

Data Centre Monitoring Voted Australian IT Manager's “Most Consistent Challenge” and “Most Time Consuming Task”

Survey finds keeping up with technology changes and patch management run a close second

Ensuring adequate monitoring and management capabilities in the data centre has been voted as the most consistent challenge facing IT managers, nominated by more than one quarter of respondents (27 per cent) in a recent survey conducted by diversified industrial manufacturer, Eaton Industries. Change management and the need to deal with technology changes emerged as the second most consistent issue (25 per cent), followed by maintaining mission critical uptime (14 per cent).

The survey of responses from 130 IT managers provides a snapshot of the data centre challenges, tasks and priorities for IT departments in 2013.

The themes of monitoring and change were reinforced when respondents were asked what tasks take the most time out of their day. Just over one quarter (26 per cent) stated their most time-consuming task was monitoring the data centre environment and equipment, such as testing hardware for thresholds. One in six (17 per cent) said it was keeping up with the latest patches and versions, while one in seven (14 per cent) nominated “assessing and reporting efficiency and effectiveness of the data centre”. Only one in nine (11 per cent) suggested security.

When it comes to energy management in the data centre, the results highlight conflicting points of view among IT managers. One in four (39 per cent) track energy consumption and the efficiency of the IT room or data centre. However, almost one third (29 per cent) do not monitor consumption, saying it is unimportant to them, and almost one third (32 per cent) say they don't track energy use because they have no easy way of doing so.

In addition, the majority of IT managers (65 per cent) have not considered the unique requirements of power management within a virtualised infrastructure.

Michael Mallia, Marketing Manager Asia Pacific – Power Quality, Eaton, said, “Organisations need to think through their power management processes carefully with regard to virtualisation, as none of the major virtualisation software solutions include built-in functionality for responding to power outages. On top of this, many power protection systems for virtualised environments come with their own command console. This means that when an outage does occur, IT staff are left juggling two separate tools – one for virtualisation and another for power management. It's a situation that inevitably leads to delays at a crucial time.”

The top three data centre priorities for IT managers in 2013 are: reliability (55 per cent), efficiency (17 per cent) and total cost of ownership (12 per cent). At the other end of the scale, the least important priorities include: serviceability (3 per cent), footprint (2 per cent) and Restriction of Hazardous Substances/Environmental considerations (1 per cent).

One strong new trend to emerge in the survey is that of disaster avoidance, with almost three-quarters (72 per cent) of IT managers stating they are looking for a disaster avoidance solution.

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