Introduction to Nagios

Systems Administration

Otago Polytechnic
Dunedin, New Zealand

Our Problem

- As sysadmins, our job is to know the state of our systems.
- We also want to be **the first** to know.
- And whenever possible, we want to catch problems before they start to effect our users.

Proposed Solutions

- We could perform various service checks on our systems regularly.
- We write some scripts to automate these checks and alert us if something is wrong.

These are better than nothing, but we quickly realise that monitoring is a very general problem faced by all sysadmins. It calls for purpose built tools.

Monitoring Tools

- Nagios
- Icinga
- Zabbix
- Spiceworks
- Prometheus

Nagios is very well known and widely used. Also, it plays well with Puppet, so it is the one we will use in this paper.

Example Scenario

- We have a server, db.foo.org.nz, running the MySQL DBMS.
- We want to monitor server uptime and the MySQL service.
- A systems admin should be notified of any issues.
- We will use Puppet to manage the Nagios config.

The Plan

We will define the following nagios resources in our Nagios Puppet module

- host: db.foo.org.nz
- hostgroup with our host as a member
- contact and contactgroup for the admin
- service: MySQL