

POINT OF VIEW: ENTERPRISE MONITORING & ANALYTICS

Digital transformation requires meaningful, actionable insights to enable a positive end-user experience.

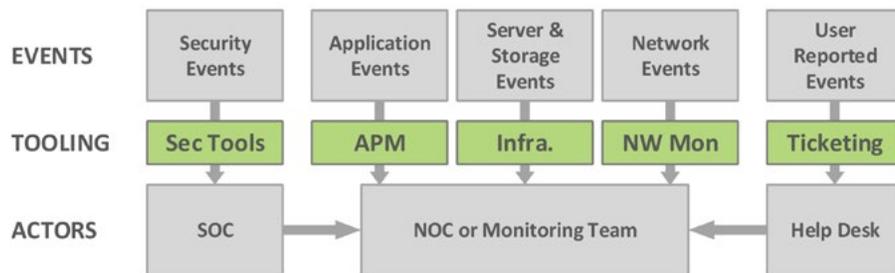


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TRADITIONAL MONITORING

One of the most common complaints among technology leaders is “We have a lot of monitoring tools and I still do not know what’s going on.” This is the necessary consequence of a bottom-up or “platform-up” approach to monitoring. We cannot measure our progress on a trip across the country by more carefully monitoring our tire pressure. We inundate ourselves with more and more readings of component performance that we believe, once correlated, will tell us “what’s going on.” A very typical tool-centered approach to monitoring looks like this:



Simply collecting more data about the status of our car’s components will not provide the complete picture of “what’s going on.” In fact, our traditional focus on component performance diminishes IT’s ability to lead higher value process conversations.

We propose a different role for monitoring that is based on a different definition of IT.

LET’S DEFINE IT BEFORE WE DEFINE MONITORING

This is a fundamentally different starting point than the traditional view of IT, which has always centered on applications and infrastructure assets. When IT is centered around process automation and not asset management, every IT domain, including monitoring, is transformed.

IT exists to automate the workflows that define your business and establish your business’s value proposition.

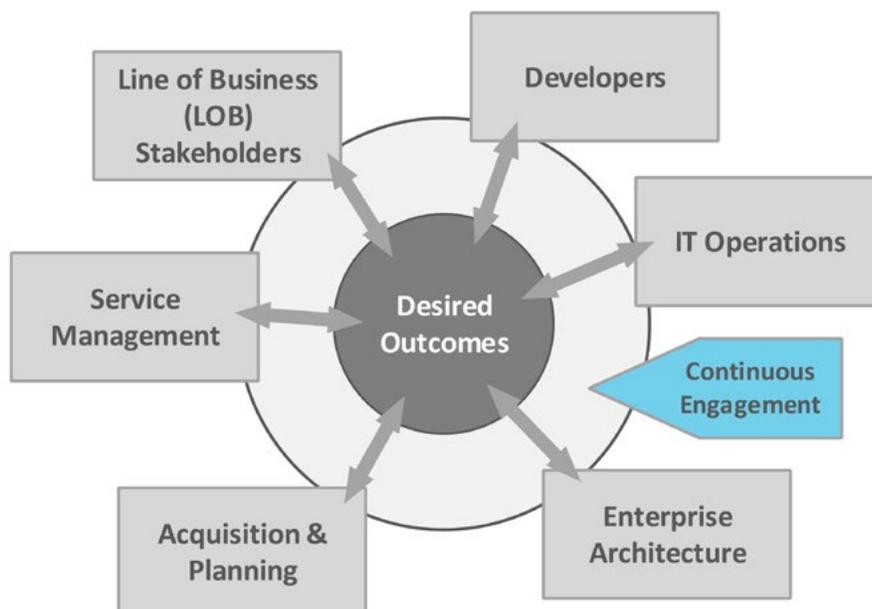


EMA—OUR VISION FOR ENTERPRISE MONITORING & ANALYTICS

This new definition of IT leads us to a top-down or “workflow-centric” approach instead of the traditional “platform-up” approach. The goal of monitoring naturally becomes “to provide the insights that allow optimization of these workflows.” IT is no longer relegated to the role of “component managers.” IT becomes a full participant in the conversations that increase the enterprise value of vital workflows... workflows that unlock employee productivity and create the customer experiences that define our brand.

In this workflow-centric approach, we are seeking insights into **process** performance, not settling for just **component** performance. We seek to understand how workflow performance is enabled or impaired by the limitations of the underlying systems. This allows us to align IT efforts and investments with outcomes that are most valuable to the business.

The Enterprise Monitoring & Analytics or “**EMA**” team is not centered around events or tools, but around desired business outcomes. The team does not simply manage monitoring tools or respond to events. It is purpose-built as the “hub” that leads ongoing conversations with all the stakeholders for process performance:



This approach drives the performance aspects of your brand identity deeply into the IT development cycle, and accelerates other IT transformation initiatives such as DevOps and cloud enablement.



FOCUSED ON DECISIONS = PROACTIVE

In the traditional reactive approach, we become very focused on data, and our actions are responsive to that data. Making decisions based on whatever data we have on hand is reactive.

In our approach, ***we do not make decisions based on the data we have available. Rather, we gather data based on the decisions we need to make.*** Just this subtle reversal of cause and effect changes our thinking, from a reactive posture to a ***proactive*** posture. We focus first on the decisions we need help making, and only then on understanding what data improves the ease and quality of those decisions. We then develop processes, and tooling, that gathers that decision-driving data.

Reactive Posture	Data Drives Decisions	Decisions are made based on data available
Proactive Posture	Decisions Drive Data	Data gathered is based on decisions that will lead to outcomes

OUR APPROACH ENABLES NEW CONVERSATIONS

Because EMA is centered around desired outcomes, and not around tools, it enables deeper conversations between performance stakeholders. In our approach, the EMA team is the initiator of lasting conversations about value and performance. We can now have conversations not only about whether ***minimum requirements*** are being met, but also about which service level ***objectives*** represent the most valuable future investment opportunities. These are new conversations that dramatically increase IT's value to the enterprise.

Equipped with our new workflow automation definition for IT, we can see how an EMA practice provides the data foundation for valuable outcomes:

- Performance modeling that underlies compute elasticity, enabling new workflow automation models and new consumption models
- Performance cost/benefit metrics that enable optimization and prioritization conversations with the business
- SLO (Service Level Objective) inputs into the development cycle
- Performance inputs into the test/QA cycle, and automation of CI/CD streams
- Ever-deepening understanding of complex application dependencies
- Enhanced RCA (Root Cause Analysis) processes that drive more deeply into systemic and behavioral causes
- Precise inputs into DR capacity planning and testing
- Performance inputs into the hardware and software vendor management process
- Governance inputs into the software/hardware selection process



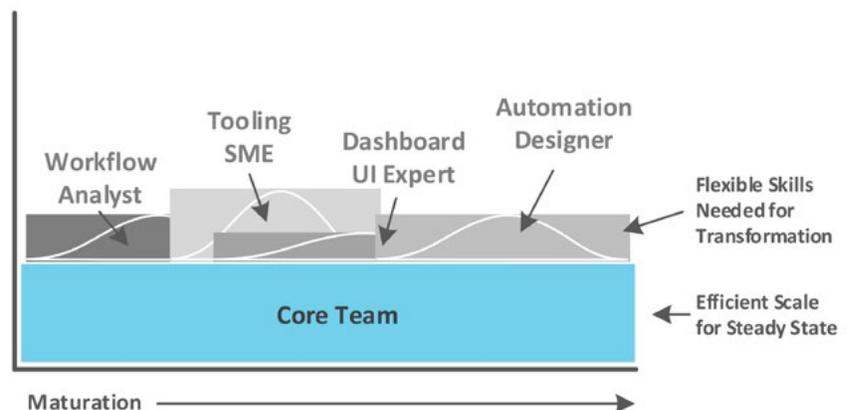
ORGANIZING FOR SUCCESS

In most organizations the monitoring team closely mirrors the monitoring function. It is a reactive, static team running a reactive, static process that observes system performance and dispatches exception events. If we want monitoring to take a more proactive, transformational role, we need to imagine a different organizational structure—one that **leads** proactive conversations rather than **responds** to events.

Evolving Solutions guides you through a methodical process of designing this team:

- 1.** We begin by clearly articulating your desired outcomes. We may start with a reference maturity model, but our goal is to create a journey unique to your organization. In the previous section, we gave examples of conversations and outcomes enabled by EMA. These examples will be slightly different for each IT organization. Creating your unique list shapes our thinking about the makeup of the team.
- 2.** We identify the stakeholders in your organization for each of these outcomes... Those whose expert inputs enrich our understanding, and those who are the consumers of EMA insights. If we think about the decisions and meetings in which these stakeholders participate, it allows us to create EMA insights that directly contribute to the quality of those decisions.
- 3.** As EMA maturity evolves, there will be changing skillsets that enable the next step in that journey. For instance, our need for dashboard design skills will peak very differently than our need for automation scripting skills. We develop a skills roadmap that reveals these evolving needs. This forward look allows more insight into which skillsets are best “flexed” into the team by Evolving Solutions, and which are best assigned to the team from your organization’s staffing:

We need to imagine a different team structure — one that leads proactive conversations rather than responds to events.





INTRODUCING THE COE

What is this team we've described? It's dynamic, like a project team. But it also has steady state responsibilities, like a business process. And while a project team drives towards a finite result, this team drives a perpetual journey of improved outcomes, more mature IT architectures, and deeper relationships between IT and the business. And most importantly of all: This team **initiates** the conversations that increase the value of your brand-defining workflows.

We call this team a **Center of Excellence**, or "COE." A COE has unique traits that differentiate it from other teams in your organization:

It is proactive	The COE does not just wait passively, responding to inputs. It actively seeks insights that increase the value of IT assets.
It has a point of view	Because it proactively drives toward value, the COE advocates on behalf of "qualitatively better."
It is inclusive	The COE includes dedicated members, stakeholders, and often "ad hoc" contributors as needed.
It evolves over time	Different core competencies are needed as your organization passes through levels of EMA maturity.
It provides management flexibility	The COE provides skillset flexibility that simplifies IT staffing decisions. Transformation often calls for a series of progressive skillsets that are not well suited to permanent staffing. The COE brings scalable expertise into an established team methodology, enabling faster time-to-value.

A COE typically involves three types of participants:

- 1.** A core team of dedicated resources, typically a mix of your IT and Evolving Solutions' resources who provide the backbone of the EMA COE;
- 2.** Stakeholder participants engaged in ongoing conversations and decision-making, including both business and IT domain area representatives;
 - Traditional IT participants – Application, platform, and network IT leaders;
 - Cloud enablement, automation, and Ops orchestration IT leaders;
 - Developers, and Test / QA leaders;
 - Marketing, customer experience, and other business leaders who help us establish the value and priority of optimization.
- 3.** SMEs who flow into, and out of the team as the evolution of your maturity model dictates over time. The COE provides a "base camp" where temporary project-oriented SMEs flow into an existing management structure and approach without the need to "spool up" free-standing project teams for each maturity improvement.



THE RESULT: CREATING A FOUNDATION FOR MATURITY

We combine two important best practices to create a more valuable approach to monitoring:

1. Centering our monitoring philosophy around optimized workflows, not tools;
2. Using the COE model rather than a traditional team structure or managed service relationship.

Our approach re-positions monitoring, becoming a foundational building block upon which brand performance can be optimized. But far more importantly, it elevates the enterprise value of IT, in ways that you may have never associated with monitoring..

A photograph showing the lower legs and feet of a person walking up a set of stairs. The stairs have colorful geometric patterns in shades of blue, green, and yellow. The person is wearing dark pants and white sneakers with orange accents.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

— Institute a “workflow-centric” monitoring approach

— Create plans to seek insights into process performance, not just component performance

— Organize cross functional teams and processes to enable the foundation of success

— Develop KPIs based on business outcomes and end user experience requirements

Contact ema@evolvingsol.com for assistance or guidance on best practices