arise, **GSX Monitor's** advanced reporting features help the support team to rapidly pinpoint the root cause of the problem, saving hours of investigation, and trial and error.

GSX Monitor automates many tasks that were previously carried out manually. Monthly management reports are generated automatically, saving the administrators the immense workload required to manually create the reports. The team use the extensive reporting features to identify trends, manage capacity, forecast, identify impacts to the availability of Domino systems outside of the IT infrastructure, and work with other departments. These reports provide a valuable insight into the service delivery and include statistics such as up-time, CPU utilization, and mail transferred. Automating these reports has reduced overheads and enabled the team to focus on projects that add value to their services.

Assuring the Delivery of Critical Services

The PwC support team use **GSX Monitor** to ensure replication of their critical databases. By automating the monitoring of replication and database response times, the team can be confident that the information required by the business, is delivered to and available for the business in the critical time frame. The team can also be confident that they can support consultants working remotely on client sites by providing reliable access to email and applications. By using **GSX Monitor** to automate monitoring and reporting tasks, the team have improved their efficiency and succeeded in reducing overheads.

Summary

PwC South Africa consists of a team of highly skilled professionals focused on identifying ways of delivering value for clients; the same skills are applied internally when planning how to get the most out of their communications infrastructure. **GSX Monitor** was assessed against other products and identified as the most suitable solution to ensure that critical services such as mail delivery, application availability, and replication consistently meet the high expectations for service delivery.

*"We have reviewed other products but many were overly complex, very expensive with high management and resource requirements. GSX is easy to configure, cost effective, and scalable. GSX is focused on the Domino environment and they **KNOW** Domino. With targeted alerts and reports they rapidly get to the heart of the problem and save administrators hours of trial and error trying to configure and consolidate hundreds of statistics."*

David Preston

PwC Southern African Notes Manager

For More Information:

For more information on GSX, visit www.gsx.net, where our resource center contains FAQs, Case Studies, Podcasts, White Papers, and Webinars. You can also download a fully functional, 30 day evaluation copy of **GSX Monitor**, **GSX Server Guard**, and **GSX ID Manager**.

For more information about PwC South Africa visit www.pwc.com.