



## CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

# MSP Deploys EM7 Meta-Appliance to Scale and Grow through Automation and Efficiency

Opus Interactive, a full-service Managed Services Provider located in Portland, Oregon, provides online services that include Web, email and application hosting, managed services, colocation and Internet access. They are a leader in their efforts surrounding data center virtualization and adopted a green data center model before “green” became trendy, operating a 100% wind-powered data center. The company philosophy is “Customer First” and Opus Interactive is committed to offering the best technologies with full customer support, reliability and security.

## The Challenge

In June 2006, Opus Interactive completed a data center expansion, doubling the space available for their hosting, server colocation and managed services. With room to grow, they needed to automate their network management to scale for an increasing number of customers. They used a variety of tools, including OpsManager, IPSentry and JFFNMS as well as the familiar spreadsheets, email and manual processes for ticketing and asset management.

With no integration between these point tools, Opus Interactive was spending an increasing amount of time and engineering resources making the disparate solutions work. Engineers were routinely pulled from development projects to perform the time-intensive tasks of gathering data from various systems and then analyzing the information for reporting, analysis and billing.

“We needed to focus our engineers on projects that move the business forward, instead of wasting time going from tool to tool or performing manual processes just to maintain what we have,” said Jeremy Sherwood, business solutions executive at Opus Interactive. “Our manual processes wouldn’t scale for the growth we wanted. We were faced with a choice: either grow by adding overhead and bodies or grow through automation.”

Opus Interactive needed an automated solution to cover their immediate needs, and also enable them to scale processes for emerging technologies and future service offerings. Throughout their growth, they wanted to maintain their “customer first” philosophy and expand their green efforts.

With this in mind, Opus Interactive evaluated HP Openview, IBM Tivoli/Netcool, Nagios, Cirtio WatchTower and ScienceLogic EM7 Meta-Appliances.

## ▼ OVERVIEW

### Customer Profile

Opus Interactive is a rapidly growing full-service MSP that maintains a “customer first” philosophy in an eco-friendly environment.

### The Challenge Growth Limited by Inefficient Processes and Tools

- Multiple point tools managed independently
- Manual billing and ticketing
- Engineers focused on maintaining instead of enabling business growth

### The Solution EM7 Meta-Appliance

- Replaced multiple, disparate tools with a single, integrated management system for networks, servers, applications, service desk assets and virtualization infrastructure
- Automated billing, ticketing, alerts and escalation
- Branded customer portal for transparency and self-service ticketing

### The Results

- Recouped \$130k per year of engineering resources
- Automated critical operations to increase efficiency, enable proactive monitoring and prepare for growth
- Grow the business without adding headcount

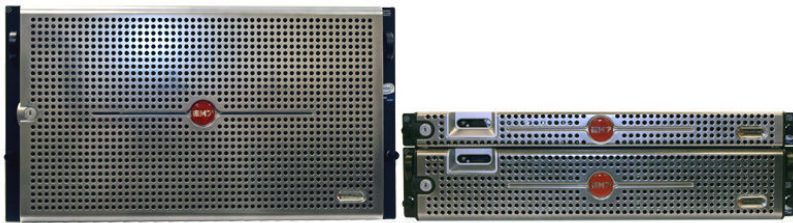


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### The Solution

Opus Interactive selected ScienceLogic EM7 Meta-Appliances to displace multiple point tools and in-house workarounds with a single solution that provides full visibility and control over their entire data center operations. In addition to being easy to deploy and use, EM7 provides a centralized data repository and an integrated suite of management applications including:

- ✓ network management
- ✓ application management
- ✓ service desk
- ✓ service level management
- ✓ systems management
- ✓ virtualization management
- ✓ asset & configuration management
- ✓ fault management



“Out of the box, EM7 automated all of the manual workarounds that previously required engineering resources to resolve,” said Sherwood. “Information is centralized and presented in a usable format, so we don’t waste time accessing different systems for data to analyze. We now do more in a fraction of the time, using existing staff, which allows our engineers to dedicate their time working on projects, rather than on tasks.”

### Highlighted EM7 Features for Opus Interactive

Besides using EM7 as the nerve-center solution for data center operations, several service provider-specific features deliver immense impact. Their short list includes:

**Bandwidth Billing:** EM7 includes an automated Bandwidth Billing Engine with pre-set calculations based on each customer’s unique terms. Before using EM7, bandwidth invoicing was a complicated, manual process that took an engineer two to three weeks each month to complete, with each new customer adding incremental complexity and man-hours. EM7 automates the billing process and generates accurate and consistent reporting with detailed usage data attached.

“Billing is no longer an obstacle to our growth,” Sherwood said. “With EM7, it doesn’t take an engineer to figure each customer’s bill. We now generate usage reports in a couple of clicks and after a quick validation, the bills are e-mailed.”

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**Jeremy Sherwood**  
Business Solutions Exec.  
Opus Interactive

### For more information

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**Branded Customer Portal for Views and Ticketing:** EM7 also includes an integrated customer portal that allows customers to access the same network information that Opus Interactive sees. Customers can monitor their service levels, view their usage and enter tickets for faster resolution. The self-service portal is an important two-way communication vehicle between Opus Interactive and their customers that adds value and improves retention.

“Our branded EM7 customer portal provides complete transparency for our customers who want or need to monitor their service and enter tickets,” Sherwood explained. “The portal looks good and is easy to use, which are great value-added services that customers appreciate.”

**Automated Ticketing and Incident Management:** Like other MSPs, Opus Interactive had used email, spreadsheets and SharePoint to manually log and track tickets. Now, EM7’s automated ticketing and incident management is the single source for ticketing and includes automatic notifications, alerts and historical data for trending.

“EM7’s centralized ticketing speeds resolution and alerts keep tickets from getting lost or forgotten,” said Sherwood. “With EM7, regardless of how much we grow, customers will receive the same high level of service they expect and we demand. Full visibility via the portal is another value-add that sets us apart from other MSPs.”

**Virtualization Management:** Opus Interactive has embraced virtualization as an efficient service delivery platform and as a product offering for a new customer segment – those who don’t require fully dedicated hosting. EM7 Meta-Appliances provide a complete virtualization monitoring solution by consolidating visibility, events and reporting for all of the critical components of virtualization deployments – from the hypervisor and guest OSes to applications, hardware, clustering, network, security and storage infrastructure.

“EM7 provides an efficient model for monitoring our physical servers and our VMware cluster, vClustr, within the same solution, with the same views,” said Sherwood. “For delivery, we only use the servers needed, saving equipment, power and cooling costs. And as a product, virtualization allows us to acquire new customers that we couldn’t serve before. EM7 handles both opportunities in one familiar solution.”

## The Results

Return on investment can be measured in many ways, and while EM7 costs less than the non-integrated tools they considered, Opus Interactive’s key considerations were to gain maximum efficiency and to ensure the business was ready and able to handle more customers.

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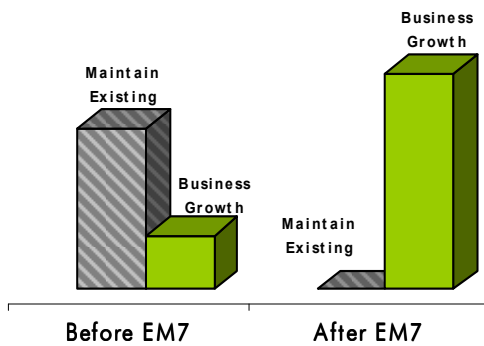
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“Our immediate, recurring ROI from EM7 is about \$130,000 per year, the cost of two full-time engineering resources that we recouped through automation,” explained Sherwood. “Engineers who used to spend their time on labor-intensive tasks now work on projects that create new revenue streams. Automated billing alone freed a headcount by enabling the engineer to fully focus on business-related projects, rather than on invoicing customers.”

**EM7 Saves \$130K per Year  
of Engineering Resources/Time Spent on:**



EM7’s automated ticketing and incident management ensures Opus Interactive that customers will receive consistently high levels of service. And virtualization provides new revenue streams while supporting their green philosophy. “We’ve grown 30 percent over the past two years, without adding overhead or headcount, something we could not have done without EM7,” Sherwood said.

## Looking Forward

What’s next for Opus Interactive? Like other MSPs, virtualization and cloud computing are new technologies gaining in acceptance and practice. “With EM7, we have the flexibility and efficiencies of scale to offer more services with the assurance that we can provide consistent service across any number of customers.”

Opus Interactive also has first-hand experience with the benefits of partnering with ScienceLogic. “When we implemented VMware, ScienceLogic was eager to hear our feedback and receptive to our input for future development,” said Sherwood. “Suggestions to other vendors often went unheeded, but ScienceLogic has responded with real-time innovation that’s among the strongest we’ve seen from any of vendor.”

As Opus Interactive continues to grow in customers and product offerings, EM7 enables economies of scale through automation and efficiency that help them deliver best-in-class solutions with a “customer first” philosophy in a green environment.

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