Capabilities You Need in an IP Address Management Solution

We live in an IP dependent world. The IPv4 address space is the backbone for the modern enterprise. Without it, resources across the enterprise would be siloed and unavailable - business would stop as availability evaporates. It's essential for the hands-on IT professional to be on the lookout for conditions that could be detrimental to optimal IP space functionality. IP Address Management (IPAM) tools are designed to provide a deep level of visibility in the IP space while automating common IP space management tasks such as discovery and inventory.

This purpose of this solution brief is to provide an evaluator's checklist of the features core to an enterprise-ready IPAM solution.

Core Challenges

- **Discovering** and inventorying the IP space is a manual, time-intensive process riddled with human-errors
- **Accurately determining** if subnets are sized properly to accommodate the high number of devices that rely on a functioning IP space is impossible with legacy IPAM solutions
- **Correlating** IP addresses to MAC addresses or hostnames is impossible with legacy IPAM solutions
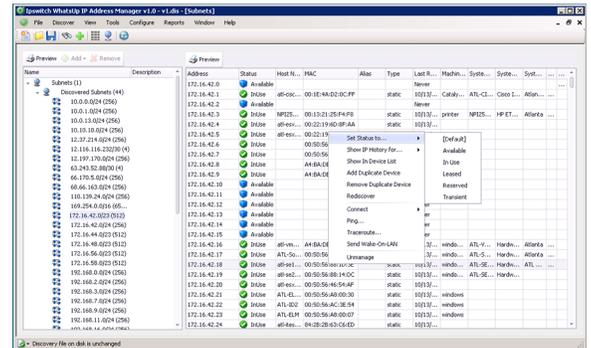
Critical Capabilities

The market is peppered with standalone IPAM products from a multitude of vendors. The task of selecting the right IPAM solution can be daunting especially when migrating from a legacy solution, such as a spreadsheet or home-grown database. Captured below are the key areas a good IPAM solution should effectively cover. Focusing on these areas when evaluating IPAM products will ensure you select an enterprise-ready IPAM solution that suits your needs both today and tomorrow.

Automated Scanning

Up-to-date visibility is a critical facet of proper IP space management. Visibility is a by-product of an error-free, automated discovery & inventory. The solution of choice must enable the IT professional to discover all or part of the IP space on a customized interval that best suits the granular needs of each subnet.

Proactive Alerting

The IP space and its supportive subnets are dynamic. Factors such as VoIP telephony rollouts, virtualization expansion, a sudden workforce increase, or an influx of smart devices can cause a subnet scope to fill unexpectedly. It's essential the administrator be alerted to IP space events such as DHCP scope exhaustion before end-users and uptime are negatively impacted.

Reporting

Automated scanning is useless without a mechanism to capture and make sense of the data. Reports such as – Managed IP Addresses, Available IP Addresses, Duplicate IP Addresses, DHCP Leases – give the administrator the visibility into the IP space to protect and optimize it before problems arise. It's essential these reports be easy to configure, easy to share, and ready to use out-of-the-box.

Automatic Device Categorization

Visibility into which device types are consuming IP Addresses is a vital component of optimizing the IP space to accommodate IP dependent traffic. For instance a subnet where most of the IP addresses are consumed by printers and servers could be sized with less IP address overhead when compared to a subnet that is designed to accommodate end-user devices such as laptops and smart devices.

IPv6 Support

IPv6 adds a new layer of complexity to the IP space. Although pure IPv6 environments represent the minority it is not too early to begin understanding which devices are dual stack capable and where IPv6 is deployed on your network.

Subnet Calculator

Subnets are a vital facet in IP space optimization, protection, and organization. The built in subnet calculator enables the administrator to dissect a superset into right-sized subnets to accommodate for the unique traffic requirements of his environment.

Historical Tracking

Correlating IP addresses with MAC addresses and hostnames enables an administrator to understand how certain properties have changed retrospectively. Overlying a current picture of the IP space with a historical view is the key to uncovering trends and optimizing the IPv4 address space to effectively accommodate future computing situations.

Fast Time-to-Value (TtV)

Increasing the operational efficiency of IT is a top initiative for IT departments worldwide. Ease of setup, speed at which discoveries and inventories are completed, historical tracking and price are the core facets for calculating the value of the solution. At a high level, core to an enterprise-ready IPAM solution is its ability to complete an automated discovery of the entire IP space in minutes enabling the administrator to focus on strategic IT initiatives opposed to manually discovering – inventorying – documenting the IP space device-by-device.

Evaluator's Checklist

IPAM Solution Requirements
Basic Capabilities
☐ Deploys in minutes with minimal preparatory work
☐ Intuitive interface – to reduce clicks to activity
Core Capabilities
☐ Proactive configurable alerting
☐ DHCP Server Scanning
☐ Reporting
☐ Automatic Device Configuration
☐ Historical Tracking
☐ IPv6 Support
☐ Flexible Search
☐ DHCP Server Scanning

Introducing WhatsUp IP Address Manager

WhatsUp IP Address Manager is an IPAM solution engineered to mitigate the deficiencies intrinsic to legacy IPAM solutions, namely spreadsheets and home-grown databases. The cornerstone of WhatsUp IP Address Manager is its ability to automate the discovery, inventory and documentation of the entire IP space – in minutes. Unique to WhatsUp IP Address Manager is its out-of-the-box ability to automatically categorize devices. Understanding IP utilization is deeper than just knowing that N number of IP addresses are consumed or available. Knowing which devices are consuming IP addresses enables administrators to right-size subnets properly. For example, a subnet that houses printers will experience less dynamism than a subnet engineered to accommodate end-user devices that continually check in and out of the network.

As you would expect from an enterprise IPAM solution, WhatsUp IP Address Manager enables the scheduling of reports that can be easily shared with team members. These reports are ready for use out-of-the-box and include – Duplicate IPs, Managed IPs, Available IPs and DHCP Leases for starters.

Succinctly, WhatsUp IP Address Manager is ready to hit the ground running as soon as it's downloaded and the first scan is started. A discovery and inventory that once took hours or days will now take minutes. Best of all, the data collected will be error-free and up-to-date. WhatsUp IP Address Manager will give you the visibility you need to see problems before they happen and take the corrective actions before uptime and availability are impacted.

 Kiss your spreadsheets good-bye with WhatsUp IP Address Manager.

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