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THE MONITORING EXPERTS

ENGIE Solutions

Case Study ENGIE Solutions

ENGIE Solutions improves monitoring of its large IT and IoT infrastructure with PRTG Enterprise Monitor

PAESSLER PRTG ENTERPRISE MONITOR

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>
> Guillaume Baudry,
> Network Architect at ENGIE Solutions

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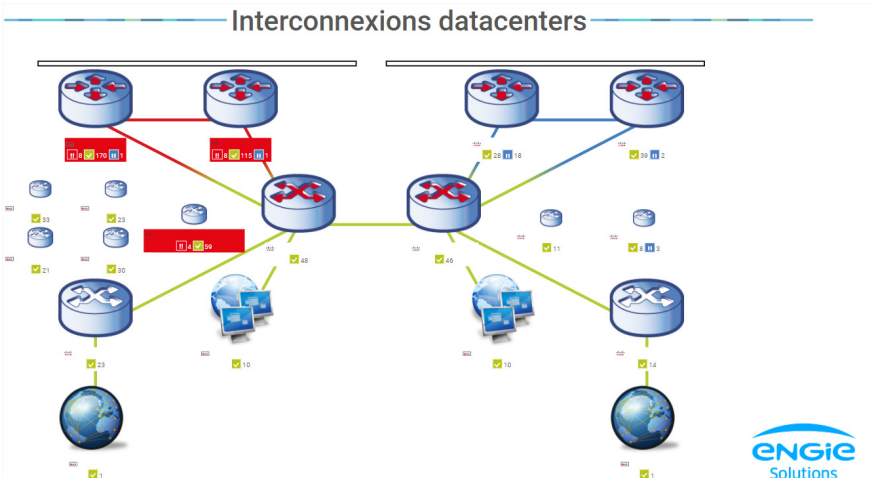
ENGIE Solutions, a major French company that provides energy and energy efficiency services to companies and communities, chose to move its monitoring system from PRTG Network Monitor, which it had been using for many years, to PRTG Enterprise Monitor, which is designed to meet the needs of large infrastructures. With over 25,000 monitoring sensors, including over 13,000 for its IoT equipment (and still more to come), the company required uninterrupted access to a reliable, unified view of its various business services via multi-server dashboards. Guillaume Baudry, Network Architect in the Center of Excellence for Systems and Networks at ENGIE Solutions, talks about the transition process and the assistance provided by Paessler.

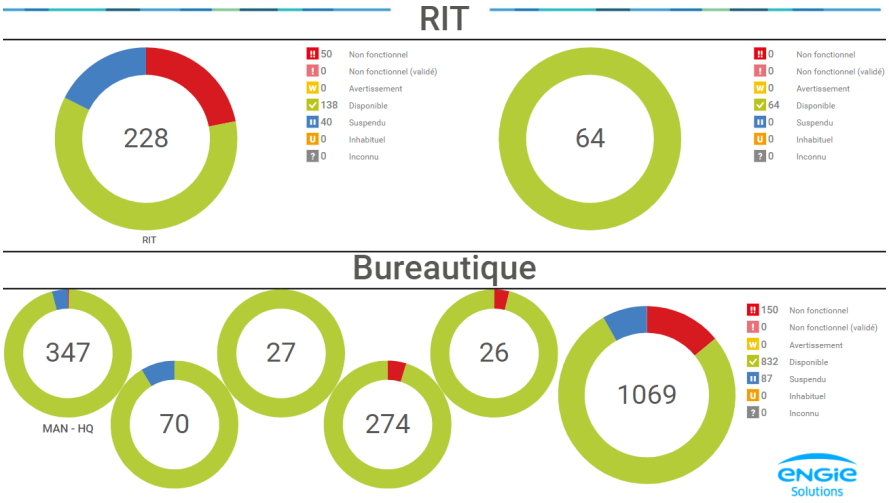
ENGIE Solutions’ requirements: to be able to continue deploying additional sensors for monitoring

Since 2010, ENGIE Solutions has used PRTG Network Monitor to monitor its entire IT infrastructure. By 2016, around 14,000 sensors had been deployed, both in the two data centers and in the company’s 900 agencies and operating facilities. The goal was to be able to monitor multiple servers, on-site and in the cloud, as well as storage units, printers and over 200 internal and external applications.

But that was only the beginning. In 2018 the company added significant quantities of IoT equipment throughout France and beyond, both in remote locations and directly on customers’ premises. 6,000–8,000 additional sensors were installed on meters, thermostats, connected heating systems, wind turbines, etc.



Datacenters interconnection



IoT and office automation monitoring

According to Baudry, "There was a realization at the time that monitoring our IoT equipment was vital to our performance and predictive maintenance, and that PRTG was fully capable of doing that for us. By September 2020, we had already installed a total of 25,000 sensors, and expected to deploy 15,000 more sensors for IoT. We urgently needed to upgrade our system, which was reaching maximum capacity."

For ENGIE Solutions, the goal was simple: to continue deploying as many monitoring sensors as needed to ensure service availability and continue improving quality by meeting their service-level agreements (SLAs). "We also needed to maintain ease of use and fast visibility of our entire infrastructure via the nine giant screens in our dedicated IT room at headquarters," Baudry adds.

Using PRTG: monitoring a large infrastructure and highly advanced utilization of the tool

The IT department had been brainstorming ways to reach this goal when the solution presented itself: the launch of PRTG Enterprise Monitor, a monitoring tool for large-scale IT environments with tens of thousands of sensors and a flexible, membership-based license model. A determining factor in ENGIE Solutions' choice: The new software solution included ITOps Board, a tool that permits the deployment of several PRTG servers while providing a comprehensive view of all business services on the dashboards. The system was installed on a trial basis in the final months of 2020, and it quickly proved its worth.

Baudry's initial assessment: "The challenge for large organizations is to successfully monitor tens of thousands of elements in real time, and ensure that they are performing well, without drowning in a flood of information. ITOps Board solves the problem by providing that essential consistency, especially since PRTG "oversees" other monitoring solutions in an overall merging of dashboards that organizes all the information, from the global level to the most granular. It's a real help in our ongoing quest for simplification."

These first months of testing ITOps Board have been decisive for the company. It will be able to continue using PRTG towards modeling and monitoring its SLAs, both for traditional IT and for the IoT, such as monitoring energy distribution for its customers. With 63 people using PRTG daily over the course of many years, ENGIE Solutions is definitely one of the companies that takes full advantage of the tool's many features.

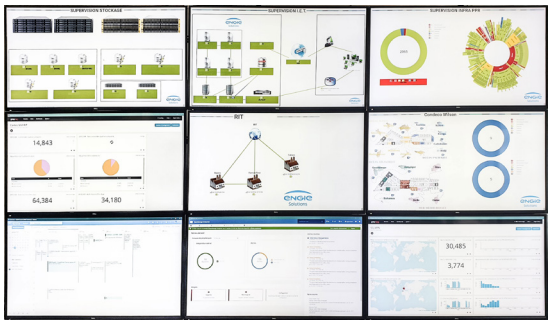
About ENGIE Solutions

ENGIE Solutions is a global reference in low-carbon energy and services. Our purpose ("raison d'être") is to act to accelerate the transition towards a carbon-neutral world, through reduced energy consumption and more environmentally-friendly solutions, recon-ciling economic performance with a positive impact on people and the planet. We rely on our key businesses (gas, renewable energy, services) to offer competitive solutions to our customers. With our 170,000 employees, our customers, partners and stakeholders, we are a community of Imaginative Builders, committed every day to more harmonious progress. Turnover in 2019: 60.1 billion Euros. The Group is listed on the Paris and Brussels stock exchanges (ENGI) and is represented in the main financial indices (CAC 40, DJ Euro Stoxx50, Euronext 100, FTSE Eurotop100, MSCI Europe) and non-financial indices (DJSI World, DJSI Europe and Euronext VigeoEiris-World 120, Eurozone 120, Europe 120, France 20, CAC 40 Governance).

ENGIE Solutions

Baudry explains, "We have so many varied, unusual elements to monitor that we end up developing our own sensors. It can be done very quickly and easily using the PRTG API and REST APIs in our CI/CD pipelines, and even the MIBs, which the system manages efficiently. It also effectively handles SQL and quick, intuitive filtering on Elasticsearch, allowing us to query all the Ping sensors at once. Paessler's customer support has been very valuable, and just perfect when we need them for technical questions."

The IT team's goal of simplifying processes and limiting human intervention whenever possible has been helped by automating several functions using scripts in PRTG. For example: the automatic deployment of sensors on a new virtual machine that a customer requested on the company's marketplace, or sending a personalized alert to a third-party service provider in case of an anomaly on a monitored device.



ENGIE Solutions dashboards

The benefits of PRTG: complete, scalable monitoring with proven ROI

The decision to move to the new Enterprise Monitor version of PRTG was an easy one for ENGIE Solutions' Center of Excellence for Systems and Networks, thanks to years of positive experience using PRTG Network Monitor. The team has discovered multiple advantages to using PRTG, first and foremost being the dashboards. These have helped the team improve transmission of monitoring information to its colleagues, partners and customers throughout France, using the report creation features to provide more visibility on its actions and the work accomplished.

Baudry adds, "The management of our SLAs was very convincing, and made us reconsider our approach to monitoring by focusing more on performance. It's helped us improve the quality of our service, particularly in terms of our customer-facing online platform, ENGIE Direct. Having the option of automating tasks with PRTG has quickly become indispensable, and we plan to go even further in that direction. But it's just as important to be able to reliably monitor our vast array of IoT equipment, as well as the data it provides, which our tools collect and utilize automatically."

Now more than ever, the future of monitoring for ENGIE Solutions is in the IoT. The company is about to deploy 15,000 new sensors. PRTG Enterprise Monitor has helped achieve this, particularly through ITOps Board's business-oriented monitoring, which efficiently provides visibility on thousands of sensors. But the company doesn't plan to stop there. It also has an enormous industrial perimeter that hasn't yet been added to its PRTG centralized monitoring, which can combine companies' IT and OT data.

CONTACT US
sales@paessler.com

ABOUT PAESSLER AG

Paessler believes monitoring plays a vital part in reducing humankind's consumption of resources. Monitoring data helps its customers save resources, from optimizing their IT, OT and IoT infrastructures to reducing energy consumption or emissions – for our future and our environment. That is why Paessler offers monitoring solutions for businesses across all industries and all sizes, from SMB to large enterprises. Paessler works with renowned partners, and together they tackle the monitoring challenges of an ever-changing world.

Since 1997, when Paessler first introduced PRTG Network Monitor, it has combined its in-depth monitoring knowledge with an innovative spirit. Paessler knows the challenges of complex IT, OT and IoT infrastructures and networks. Paessler products empower its customers to monitor everything, and thus help them optimize their resources.

Paessler AG // info@paessler.com // www.paessler.com

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