Sparrow^{IQ}: Cost Effective Network Performance Management for SMBs

The Role of Performance Monitoring in Network Management

As networks have become increasingly stable and reliable, focus has moved to ensuring that IT staff have a clearer, more detailed understanding of how the services and applications crossing the network are performing, and hence serving end users. Network traffic monitoring tools help to provide such visibility and by incorporating application awareness capabilities further improve the understanding of performance issues. The most detailed, complete solutions analyze packets to provide visibility across the network and application layers, but these solutions tend to be not only complex, but prohibitively expensive and out of reach of Small and Medium-sized Business (SMB) organizations. Flow-record based or agent-based approaches are more economical, but offer less detail and can have specific hardware requirements in order to be deployed. Solana Networks has developed Sparrow^{IQ} as a cost-effective, user-friendly application aware solution specifically for SMBs.

Sparrow^{IQ} – Traffic Monitoring for SMB

Sparrow^{IQ} is a packet-based traffic analysis and network performance monitoring solution that provides network managers with near real-time traffic visibility into network usage based on conversations, applications, users and class of service. Delivered as a software solution, Sparrow^{IQ}'s key features include:

Traffic Forensics for identifying business-relevant versus recreational and unauthorized traffic

- Single click drill down to quickly and intuitively see traffic pattern details
- Investigative workflows to diagnose network traffic slowdowns in real-time

Real-time Traffic Alerting for instant notification when bandwidth crosses preset thresholds

- Configure alert thresholds for a specific application, conversation, traffic type, department, user, or domain

Automatic Report Generation and Distribution for technical and non-technical audiences

- Network usage trends to get a better understanding of normal patterns versus abnormal activity
- Bandwidth consumption reports to help with capacity planning

Other key features include customizable dashboards for administrator-specific views, support for mobile clients, and full operational deployment in as little as five minutes. Upcoming releases will incorporate new features such as more granular application layer visibility, (e.g. Skype running over HTTP), as well as integrated support for native NetFlow and IPFIX.

> ### HIGHLIGHTS
> Vendor name:
> Solana Networks
>
> Product name: Sparrow^{IQ}
>
> Product function: Application-aware Network Performance Management (ANPM)
>
> Operating systems: Windows XP/Vista/7
>
> Vendor contact:
> sales@sparrowiq.com
>
> Pricing: $299 to $499
>
> Availability: Shipping now

EMA Perspective

Performance of applications and end user experience are the new parameters for success against which all IT departments, regardless of their size, are being measured. The combination of network monitoring coupled with application awareness provides IT departments with a powerful solution to keep performance issues in check and be more effective at troubleshooting when problems do occur. Solana Network's Sparrow^{IQ} brings application aware traffic monitoring to smaller IT shops that have the same performance management needs as larger enterprise counterparts, but lack enterprise-sized IT budgets- whether their networks are managed internally or externally by an MSP.

About Solana

Solana Networks was founded in 2003 and provides network diagnostic and monitoring solutions for small to large enterprises and technology vendors. Products include: SmartHawk for Route Analytics capability in medium to large enterprises and Sparrow^{IQ} for network performance monitoring in SMBs.

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