



Heroix closes the IT communication gap with insightful commentary and automated annotations

Heroix has long positioned Longitude as a sophisticated enterprise-class management solution designed with the usability and price points required by medium-sized business. With this announcement, Heroix adds capabilities that some enterprise management solutions have yet to deliver, without sacrificing usability or price.

Heroix has expanded its transaction monitoring support. Longitude has always provided the ability to monitor web transaction metrics captured by third-party solutions, however, with this release, Heroix provides the ability to record, run and monitor synthetic application transactions within Longitude. In addition, Longitude v5 monitors VMware virtual machine images and correlates the impact of those virtual machines on the physical hardware, allowing administrators to quickly understand underlying resource contention issues. Heroix also expanded support for IBM Director, WebSphere V6, SQL Server 2005, network shares, and log files.

This expanded coverage is enhanced with auto-discovery and network topology mapping. The solution can now scan the infrastructure for deployed systems and applications and automatically apply out-of-the-box thresholds for key health and performance indicators. These thresholds can be readily modified as administrators gain more understanding of their environment.

One feature frequently requested by Heroix customers was the ability to add comments to monitoring and service-level agreement (SLA) reports and dashboards. Customers wanted to provide additional data, such as background information about problems to business executives. Longitude now allows users to manually add comments to SLA reports. Business readers are provided annotation markers that link to the additional information provided by IT managers, typically to clarify the actions taken in response to a problem situation. In addition to these SLA commentary capabilities, Heroix has provided self-annotation for infrastructure and transactional reports. As IT administrators resolve infrastructure issues, this information is captured and automatically correlated to all relevant reports (see Figure 1).



57 Wells Avenue
Newton, MA 02459
www.heroix.com
Phone: 617-527-1550
Fax: 617-527-6132

Monitoring report annotations improve communication between technology managers. For example, an application administrator reviewing a transaction performance report will see annotations related to the application server created by the server administrator.

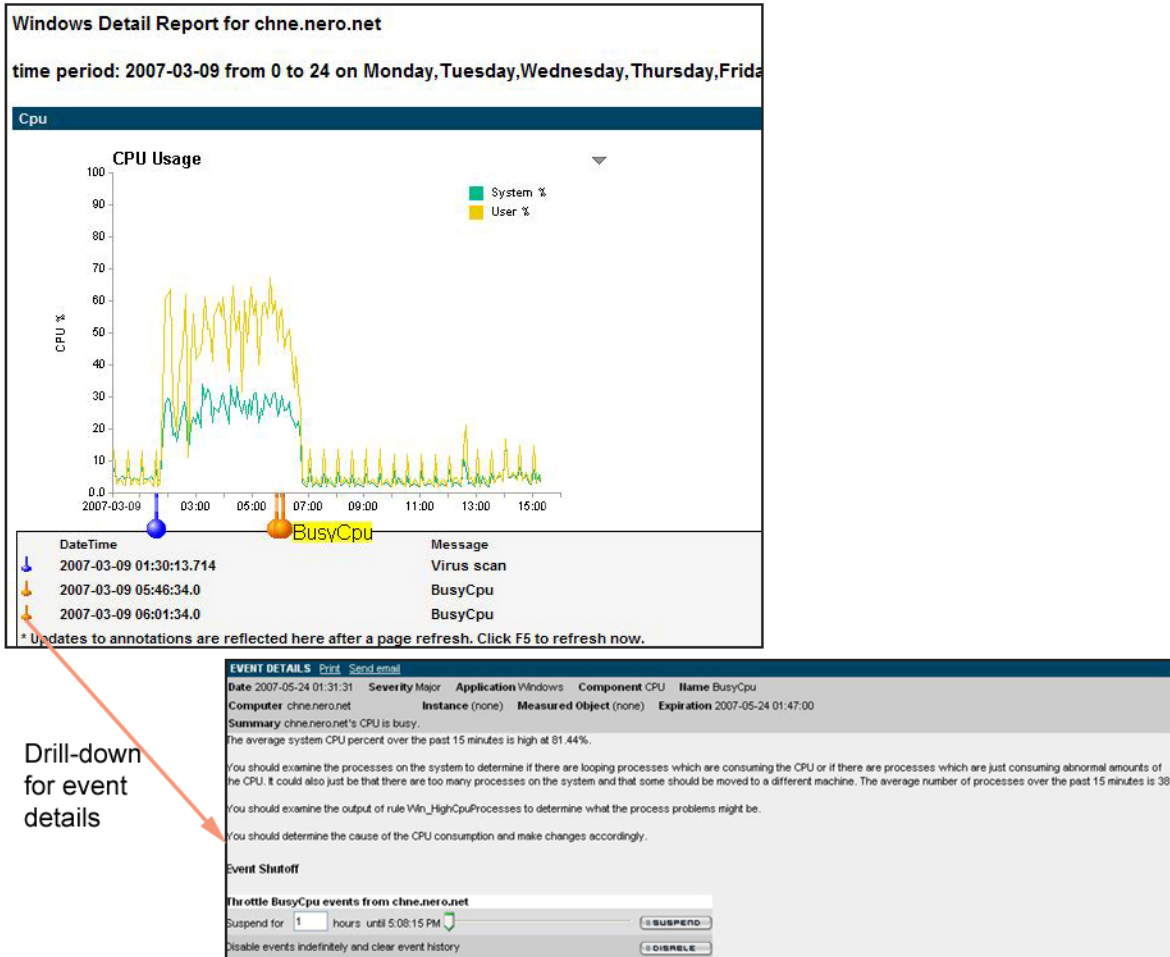


Figure 1: Infrastructure report with automatic annotation with links to event data.

PNA believes as more business managers request SLA reports, the tendency will be to focus questions only on the “red parts” of any chart or dial, which immediately places IT in a defensive posture. The ability to proactively add commentary and provide answers to typical “red part” questions within the SLA report should even the playing field for IT managers. Easy access to these explanations builds business confidence in IT and allows IT-business discussions to focus on more strategic issues.

It is PNA’s opinion that Longitude’s new automated annotation capabilities are a differentiator for Heroix. Directly linking metric reporting to relevant event data provides

immediate benefits. Transactional charts and graphs are becoming the starting point for most troubleshooting activities, so directly linking infrastructure events to those dashboards and reports makes it easier for all IT staff to understand what is happening. With more understanding comes faster problem resolution and better decision making.

However most IT organizations (be they for large enterprises or small businesses) have not done this because no administrator has time to manually annotate all of the custom monitoring reports and dashboards. Automatically linking transactional reporting schemes to infrastructure event data sounds almost too good to be true, yet it is possible because it builds on Heroix' past enhancements to its event management platform.

In version 3, Heroix added service-impact data to the event stream, allowing infrastructure events to be categorized into service groups and event text customized to include more service focused information. In version 4, Heroix simplified the process of managing events themselves (e.g. modifying event thresholds or adding service context) without navigating away from the main event display. Thus event knowledge can be captured and modified as the administrator is resolving the event, instead of needing to carve out extra time to create a new correlation rule or write up a business impact analysis. With version 5, Heroix Longitude automatically links this continuously captured event information to summary charts and reports. In other words, the information is captured once – during normal operational activities – and is disseminated automatically to relevant parties in the contexts they require. IT users get the benefits without a lot of extra work.

The Final Word

The communication gaps between IT silos, and between business and IT, just got smaller for Heroix customers. With synthetic transaction monitoring, IT gains the same understanding of the application performance as its business users. When this viewpoint is added to infrastructure dashboards and reports, which are automatically annotated with infrastructure events, different IT experts can collaborate on troubleshooting more effectively. By providing commentary in SLA reports, IT executives can help business users gain insight into how IT's efforts support business goals. By bringing the most relevant information into relief so that the meaning of the data is clearer, Heroix not only provides a more proactive management product, it helps remove much of the questioning and defensive posturing that have strained IT's working relationships, both internally and with the business.

This document is subject to copyright. No part of this publication may be reproduced by any method whatsoever without the prior written consent of Ptak, Noel & Associates.

All trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

While every care has been taken during the preparation of this document to ensure accurate information, the publishers cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.

About Ptak, Noel & Associates

With a belief that business success and IT success are inseparable, Ptak, Noel & Associates works with clients to identify, understand and respond to the implications of today's trends and innovations on the future of IT Operations.

www.ptaknoelassociates.com

About the Authors

Jasmine Noel has 10 years experience helping clients understand how the adoption of new technologies affect IT management. Noel served previously as director of systems and applications management at Hurwitz Group, where she formulated and managed the company's research agenda. She was also a senior analyst at D.H. Brown Associates, where her responsibilities included technology trend analysis in the network and systems management space. Noel is regularly quoted in publications such as CIO Magazine, eWeek, InformationWeek, InfoWorld, and NetworkWorld. She also has contributed articles to several leading publications on various IT management topics. Noel holds a bachelor of science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a master of science from the University of Southern California.

jnoel@ptaknoelassociates.com