



Magic Total Service Desk

THE APPLICATION FOR IT

EXECUTIVE WHITE PAPER

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Introduction

Network Associates has combined best-of-class network monitoring with desktop, event, and workflow management integrating them with a help desk repository—marking the arrival of the next-generation IT management solution with its Magic Total Service Desk Enterprise Suite (Magic-TSD). Finally, IT management has its own business application—one that maps to existing IT management processes that enable and even facilitates growth and change.

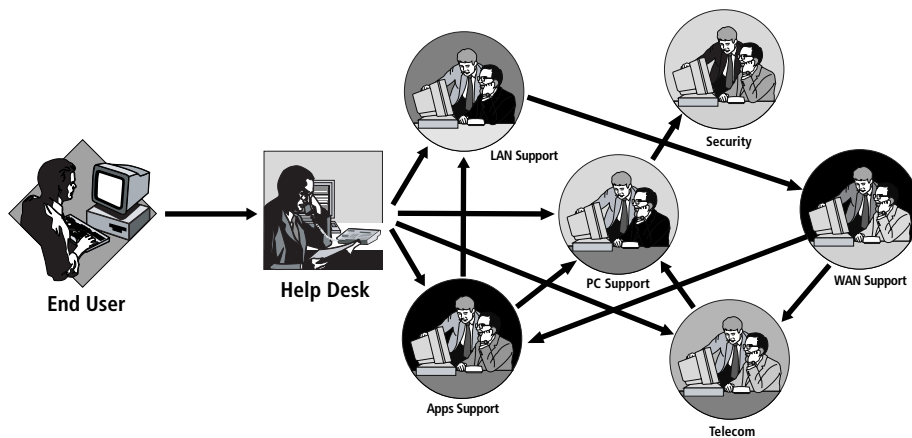
Based on an advanced, N-tiered client/server architecture, Magic TSD offers users a highly-scalable business application with unprecedented customization and integration. It introduces many innovative, patent-pending features—including the first fully browser-based, fully customizable user interface while integrating and leveraging the enterprise's existing network and desktop management tools.

This white paper discusses the many challenges facing IT support management in today's increasingly complex, mission-critical networking environments and defines the fundamental requirements of a next-generation IT management solution. It describes the innovative architecture of Magic TSD—the first 100 percent browser-based service desk built around Microsoft's Distributed InterNet Applications (DNA) architecture and introduces the enterprise-level functionality integrated into this industry-leading suite of applications.

The IT Management Challenge

Before data processing groups and MIS departments evolved into IT organizations, employees had to be fluent in all aspects of the computing infrastructure. The explosive growth and increasing complexity in the computing and communications infrastructure caused the broad-based departments to split into specialized teams responsible for managing specific technologies and disciplines. As a result, IT personnel are required to specialize in distinct functional areas such as, LAN, WAN, desktop, applications, security, telecom, Web groups—to name a few.

One of the main goals of any help desk organization should be to shield the end user from this complexity by providing a single point of contact who can help them resolve their issues. Unfortunately, in most organizations the help desk is isolated from the other IT groups, who often become so involved in their areas of specialty that they do not communicate effectively with each other or with the help desk. Poor organization and insufficient interaction with other IT support groups greatly reduces the effectiveness of first-line help desk personnel, increasing the cost of support and lowering end-user satisfaction.

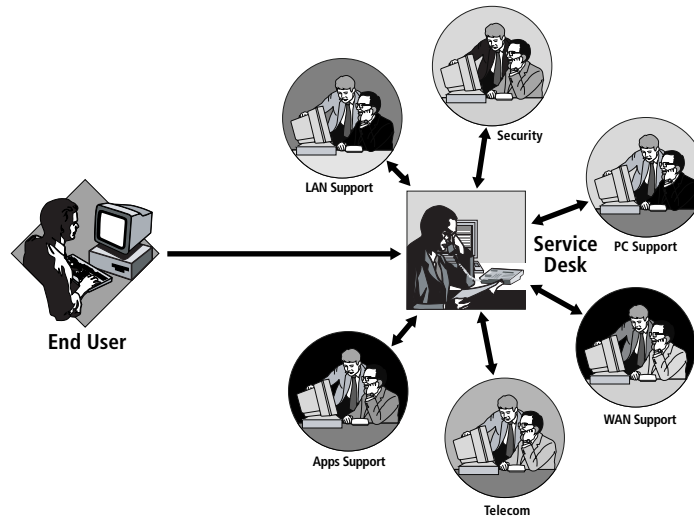


Poor IT organization and lack of integrated systems can result in lower service levels to end users.

To be truly effective, the various IT groups and resources must work seamlessly together to provide a common environment that supports the business units of an organization. The service desk must present a unified IT interface to end users. To accomplish this, the IT organization must implement common practices and processes across its diverse groups. Other organizations, such as finance and manufacturing have accomplished this successfully by implementing enterprise resource planning (ERP) applications that map to their business processes, such as accounts payable, invoicing, and accounts receivable. Such a process-driven application for IT must support the business requirements of each individual group while maintaining a common repository of information about the supported end users and resources.

Traditional help desk applications have tried to provide this automation, but they have lacked the integration and depth to match the specific requirements of each group within IT. The LAN management group, for example, requires data and information about routers and hub performance and access to troubleshooting tools, while the desktop management group requires PC inventory information and integration with remote control applications.

An integrated service desk provides a single point of contact to ensure the end user's issue is resolved quickly and efficiently.



As more and more IT groups come to realize that they are service organizations, employed to serve the end-user community, they are demanding a new class of system that will enable them to manage all of their business processes while providing the needed tools, integration, and depth to meet the diverse needs of individual IT groups.

Traditional Approaches to IT Management

In some large organizations, the cost of network downtime can reach hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars an hour. At the same time, IT managers are being directed to reduce the cost of managing and maintaining desktop computers.

In response to these pressures, a wide variety of tools have come to market in an attempt to deal with different facets of network management. Enterprise Management “frameworks” promise a centralized management console for the entire corporate network while specialized network monitoring tools deliver the added value of anti-virus defense, firewall intrusion detection, network analysis and fault management.

Additionally, problem and desktop management systems that automate the process of tracking end-user requests and desktop inventory, offer real-time alerting and advanced knowledge management functionality that helps speed the resolution process. They also allow IT management to define and implement Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to measure actual problem resolution against pre-defined performance targets.

While there are many good products in each of these categories, their long-term value is significantly limited by the lack of integration with one another or with the IT management workflow. Consequently, IT process automation is limited, and IT managers are vulnerable to network failures or unresolved end-user problems.

Service Desk Design Requirements

The next generation IT management solution must provide an integrated, process-driven platform for seamless delivery of the full range of IT functions. Achieving this vision requires a solution designed around four key principles:

- **True integration of management tools**—many help desk products that promise integration consist of a toolkit that requires IT management to buy a host of third-party products and essentially build their own application. The service desk of the future must integrate industry-leading tools into a comprehensive package with a consistent user interface.
- **Customization**—each user or group of users needs to log data quickly and accurately, view the data in the format they need, and correlate related data effectively. Customization must be easy and intuitive without requiring arcane programming knowledge.
- **Scalability**—the service desk architecture must support the enterprise as it grows. To ensure top performance, the application layer should be able to be load balanced over multiple servers and locations. The architecture should minimize the cost of software distribution, configuration, and upgrades.
- **Enterprise-level service desk functionality**—today's enterprises need robust functionality to meet the needs of enterprise IT management. Features such as Service Level Agreements, Service Contracts, and Crisis Management are key to managing response time and improving the overall service of the help desk.

"Network Associates, Inc. [has] unveiled a browser-based service-desk application that will centralize network desktop and security operations around one common support management application."

—Computer ResellerNews

The Solution—Network Associates Magic Total Service Desk

In response to these challenges, Network Associates offers an innovative solution—one that transforms the IT help desk into the central management application for IT. By integrating the full range of network management technologies into the service desk, Magic TSD lets IT managers realize their vision of an integrated, process-oriented service solution that delivers the highest levels of service with the greatest efficiency.

In this new environment, each department in the organization has its own customized view into the service desk and can monitor its own activities and check on the status of activities being performed by others. Automatic, user-defined escalation capabilities ensure that critical problems are prioritized and uncompleted tasks are reassigned or a manager is alerted to the situation.

Magic TSD automates the proactive management of faults that could impair the network. It speeds and streamlines the process of responding to problems that do occur through a tightly integrated, highly customized, enterprise-scale application suite that delivers the following capabilities:

- **Provides a single, integrated fault repository** through which all faults can be logged, tracked, resolved, and stored. Everyone in the IT organization uses the same set of data, and that data is readily available for system performance monitoring, trend analysis, and proactive planning.
- **Provides easy customization in every level of the product** the browser interface allows users to modify the style and positioning of every element on the page. The Navigator Bar can be assigned to individuals or workgroups and extended to include links to related resources across the World Wide Web. The product's modular business rules are based on a component model for easy customization and extension.
- **Automates the response to faults** as they are detected by network management tools, security management tools, desktop management tools, and other related applications, or by Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) agents on the network. The Magic TSD Event Orchestrator identifies the problem and automatically routes it to the right person, informing the central service desk at the same time, so that the problem can be tracked escalated.
- **Delivers integrated, "best-of-breed" IT management tools** Magic TSD ships with a host of fully-integrated industry-leading network management, desktop management, and security management tools. Whenever a monitored device or application experiences a significant

change of status, the Event Orchestrator automatically generates a detailed trouble ticket and notifies the appropriate support specialists via pager or e-mail. The fully integrated ZAC 2001 application provides desktop hardware and software inventory, year 2000 risk assessment, and remote control that works in tandem with integrated PC self-diagnostics.

- **Provides innovative, enterprise-level functionality** including a White Board feature that keeps the entire IT organization informed about critical issues that affect large numbers of users and allows them to easily manage and update all related inquiries.
- **Introduces a completely browser-based, thin-client user interface** that requires no distribution to management stations across the enterprise, allowing technicians to access the service desk from the field as easily as from their own workstations.
- **Includes a Web-based, self-service interface** that lets end users search the Magic TSD knowledge base using the industry-leading Statistical Information Retrieval (SIR) engine.
- **Provides an accurate and consistent record** of problems and resolutions. Magic TSD reporting functionality is invaluable for service desk performance review as well as for long-term network and IT support planning. The browser-based reports can be readily viewed by management and provide easy and immediate access to the robust data repository.
- **Scales seamlessly to support enterprise growth** with a flexible architecture capable of supporting more than 1,000 concurrent users. The Magic TSD component-based application layer can be load balanced across multiple servers and locations, and its thin-client, browser-based user interface is easy to configure and upgrade.

Magic TSD is the integration point for Network Associates' comprehensive portfolio of industry-leading network management technologies. Network Associates is the #1 Windows NT-based help desk vendor in the United States, as well as the leader in anti-virus software, the global leader in data communications encryption and authentication, and a market leader in firewall and intrusion detection technologies. From security management to desktop management to network monitoring and troubleshooting, Network Associates Net Tools is the industry's most complete set of products for managing today's mission-critical corporate networks. All this expertise and product innovation is seamlessly integrated into a single application environment in Magic TSD.

"As networked enterprises grow and integrate more complex devices, the need for automated monitoring and event management becomes increasingly critical to the IT support organization. Network Associates is addressing this need with automated proactive response capabilities in its Magic Total Service Desk solution, that helps resolve IT problems before they affect the end user."

—International Data Corp (IDC)

"Magic TSD is the first Microsoft Windows DNA Service Desk application that is 100% browser-based and leverages Microsoft middleware."

—Microsoft Corporation

Innovative N-Tiered Architecture

The Magic TSD N-tiered, browser-based architecture is based on Microsoft's Windows Distributed InterNet Applications (DNA) architecture. DNA is a Windows NT-based, distributed application model that brings together the benefits inherent in client/server computing and the best of Internet technologies around a common, component-based application architecture.

DNA is a key component of Microsoft's digital nervous system (DNS) vision for the next stage of the information revolution. DNS is an approach to using technology to ensure that employees can access the knowledge that resides within the organization. The digital nervous system is characterized by integration, easy information flow, and easy employee access to tools and information.

The DNA model replaces the conceptual categories of traditional single-tier and two-tier models—high-level programming languages, database management systems, and graphical user interfaces—with a vision of cooperating components organized in a presentation or client layer, a business logic or business rules layer, and a data layer (Figure 1). This model is the foundation for developing scalable, manageable, and maintainable multi-user applications to support the digital nervous system.

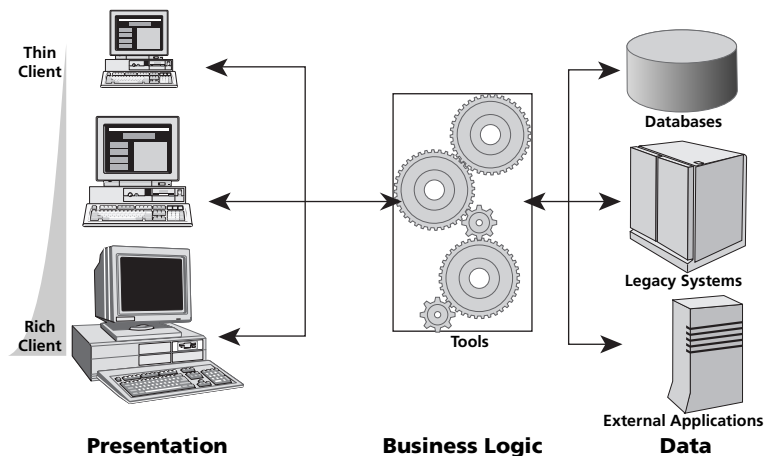


FIGURE 1
Microsoft Windows DNA Architecture.

Past client server applications were built on a two-tier model, in which the business rules were included in the client tier. The resulting desktop applications were often as large as 30 MB, making them difficult to install on the desktop and unwieldy to customize or upgrade. This two-tier model also was not well positioned for migration to a browser-based client interface.

By contrast, the DNA-based architecture of Network Associates Magic TSD enables the use of a multi-tiered service desk architecture. In the N-tier architecture, the business logic is completely independent of the client tier, allowing it to be accessed equally from any client implementation (Figure 2).

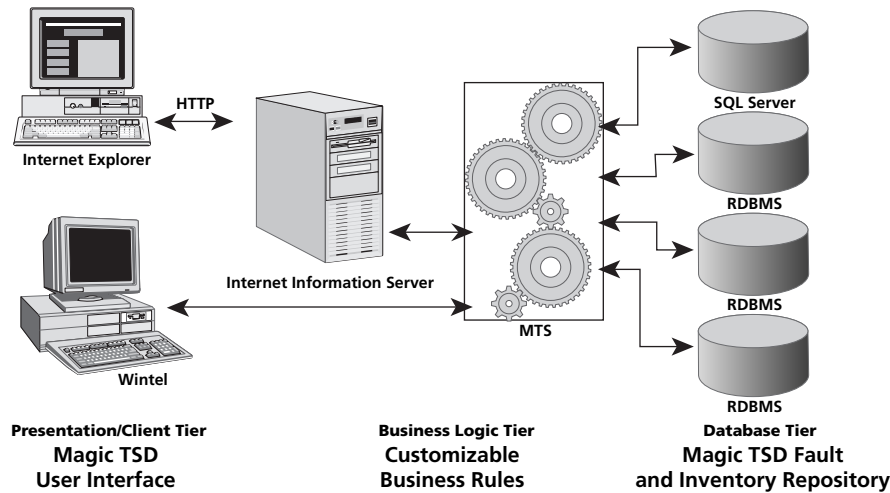


FIGURE 2

Magic TSD N-Tier Technology.

The Magic TSD client tier is written using Dynamic HTML (DHTML), which gives it exceptional customization flexibility. Providing all the functionality of a standard Windows environment in a browser. Interface elements include drop-down menus, pop-up selection windows, and controlled tab order. The DHTML environment allows for drag-and-drop customization of the client interface, for a rich, highly flexible user experience.

The middle tier(s) of the N-tiered Magic TSD architecture is the business logic or business rules tiers. The business rules can be implemented as a single logical tier or several, logically separated tiers residing on a single server or multiple, distributed servers. The component-based DNA architecture of Magic TSD makes it easy to update existing business rules or add new ones using a variety of familiar programming languages, without disturbing other areas of the product's functionality.

The back-end or database tier runs on Microsoft SQL Server 6.5 or higher and an Oracle Database Management System.

"The Web's greater affordability helped to make Network Associates' Magic Total Service Desk more appealing to Gadzoox Networks, in San Jose, CA... Magic's flexibility, scalability, and fast setup also were priorities..."

—InfoWorld

Using Magic Total Service Desk in The Enterprise

In general terms, service desk users fall into five categories. Each user works from the same data, but each has different needs. The Magic TSD flexible, N-tiered architecture delivers the scalability and integration to supply the appropriate data to each type of user in a format that meets their specific business requirements. All service desk data is stored in a single logical data repository, but Magic TSD offers different views into the data to meet the needs of different users and groups. Each type of user sees the fields and integrated tool they need to efficiently perform their core tasks on a daily basis. Additional information is just a few mouse clicks away and the browser-based user interface can be dynamically customized as user's needs change.

- **Front-Line Agent**—the agent is the first line support person, responsible for solving the caller's problem or handling their request as quickly and efficiently as possible. The agent logs requests into the Magic TSD system, views detailed information about the user and/or equipment, searches the knowledge base for solutions to problems, updates existing requests, and assigns unresolved tickets to technician/specialists as needed. The agent requires quick system response; a simple, intuitive interface that can be customized to their needs; and fast, easy database access.
- **Technician/Specialist**—the technician or specialist typically works in another department outside of the "help desk" itself. This person may be a security technician, a network operations manager, a desktop application specialist, or a Web server manager. The specialist takes action on a Magic TSD trouble ticket after it has been forwarded from the first line of support or generated automatically via a systems management alert. He or she uses the system to display and update requests; view detailed information about the end user and/or equipment; search the knowledge base; access other integrated tools (remote control, inventory management, network analysis, etc.); and close requests upon completion. The specialist needs a flexible and customizable "to-do list" functionality that includes the ability to select, sort, and prioritize trouble tickets; seamless integration with advanced support applications; and fast, easy database access.
- **Manager/Supervisor**—the manager or supervisor may monitor service desk operations and manage automated processes; enter and maintain service level agreements; review service metrics online and print reports; and dispatch work to individual technicians and/or workgroups. This user needs robust reporting capabilities that provide meaningful data and metrics to help them evaluate performance, allocate resources, and plan for the future. They need to customize and store multiple views of data and reports using an easy, intuitive interface.

- **Administrator**—the administrator is responsible for the setup and configuration of the service desk database. This includes establishing workgroups and escalation policies and performing database backups and system maintenance. The administrator needs the ability to establish security and permission levels for each system user, easily and with a fine level of granularity. They must be able to customize the user interface to meet the needs of each user or workgroup and control what data each group can view and update.
- **Requestor**—the requestor may be an employee, an external customer, or even a device that requires some type of action in order to operate properly or efficiently. The request may reach the service desk system by phone, e-mail, a Web browser interface, or an automatic system alert such as a network monitor or management console. The requestor needs a simple, intuitive interface, with capabilities for self-service problem resolution.

By meeting the specialized needs of these five user communities, Magic TSD increases IT productivity, improves overall satisfaction with IT service delivery, and reduces the total cost of ownership for IT technology assets. Most importantly, it helps facilitate the organization's overall business competitiveness by ensuring the reliability of communications and the performance of mission-critical applications throughout the enterprise.

Enterprise Functionality in a Fully-Integrated Platform

Magic TSD is designed to map to the business process requirements of today's IT organizations, providing integrated service desk functionality in four critical areas:

- Problem management
- Event management
- Asset and change management
- Network management

Problem Management

Magic TSD automates traditional help desk functions to help IT managers solve problems, not just track them. The call entry screen can be customized to collect as much or as little data as necessary (Figure 3). Support requests can be logged quickly and easily using keyboard shortcut keys or templates. Calls can be opened by serial or asset tag number, as well as by end-user name or number. Calls can be automatically prioritized, weighing many variables, including type of end-user and nature of request. Comprehensive call tracking abilities make sure every call gets the attention it deserves.

"[Magic TSD] couples traditional help desk functionality with event, desktop, and network management to deliver enterprise service management."

—Service News

FIGURE 3

Logging a call and creating a trouble ticket is easy with Magic TSD.

The screenshot shows a web-based interface for logging a call and creating a trouble ticket. It includes fields for Client ID, Name, Phone, Ext., Problem #, and Subject. A 'Problem Description' field contains the text: 'Windows 95 user wants to get a list of all the programs installed on the system.' Below this, a 'Problem Resolution' section lists steps: '1) Choose the "Start" button to display the "Start" menu. \', '2) Select the "Programs" menu.' At the bottom, a 'Help Desk Details' table shows a log of actions.

N	Date	Support Staff	Action ID	Description	Duration
1	2/16/99 8:10:45 PM	MAGIC	HD_OPEN	Opened Call	00:01:00
2	2/16/99 8:10:46 PM	MAGIC	HD_TAKEN	Call Taken By MAGIC	00:00:00
3	2/16/99 8:10:46 PM	MAGIC	ESCAL_START	Escalation Process started: Silver	00:00:00

Advanced knowledge management capabilities speed problem diagnosis and resolution. The key to Magic TSD problem resolution capabilities is the SIR search engine, Network Associates' own full-text, high-speed problem resolution tool. SIR uses artificial intelligence and neural networks to search and instantly retrieve all pertinent answers, ranked

in order of relevance. It simultaneously searches the Magic TSD database, third-party knowledge bases, and external documents.

Magic TSD patented Problem Sensitive Tool Integration lets support staff launch problem resolution tools directly from the help desk to resolve the problem identified in the trouble ticket. For example, if a desktop manager wants to take remote control of a desktop, Network Associates Remote Desktop 32 (RD32) can be launched directly from the trouble ticket and automatically knows what PC to go to, with no human intervention required.

FIGURE 4

Magic TSD Whiteboards let you manage widespread problems.

Innovative problem management capabilities include a crisis White Board that automatically links multiple trouble tickets to a common problem, minimizing redundancy and speeding resolution of widespread problems. When a major problem appears, a service desk agent can simply write it up on the White Board to post it centrally for all support operators to see (Figure 4). When users call with that problem, one click on the White Board automatically generates a complete trouble ticket for that user. When the problem is resolved, all linked trouble tickets are closed automatically. Detailed reports then help the IT manager assess the true impact of the problem.

The screenshot shows a 'White Board Notice' window. It contains a table of notices with columns for Post Date/Time, To, and From. Below the table, a text box states: 'The WAN link between Dallas and Santa Clara is down. IT will have the link back up in 30 minutes.' At the bottom, a table titled 'Linked Calls to the selected Notice' shows a list of problem numbers, their open dates, and the assigned support staff.

Post Date/Time	To	From
2/16/99 7:52:16 PM	MAGIC	MAGIC
2/15/99 5:32:56 PM	ALL	ESAHAI
1/25/99 9:38:35 AM	DAVID	CUSTOM
1/22/99 4:20:13 PM	BRIAN	MAGIC

The WAN link between Dallas and Santa Clara is down. IT will have the link back up in 30 minutes.

Problem #	Open Date & Time	Status	Login ID Assigned To
1660	1999-02-16 19:57:43.0	0	DWILCOX
1661	1999-02-16 19:58:27.0	0	DWILCOX
1126	1999-02-06 15:07:17	0	DWILCOX

Service level management is becoming an increasingly important part of IT service methodologies. Magic TSD includes an integrated Service Level Management capability that automates the creation of Service Level Agreements (SLAs), escalation rules, and policy requirements. The Service Level Management module also helps IT managers track and document performance against contract terms.

Detailed reports of service desk performance help the IT organization keep on top of staffing, planning, and cost control. Magic TSD includes Crystal Reports, the industry-standard reporting package that enables unlimited custom reporting. Managers can customize predefined report templates or create new formats that precisely meet the reporting needs of each functional group within the IT organization.

Event Management

The faster a problem is identified and contained, the sooner it is resolved and the faster everyone is back to work. At the core of the Magic TSD Event Management module is the Event Orchestrator, a powerful, Windows NT server-based listener and event handler application that supports industry standard protocols like SNMP, Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP), and Microsoft's Messaging API (MAPI) and automatically "listens" to the entire network (Figure 5). Event Orchestrator captures events from servers, uninterruptible power supplies, printers, routers, switches and hubs—any SNMP-managed device on the network. Then it routes the alert to the appropriate person or group for resolution *before* the problem affects end users.

Automatic actions or groups of actions can be easily configured using the Event Orchestrator built-in mapping mechanism and Windows-based Visual Basic scripts. Customizable response algorithms ensure that analysts get automatic notification of new calls and escalation alerts from existing calls.

When events occur that require immediate attention from second-tier specialists, Event Orchestrator routes the call directly to them. IT management determines who should be notified based on the event type or

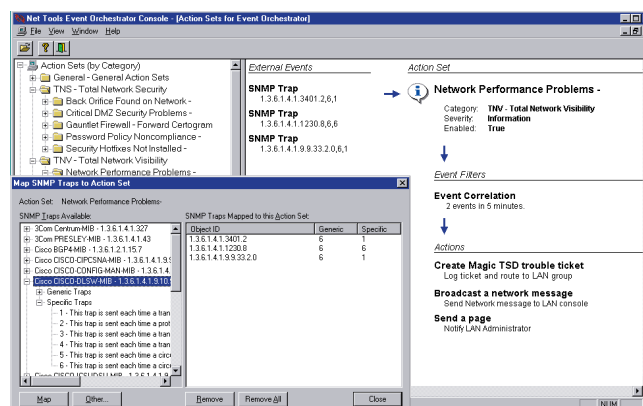


FIGURE 5

Integrated event management through Event Orchestrator facilitates IT process automation.

other parameters, eliminating unnecessary delays. security conditions can be automatically routed to the Security group, while network issues are automatically routed to the LAN group. At the same time, the appropriate information is made available to the help desk as problems occur—not hours later and automated escalation ensures that analysts are immediately notified.

Magic TSD can be integrated with Microsoft SMS, IBM/Tivoli TME, HP OpenView, CiscoWorks2000, or any application that supports industry-standard protocols. The functionality of the Magic TSD business logic layer can be extended by creating new business objects using popular programming tools such as Microsoft Visual Basic or C++.

Asset and Change Management

One of the most time-consuming tasks for support analysts is trying to get an accurate picture of existing desktop configurations in order to determine the cause of current problems. That's why Magic TSD includes an integrated asset management capability. With up-to-date asset information, an analyst can "see" the desktop without physically going to a user's work area. They can eliminate many baseline questions to get to the heart of the problem quickly. By having instant access to related data, such as service contracts in force, analysts can also take the appropriate action and set end-user expectations. In addition to complete asset inventory and configuration information, Magic TSD includes a complete Y2K risk assessment tool.

Enterprise desktop software and hardware inventory information is collected and stored in the central Magic TSD data repository. Information includes details on asset location, contact, and history; asset configuration; asset availability and performance; and asset service and warranty information.

Magic TSD helps automate support for moves, adds, and changes by letting the IT manager establish standard device configurations. When a new employee joins the company, for example, the support technician can simply pull up the standard configuration for that end-user or department, which contains all of the information on approved desktop hardware and software. The Magic TSD Work Order module is fully integrated with the inventory module to automatically track repair services and record any replacement parts used in the repair process.

"Formerly mode-named 'Merlin,' Magic TSD represents the joining of NAI's Total Service Desk and its SupportMagic user interface to create a browser-based enterprise support management solution"

—Service News

Network Management

No other company offers more time-tested network management solutions than Network Associates. As the industry leader, Network Associates leverages more than a decade of research and development, product innovation, and experience with key customers and leading-edge hardware partners. This vast resource is tightly integrated into Magic TSD. Two powerful tools can be launched directly from the Magic TSD Navigation Bar: Distributed Sniffer System/RMON Pro (DSS/RMON Pro) and Network Informant.

DSS/RMON Pro is a fault and performance management solution that lets IT managers proactively troubleshoot, monitor, and manage the network for end-to-end coverage of complex distributed systems. DSS/RMON Pro automatically detects and interprets RMON2 statistics and combines Expert analysis with experience-based solutions for faster time-to-resolution. DSS/RMON Pro also tracks historical statistics and changing configurations to help forecast future network needs.

Network Informant is the premier high-level solution for enterprise-wide network performance reporting (Figure 6). This flexible, browser-based package includes standard and on-demand executive, network management, and service provider reports that can be modified to fit the unique business requirements of each organization. Network Informant also provides the added flexibility of creating custom reports using the industry's most common and widely accepted database reporting system.

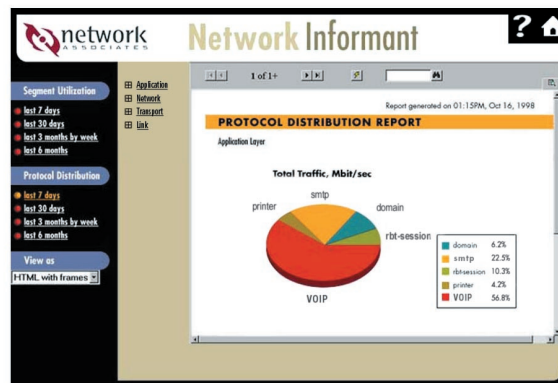


FIGURE 6

Flexible browser-based reports monitor network utilization, control WAN line costs, and keep networks up and running.

Tomorrow's Service Desk Today

Network Associates Magic TSD is designed to meet the business requirements of today's IT organization with a fully integrated, process-driven, next-generation service desk solution. Other help desk products provide pieces of the solution but leave the basic challenges of IT integration unsolved. Magic TSD is the first enterprise-level service desk that unites multiple IT disciplines into a single, coherent, IT management tool.

One of the most exciting features of Magic TSD is that all of its powerful technology—including industry-leading knowledge bases, problem tracking, event management, network management, remote control, asset inventory, and desktop self-healing technologies—can be customized to the requirements of each customer environment. Patent pending, drag-and-drop customization technology, combined with a scalable architecture and fully extensible business logic layer, provide unlimited options to tailor Magic TSD to match an organization's business processes. All this functionality is accessed through the interface of the future.

Magic TSD delivers the world's leading solution on the world's most widely used operating system. It provides an advanced, easily extensible architecture built on tomorrow's Internet technologies to protect the IT investment into the future. It includes integrated, best-in-class tools from Network Associates, a billion-dollar global leader. With all this browser-based functionality and enterprise scalability, Magic TSD is truly "Tomorrow's Service Desk—Today." No wonder they call it Magic!



Who's watching your network

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