



Maintenance Perspectives
Ways to get more from your hardware agreements

The Best Defense is Having a Good Defense Unsung Defensive Heroes Make IT, Sales Wins Possible

January 11, 2011

Keep an eye out for typos.

Details at the bottom of this newsletter's content.

Bowl Games and the Datacenter

Auburn's win in this week's BCS National Championship game came off of a short yardage field goal in the closing seconds. Prior to the game, however, analysts didn't expect that Auburn would only put up 22 points of total offense. Most anticipated a score-a-thon rather than a tense defensive grind. But what happened, and what both teams did to rise to the occasion, illustrates an important point. If Auburn had brought only their offense to the game, lack of defense would have allowed Oregon to score all the points analysts expected, and Auburn would have lost. Instead, a solid defense that had spent most of the year in obscurity permitted a 22-point offense to win the national title this year.

A metaphorical connection to operations in the enterprise datacenter isn't as big of a stretch as you might think. Businesses are constructed around a sales offense, where superstars rack up wins and beat out the competition, and the best will train hard to do even better next quarter. By contrast the IT team provides the defense, and generally is in the spotlight only when something goes wrong - when costs are too high or something fails and requires attention. Backups and security keep the data safe, apps and middleware keep conversations and data flowing, and purposeful choices for power and cooling infrastructure ensure that costs are predictable and as low as possible. But what about the IT hardware itself - the servers, storage and networking infrastructure that are outside of the IT team's direct maintenance role? What does a solid defensive strategy for IT hardware in particular look like?

Warranties and contracts, not nuts and bolts

The defense of hardware begins with a good defensive strategy in the maintenance contract and post-warranty choices you make for your servers, storage, networking and OS assets. Hardware defense consists of maintaining a manageable - though not necessarily simple - process flow to identify, diagnose and respond to hardware failures. Beyond this, it also requires an equally comprehensive management scheme for installing, moving, adding and changing (IMAC) the IT hardware due to growth, acquisitions and other non-failure related reasons. For most datacenters, this is a tall order because while a variety of vendors and OEMs are providing the operational products, no one vendor or OEM can support or repair them all or even successfully bundle a few together under the same coverage. As such, it's common to have a hodgepodge of coverage types, levels, and providers, which severely undermines a defensive IT strategy. The first response to a failure should be to fix it, but too often the first response is actually a cumbersome process of determining who is even willing to diagnose it.

TERiX Computer Service is one of a handful of Third Party Maintainers (TPMs) that can deliver breadth in all three of the most critical hardware maintenance metrics: Number of OEM products/product lines covered, geographical scope, and Service Level Agreement flexibility. TERiX supports hundreds of product types, both new and legacy, from more than 30 OEMs including HP, IBM, Oracle Sun, Cisco, and EMC. TERiX offers nationwide coverage in the US (190 sites) as well as international coverage in 48 countries. And only TERiX makes test calls and service demos on real support problems a readily available option for potential customers, backing it up with a variety of flexible SLA, monitoring, and professional services choices. TERiX fix-first even eliminates the

scramble for diagnosis in cases where multiple providers are involved - TERiX will fix the problem first, and then determine what coverage changes are necessary for the future.

Find Out More

If this seems relevant to your specific circumstances, or if you just want to find out more about third party hardware maintenance in general, please click through to our [general information](#) area on our website. A quick response form is available at the bottom of that page if you're looking for the answer to a specific question regarding covered product models SLAs or geographic areas.

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Terix Computer Service | 388 Oakmead Parkway | Sunnyvale | CA | 94085-5407