

PRODUCT REVIEW

# AdventNet's OpManager Offers More Than Simple Monitoring

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AdventNet, a provider of network and telecom solutions since 1996, has recently released Web-based monitoring software, OpManager MSP Edition. OpManager is designed to enable VARs, systems integrators and MSPs to offer managed network services to small and medium enterprise customers.

Unlike competing products, AdventNet's OpManager is not just a network monitoring tool. The tool acts as a watchdog, continuously monitoring the network for trouble spots, and will instantly send alerts to notify administrators when and if a fault occurs.

OpManager will help monitor an unlimited number of [client](#) devices such as firewalls, Windows servers, [Linux](#) servers, Exchange servers, [Active Directory](#) servers, routers, printers, Web applications and UPS devices, all by using the built-in auto-discovery feature.

The new MSP edition uses probe-server architecture, which is a key differentiator from the previous version of the software. The probe resides inside client machines and performs network-facing operations such as discovery, polling and data collection, and uploads data periodically to a central aggregator that receives data from multiple remote locations.

As complicated as that may sound, partners of AdventNet need to install the MSP Edition central server at the network operations center (NOC) with remote probes installed at each customer location. The remote probes collect the status of devices in its location and then communicate with the central server.

The software's design makes it simple to install and configure. All aspects of the software can be administered through the network operations central location, which coordinates network troubles, provides problem management and manages network changes. CRN engineers were able to group devices into intuitive maps and monitor them in realtime. The utility also can provide intuitive reports if requested.

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Setup consists of downloading a 47 Mbyte [file](#) directly from AdventNet's

Web site. Once the [download](#) is complete, the entire setup process is wizard-driven and is offered in four different languages: English, simplified Chinese, traditional Chinese and Japanese.

OpManager MSP provides two install options. The first is central server installation, which consists of installing the utility in the administrator's NOC. This is the install feature where the central server would receive data from multiple probes and would provide the [portal](#) for login-specific views of alarms, reports, inventory and other important options. Administrators need

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to install OpManager at the NOC with remote probes installed at each customer location.

The second option is the probe installation. This is for the client machine, which will be under constant surveillance. The probe will be installed on each individual client, all of which can be easily accessed through the local configuration interface. The remote probe then collects the status of all the devices in its location and communicates it directly to the central server.

The central server uses port 443 to run the Web server in [SSL](#) mode. If administrators want to specify a different port, they can choose a different [port](#) during the setup procedure.

CRN Test Center engineers discovered that the utility works without requiring any firewall configurations—a very important requirement in this market.

Another important feature is the inclusion of support AdventNet offers for effective monitoring of an Exchange 2000/2003 server environment. The utility, when configured correctly, can identify potential problems and performance degradations before they turn into costly downtime.

Overall, OpManager is an adequate tool for monitoring [IP](#) networks and should provide greater management, monitoring and security capabilities. However, in comparison to other network performance tools out there, CRN engineers found it lacked in sophistication for providing proper analysis of network activity, network security policies and network performance.

The utility is priced at \$4,995, which includes unlimited monitoring. AdventNet also packages an enormous amount of explanatory literature and offers live HTML help directly from the company's Web site.

The company offers a single-level channel program that is clearly aimed at VARs servicing the [SMB](#) market. Margins range from 20 percent to 40 percent based on overall revenues—the more of AdventNet products that are sold, the higher the margin.

AdventNet offers pre- and post-sales support and eschews the complexity often found with channel programs aimed at enterprise-level products. This bodes well for the target audience and their clients.

There are no up-front or ongoing costs for partners and the company offers ample avenues of support, ranging from live phone support to WebEx-based demos and trouble-shooting sessions. Because the product is delivered electronically, partners are able to quickly install and deploy the software—even while, for example, processing an order during a sales call.

The company's take on the channel proves that they are well aware of the needs of smaller solution providers and eliminates any obstacles for those partners that are serious about selling the product.

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**OPMANAGER MSP EDITION**

> **Company:**  
AdventNet  
Pleasanton, Calif.  
(925) 924-9500  
msp.opmanager.com

> **Tech Rating:** ★★ ★

> **Channel Rating:** ★★ ★★

> **Distributors/Integrators:**  
Direct from vendor

Note: Recommended status is earned with a score of at least eight stars out of 10.

A 3D rendering of the OpManager MSP Edition software box, which is blue and white with several CD/DVD icons on the front.

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