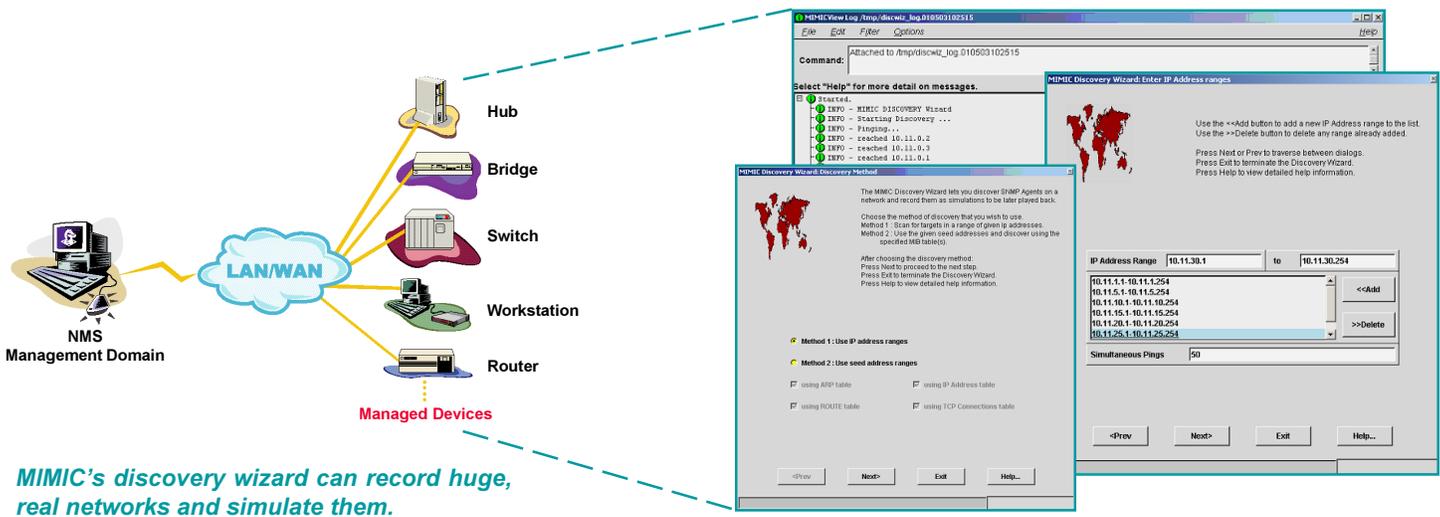


Application Brief: Management Service Providers



The basic tenant of network and systems management outsourcing is simple: turn over network and systems management to an organization that

MSPs leverage MIMIC in many applications, including:

- Customer support
- Disaster simulations
- Sales demos
- Software development
- Software testing
- Internal software training

specializes in network management and focuses on nothing else. This provides personnel who are uniquely qualified to monitor and manage networks and have the know-how to meet the expectations of a service-level agreement. Customers that decide to outsource network and

MIMIC SNMP Agent Simulator

systems management want their environment to be monitored constantly and professionally. In addition, they do not want the hassle of daily operations and maintaining management personnel.

Theoretically, if an MSP or outsourcer adds clients to their roster, their economies of scale will allow a profit to be made in the venture. As clients are added, however, the complexity of the network and systems management knowledge necessary also increases

along with the amount of customization necessary. Given this, how can MSPs and outsourcers effectively deal with the proliferation of networking devices? How can they keep employees' training up-to-date? How can they provide the internal tools that help meet service level agreement clauses on network availability?

Simulate Real Networks

MIMIC's simulation capabilities for SNMP-based device recording and simulation provide one solution for dealing with the proliferation of network devices. Using MIMIC's ability to capture information on real networked devices (including servers), users then have access to that information in a multi-functional virtual lab.

Engineers can determine the impact of additional hardware by creating "what if" scenarios using the simulations.

Programmers have access to the real hardware information needed for developing custom applications. Support personnel can also use the simulations for troubleshooting remote problems, by recording the remote network and working on the problem at their local lab. This results in a reduction of travel time and the associated expenses. In addition, simulations can be used to train network operators, administrators, and technicians in a "safe" environment that

cannot be harmed by a learner's mistakes or experimentation.

Create Disaster Scenarios

In addition, MIMIC allows MSPs and outsourcers to run disaster simulations without involving the actual, physical network. These disaster simulations provide an important way of assuring customers that their service-level agreements will be met, even in the event of a natural disaster, site outage or line cut. All these functions not only save time and money, but also make it possible to do many tasks that are not feasible within the physical lab environment.

Overall, by using MIMIC, MSPs can support their customers with a higher level of efficiency and quality and get a much greater ROI with the virtual lab.

Gambit Communications, Inc.

Founded in 1995, Gambit Communications is a leader in network simulation tools that enhance the productivity of network management developers and enterprise users while lowering their costs.



76 Northeastern Blvd, Suite 30B
Nashua, NH 03062
(603) 889-5100
(603) 889-5005
www.gambitcomm.com

Your Best Move to Effective Network Management

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Customer Profile: InteQ

MIMIC Helps InteQ Manage

InteQ's InfraWatch™ is a management service that provides proactive monitoring, notification and Web-based reporting on the health of complex IT and Internet infrastructures. Charged with servicing enterprises whose infrastructures are comprised of all types of networking gear, servers, databases and applications from vendors around the world, how does InteQ assure customer satisfaction given this heterogeneous mix? By simulating its management services before implementing them.

When you're the first Management Service Provider (MSP) on the market, you have to stay way ahead of the competition in terms of service offerings. In the MSP space, the more customers you take on, the more scalable and diverse your service has to be. You are expected to manage any brand of server or networking device, as well as the mission-critical applications that fuel daily business operations. So, how do you cope with the needs associated with managing large enterprise networks? One solution for InteQ is the MIMIC™ Simulator and its SNMP agent simulation capabilities. By using the MIMIC Simulator before monitoring services are used in production, InteQ assures excellence in management and, therefore, customer satisfaction.

When InteQ decided to use a simulation tool, the engineers conducted an exhaustive search and test of all available alternatives. At the end of this rigorous exercise, they determined that the MIMIC Simulator was the best solution for many reasons, including:

- MIMIC was the only simulation tool that had the scalability InteQ required for simulating tens of thousands of nodes from multiple enterprise customer environments.
 - MIMIC's extensive library supports virtually any SNMP-manageable object. The library is updated frequently, and there is a mechanism to easily add devices that are not in the library.
 - Only MIMIC has the capability to manipulate parameters and simulate different network conditions.
 - MIMIC runs on many platforms, including Linux and Solaris, which is very important to InteQ.
- "In addition to these technical reasons,"

said Jay Martin, Director of Network Infrastructure Engineering at InteQ, "the Gambit Communications personnel consistently exhibit a can do attitude given our unique business model. Everyone from the sales team to the technical staff was able to understand our requirements and package a solution that has really worked quite well for us. They really took the time to understand our needs and go the extra mile."

InteQ is planning to implement use of MIMIC in both its R&D and operations areas. In R&D, MIMIC is used in the development of future enhancements to InteQ's subscription-based services. These services include InfraWatch™, InfraStream™ for data correlation and analysis, as well as a reporting portal called InfraPortal™. MIMIC's simulation capabilities are used to assure the scalability and reliability of enhancements to these services before they are put into production, managing customers' IT environments.

"Our business model is based on a one-to-many model, which means that we must be able to provide 24x7 visibility to hundreds

"MIMIC was the only way to test this level of scalability for our services without bringing in dozens and dozens of servers and network devices."

Jay Martin, Director of Network Infrastructure Engineering, InteQ

of customers and thousands of objects from a few Monitoring Points-Of-Presence™ (M-POPs™)," continued Martin. "MIMIC was the only way to test this level of scalability for our services without bringing in dozens and dozens of servers and network devices." With MIMIC, InteQ can set up virtual customer labs that simulate real IT environments. By using virtual customer labs for test and development, InteQ will avoid the capital cost of setting up a massive physical lab, as well as the administration headaches associated with managing such labs. MIMIC allows InteQ's engineers to get right to work on designing and testing new enhancements instead of designing and building physical test labs that are expensive, resource intensive and become obsolete quickly.

"With MIMIC, InteQ's engineers are able to perform real-world simulations to test the performance, reliability, and look and feel of management services before they're put into

production," said Stephen Elliot, E-Services Manager at InteQ. In addition, MIMIC easily allows InteQ's engineers to develop custom management for their clients. When customers request the management of new devices, InteQ will be able to remove the guesswork from this process and meet the client's needs right from the start. MIMIC allows InteQ to generate a list of events that the new device can generate, then review that list with the client to prioritize importance and set thresholds that meet the client's individual needs. For many service providers, this process is fraught with guesswork after management begins, ending with frustration on the client side as the process draws out and useless events are generated.

In addition to R&D, InteQ's operations personnel benefit from MIMIC's simulation capabilities. InteQ has a 24x7 NOC that responds to infrastructure issues at clients' sites. MIMIC can be used to train operations personnel when new applications and enhancements are made, before they're put into production. Training in a simulated environment allows operators the freedom

to experiment with and learn new features, knowing that they cannot endanger the virtual customer network on which they are learning. In this way, operators can experience new alarms and events and be prepared for dealing with them when they appear while managing client networks.

With the help of MIMIC's simulation capabilities, InteQ plans to continue to lead the MSP marketplace in introducing new and innovative management services. "Our company background in IT service management consulting and management services gives us the knowledge base to innovate and attract mid-sized and large enterprises to our service offerings," summed up Elliot. "MIMIC allows us to quickly implement those innovations and meet the growing customer demand for IT management services."

InfraWatch, InfraStream, Monitoring Points-of-Presence and M-POPs are trademarks of InteQ Corporation.