



CASE STUDY

Monitoring more servers,
more closely, with
SQL Monitor

claranet

 **redgate**

"When trialling SQL Monitor, the performance benefits were instantly visible."

Claranet is one of Europe's leading managed IT services providers, and offers business hosting, network and communications services. With over 1,300 employees in 20 offices across Europe, it provides services to over 6,000 customers across a wide range of industries.

Nick Percy is Claranet's Senior Database Administrator and is responsible for the smooth running of its server estate, which includes over 400 SQL Servers. The company has a few internal SQL Servers but the vast majority are actually used by Claranet's customers, who run their own applications on the SQL Servers while Nick and his team act as remote DBAs, managing the servers on their behalf.

With so many servers and customers to look after, the potential to miss critical SQL Server problems is extremely high, which is why Nick made sure he had a third party SQL Server monitoring tool in place. Like SQL Monitor, it had a lot of functionality, but it became slow and clunky, and Nick realized it just wasn't getting the basics right.

As Nick says: "In order to cope with the tool's slowdown in performance, we were looking to spend more money on upgrading our hardware and infrastructure. It was at this point we decided to look around for alternatives. I'd known about Redgate and SQL Monitor but hadn't looked at it for some time. I saw there had been a lot of recent development work and realized it was now definitely something we could use for our business."

“We were up and running in less than a day with some great support and help from the Redgate staff.”

When trialing SQL Monitor, the performance benefits were instantly visible. The setup time was shorter than expected and the new tool was immediately able to cope with the volume of SQL Servers at Claranet. It quickly delivered the core information Nick needed to know from across the entire estate.

“Straight away, we could monitor 40 more servers with SQL Monitor than we could with the old tool using the same infrastructure. So we introduced a new tool that does the job better and has actually saved us money and improved service for our customers. The other bonus is that SQL Monitor is very easy to use and is priced very competitively.”

It is not just the size of the SQL Server estate that SQL Monitor can handle that concerns Nick, however. It is the alerting capabilities because he needs to know the instant a problem occurs.

“On the whole, we try to be as proactive as possible but when something unexpected does happen, SQL Monitor lets us quickly know what the exact problem is so we can jump on it and fix it before the customer even notices.”

“We’ve integrated the alerts into Rocket Chat, which is similar to Slack, so that everybody can see what’s happening as it happens. It’s been a great help coordinating jobs amongst the teams. As my day normally starts even before my morning coffee, I can quickly go through the alerts that have cropped up overnight and prioritize the day’s work.”

“Ultimately SQL Monitor doesn’t just benefit the internal IT team at Claranet, it benefits our customers too.”

Since its introduction, SQL Monitor has demonstrated the value of having a monitoring tool in place that not only provides alerts about problems, but helps pinpoint their root cause too.

When, for example, there was a problem with SQL Server sending read statistics through the roof, SQL Monitor was able to quickly drill down and identify which of the multiple instances was at fault, the drive, the database and then the specific query that was misbehaving. Using SQL Monitor’s inbuilt Query Plan viewer, the team could see that there was a missing index. They added the index, ran it through test and it solved the problem instantly.

“Now we have SQL Monitor, the team are quicker to react,” Nick adds. “Anything that comes up can be rapidly dealt with, and people have been freed up to do more project work. The best news is, we’re able to finish the day’s work on time.

SQL Monitor has also helped Claranet provide a better, more complete service to customers and be much more proactive. If customers want a view on the performance of their servers and the service Claranet is providing, they can instantly be provided with a report from the SQL Monitor reporting module that can automatically be sent to them on a regular basis.

Not only has SQL Monitor been able to cope with Nick’s large SQL Server estate, it has helped them to respond quicker to any issues, freed up their time, and saved them from unnecessarily spending money upgrading their infrastructure.

As Nick concludes: “Basically, Redgate’s SQL Monitor helps us do more with less.”



SQL Monitor is a SQL Server monitoring tool that transforms the way you look at your database. With a web-based overview of all your SQL Servers, it cuts your daily checks from hours to minutes.

The result? You can do more of what you need to and spend less time monitoring, stop performance problems spoiling your day, and always have the answer to any question about your SQL Server estate.

The new reporting module also lets you create customized reports which combine the performance metrics available in SQL Monitor's analysis view with summary information on factors like server uptime, the numbers of alerts being raised, or the disks which are filling up fastest.

To find out more, visit www.red-gate.com/sql-monitor, where you can download a 14-day, fully-functional trial.