When we talk about **IT support** in an organization, it’s not only about resetting passwords or fixing desktops and printers. The most important task for your IT staff is to regularly monitor your network for any emerging issues or threats, and respond on time to ensure that the problem does not interfere with your productivity.

However, in an age of growing networks and small budgets, it’s a challenging task that is not easy to handle manually at all times. You need a partner in the form of an **IT monitoring software** solution which detects exactly what’s on the network and promptly alerts you about problems.

The good news is that there are affordable **network monitoring solutions** available to monitor your application and network health. But choosing the right kind of monitoring tools catering to your specific needs can be hard. The market has many varieties to offer: open-source or closed, hosted or on-premise, paid or free, and more.

With all the options available, you need to choose one that addresses your unique needs of all departments with vital business systems. In this guide, we will look at some top factors that you need to consider and how to evaluate different **monitoring solutions** when choosing an IT monitoring software for your business.

**Set Your Preferences**

You should first ask yourself if you really need to spend money on these monitoring tools or can manage with **free and open-source network monitoring solutions**. Free performance monitoring tools come with limited features, so you will need to run different IT monitoring tools together to get complete functionality, which can complicate maintenance and configuration.

When it’s something critical like your network, it’s always better to use a **single paid product** which has all the important features integrated. With all applications, services and devices monitored from a single console, it’s easier to find and address a problem quickly. Go for a solution where you can easily customize the main dashboard.

Also look for an IT infrastructure monitoring tool that comes with alerting features. It’s not possible to sit in front of the console at all times and when the service detects an issue, it should create an **alarm**, for instance, threshold increase of CPU usage or temperature rise.

**SAAS vs On-Premise**

The decision of choosing between an **on-premise and SaaS-based monitoring solution** depends upon your system administrator’s expectations from IT performance monitoring tools. On-premise tools are better for large environments where control and security are of higher priority. SaaS is more suited for smaller environments where system admins don’t have to worry about routine management.

If you go for on-premise network monitoring tools, you need **more technical expertise** as your system admins will have to manage everything. You will also need to update it from time to time. On the flipside, you can have more insight and security control and better disaster recovery capability.

SaaS on the other hand, is managed by someone else for fixing bugs, updating, and other tasks. System admins only pay for the parts they use. This is why it is **comparatively cheaper** and easier to manage. However, data transferring over a network connection is less reliable and you have lesser control over security.

**Usability and Design**

A software that has an unattractive or difficult interface and is hard to use can negatively affect user experience. It can slow down your productivity and make it hard to scale your monitoring capabilities as you grow. When choosing a monitoring solution, choose one which provides a **good balance** between affordability, functionality and team experience.

**Encryption**

Encryption is relatively a new concern in IT monitoring, but it’s particularly important for industries such as retail and finance, which have **compliance requirements**. This is because cyber criminals always look for easiest paths to exploit and your IT monitoring tool could provide an easy entry to your network.

For system admins in the healthcare, retail and finance industry, it’s not only the emerging threats that are of concern, but also the compliance requirements about how they manage **sensitive data**. These compliance standards such as PCI-DSS, HIPAA and SOX are very rigorous and businesses could be exposed to penalties in case of noncompliance.

**Number of Devices**

You also need to consider **how many devices** you have to monitor. This is not only important to identify where you stand in the pricing tier but also to assess where you will stand in future and how many resources you will need for your IT infrastructure monitoring.

**Licensing**

This is one of the hardest things to choose. All vendors have their own pricing structure and it’s not easy to decide which licensing scheme suits you best. Some vendors charge per **element or sensor**, which refers to a single monitored item such as a CPU core, disk volume or network interface.

**Device license** on the other hand is easy to manage and monitors everything happening on a single device. No matter how many services are running on your Windows server or how many ports you have on your switch, it will only use one license for one device.

But in this case, even if you want to monitor only a few items, you would still have to purchase license for entire device. Sensor license gives more flexibility but you have to carefully think about what you need to monitor and how many sensors you will need.

**Extendibility**

If you plan to scale your business in the future, choose a monitoring software that is **flexible** and easily allows to add new integrations and devices. It should also be able to integrate with external servers and databases along with providing flexibility to adapt to other tools and software.

**Virtual Metric’s IT Monitoring Solution**

[Virtual Metric’s monitoring solution](https://www.virtualmetric.com/windows-monitoring) can help you find problems in your IT infrastructure before a major issue arises, and allows you to adopt a **strategic and proactive** IT management approach through robust network monitoring. We provide an affordable solution with all monitoring features in one place.

Additionally, our scalable solution can help you add more devices as your business expands and has a user-friendly interface. Get smart alerts and notifications through our **agentless** monitoring and reporting software without installing anything on your server. To discover and test more features of our monitoring software, click [here](https://www.virtualmetric.com/trial) and get a free trial today.