

CASE STUDY

Regional Health Care Provider

Empowered Networks uses Infoblox NetMRI to deliver visibility, automation and compliance

The Customer:

- Major healthcare organization delivering services through hospitals, clinics and facilities throughout the Midwest US

The Challenge:

- Central network visibility, collaboration enablement, security, performance, and network compliance across all ecosystem providers

The Solution:

- Infoblox NetMRI Network Change and Configuration Management (NCCM) for network equipment and device inventory, software and system updates, continuing security audits and issue resolution

The Results:

- Network discovery, visibility, automation and control
- Device compliance validation and security management
- Operational policy enforcement and best practice deployment and management
- Compliance and audit validation
- Regulatory reporting for audit and compliance

Summary

A prominent Midwest regional health care organization delivering medical services through major hospitals, clinics, doctor's offices and facilities needed better network visibility, automation, control and centralized management to meet service, operational and regulatory requirements. Their technology investments supported patient care through an e-health environment, yet diverse systems and devices were operationally and geographically siloed, making them difficult to manage from an audit, security and performance perspective. They needed team workflow collaboration, device inventory, policy enforcement and reporting to ensure security, performance and regulatory compliance.

The organization chose Empowered Networks to help streamline network operations, elevate device and network visibility and management, and enable stronger cross-functional team efficiency. They also needed to ensure network endpoints met security and regulatory requirements, improve device upgrade processes and quickly resolve any adverse security audit findings.

Empowered Networks teamed with Infoblox and deployed the Infoblox NetMRI Network Change and Configuration Management (NCCM) solution. With NetMRI, Empowered Networks was able to discover and load the entire inventory of network equipment into the NetMRI database. NetMRI delivered visibility, and simplified and automated device management, making workflow processes more efficient. NetMRI further saved costs associated with managing regionally dispersed network assets, improved policy enforcement, and enabled device upgrades to meet audit and compliance requirements quickly and easily.



The Challenge

As a not-for-profit regional health care system with services delivered over several hundred square miles and plans for future expansion, it was essential to maximize network effectiveness and efficiency, but without adding the cost of additional IT staff. Since most staff time was spent managing manual processes and dealing with mounting federal, state and local regulations, the IT department required automation to remove manual labor from the process of managing the network. They wanted device discovery and visibility, and policy management from a single control plane. It was also critical to simplify processes and ensure compliance, security and team collaboration to support IT services and patient care as efficiently as possible. Further, they needed a solution that could be used by the entire IT department whether staff were new to the industry or had years of experience.

The Situation

With staffing levels and budgets flat, yet increasing network demands and rising security, compliance and regulatory concerns, network automation was the top priority. To address the situation, the health care system hired Empowered Networks to implement the Infoblox NetMRI network change and configuration management (NCCM) solution. NetMRI proactively identifies performance, configuration and policy issues against organizational and industry best practices. It automates data collection, performs deep network analysis and prioritizes potential network issues. NetMRI eliminates manual workflows, saving time and money, and releases resources for higher-value projects.

The Solution

Empowered Networks deployed Infoblox NetMRI to automate and streamline the organization's network management functions, delivering a better management experience and a number of operational advantages:

- **Network Auto Discovery and IPAM Sync:** NetMRI automatically discovers, views and synchronizes multi-vendor infrastructure, IP addresses, end hosts, network constructs (L2 physical data, L3 logical data, routes, VLANs, virtual forwarding and routing) and topologies with current and historical information through a single control plane.
- **Change Management:** NetMRI manages change tasks with powerful but simple methods for encoding change logic. NetMRI's automatic change detection saves considerable time, and delivers historical views, side-by-side comparisons and configuration search.

- **Configuration Analysis:** NetMRI auto-detects and audits network updates, receives detailed analysis, and performs configuration backup, search and date/time stamp correlation of network problems. Analysis and alerts on network performance, configuration and problems saves time and speeds resolution.
- **Change and Configuration Automation:** NetMRI enables and embeds variable-based jobs and scripts, customizable templates, scripting (CCS, Perl and Python), user-based role access control and job scheduling for further time-saving automation.
- **Switch Port Management:** NetMRI tracks free, available and unused ports. It also provides provisioning, remediates compromised endpoints, monitors connected wired and wireless end-hosts, and supports capacity planning.
- **Policy and Compliance Management:** Another helpful provision is automatic, continuous real-time and historical tracking of network changes against multiple security policies. Embedded compliance rules, best-practice templates, violation detection and remediation tools further assist in resolving conflicts.
- **Automated Failover:** NetMRI provides redundancy and resiliency for data center collectors and appliances to support network availability requirements.
- **Reporting:** Finally, the single-click, pre-built and customizable executive and granular reports, filtering, on-demand, scheduled and role-based access enables IT management the visibility to see and share network information across the ecosystem.

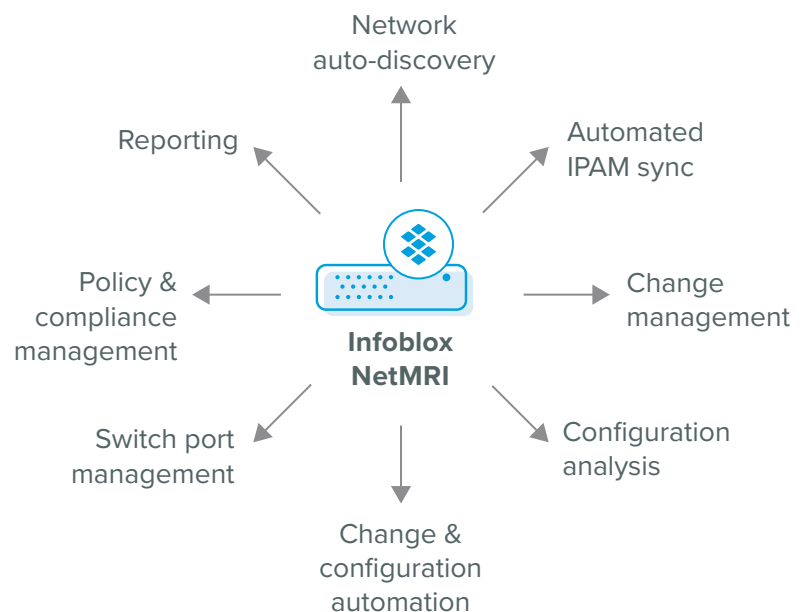


Figure 1: Infoblox NetMRI

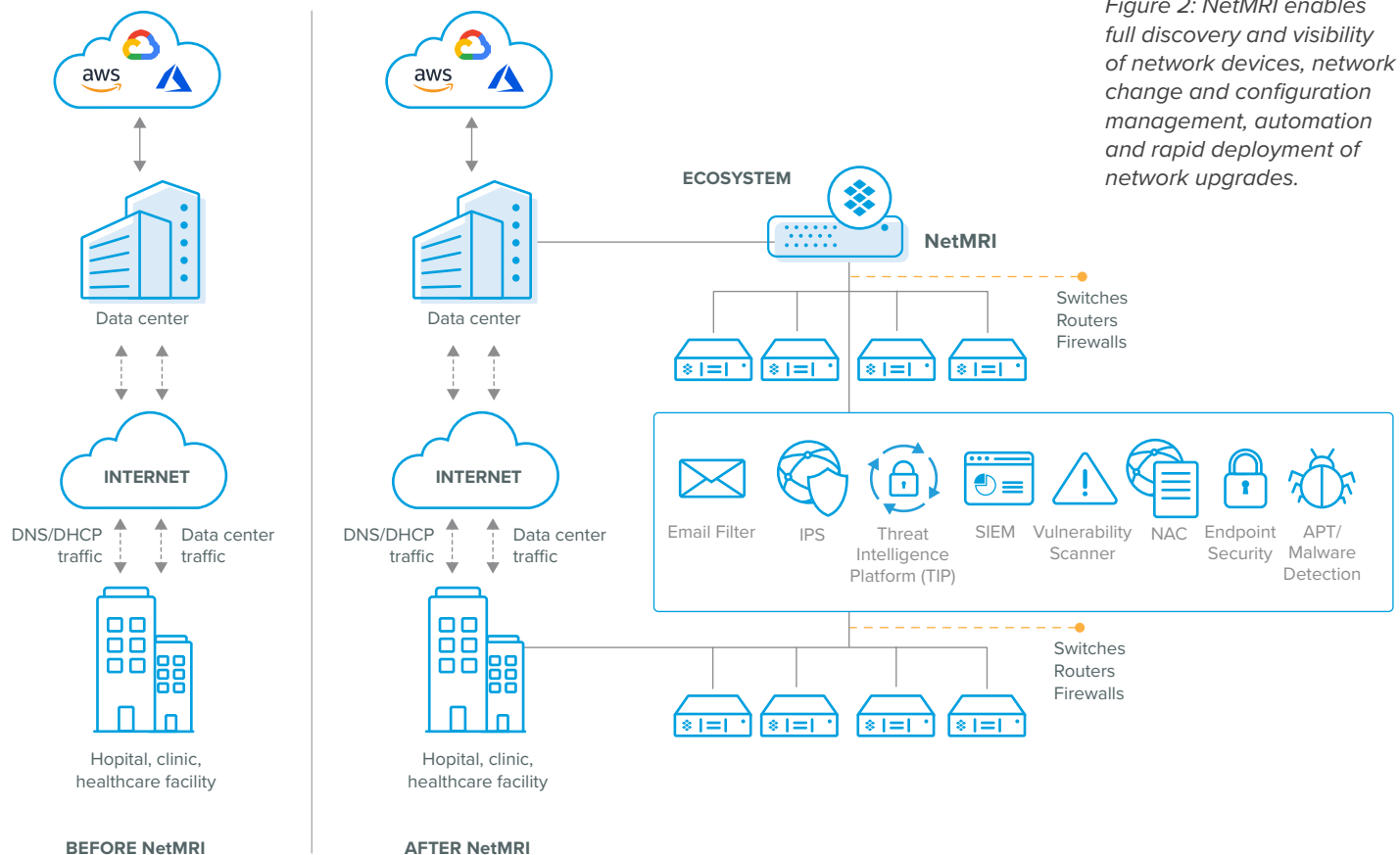


Figure 2: NetMRI enables full discovery and visibility of network devices, network change and configuration management, automation and rapid deployment of network upgrades.

The Result

Empowered Networks leveraged NetMRI's discovery to provide visibility for all network devices. NetMRI's compliance policy capabilities were used to develop, deploy and assess network device compliance across the ecosystem. A comprehensive set of policy rules reflecting the organization's best practices were developed and deployed, providing the required audit validation to ensure compliance. Further, custom reports were developed

to expedite audit and issue remediation. Most importantly, Empowered Networks and Infoblox NetMRI removed the manual processes out of the organization's network management process, and replaced it with automation and control, freeing resources for other critical assignments, saving time and money and enabling the organization to focus on what's most important—ensuring the health, healing and well-being of its patients.