

ADM INVESTOR SERVICES, INC.

By Mark Nelson

A PROVEN APPROACH FOR IMPLEMENTING MICROSOFT'S SYSTEM CENTER OPERATIONS MANAGER IMPROVES SERVICE MANAGEMENT—AND MORE.

To improve service management in its large, growing, and dynamic trading environment, ADM Investor Services sought to establish enterprise monitoring, alerting, and reporting capabilities. West Monroe Partners brought a proven approach and deep industry and product expertise to implement Microsoft System Center Operations Manager (SCOM) and related processes—creating a full-suite enterprise service management solution that has produced a variety of benefits for the organization.

ADM INVESTOR SERVICES.

ADM Investor Services, Inc., offers comprehensive trade execution and clearing services to retail, commercial, institutional, and introducing broker clients in an environment of strong ethics and financial stability.

The company has a reputation for providing exceptional customer service along with swift, accurate trade execution and expert market research support in a 24/7 marketplace. ADM Investor Services is a subsidiary of the Archer Daniels Midland Company, a registered Futures Commission Merchant and a clearing member of all U.S. futures exchanges.

ENTERPRISE SERVICE MANAGEMENT.

In the trading industry, it is critical to know if and when an application, system or business process is faulting and to receive early indicators that enable an organization to fix a problem before it happens.

ADM Investor Services sought to enhance the efficiency, control, and up-time of its systems by establishing a monitoring tool that could:

- ◆ Monitor and report on corporate systems (Active Directory, Exchange, etc.), as well as its third-party and custom trading environment—both areas that are vital to the company's day-to-day operations. It was necessary to monitor all systems to ensure a problem-free environment.
- ◆ Meet compliance requirements. The company needed to store and have easy access to at least 30 days of security audit logs.
- ◆ Enable the company to spot trends in high CPU or memory utilization, latency, and other critical areas of the network. This required certain reporting capabilities and dashboard features.
- ◆ Provide multiple ways of alerting appropriate IT personnel of failures or changes in trends based on custom thresholds, on a 24x7 basis.

ADM Investor Services selected West Monroe Partners to assist with this critical initiative. West Monroe Partners not only had delivered large and strategic initiatives for ADM Investor Services in the past; it also offered:

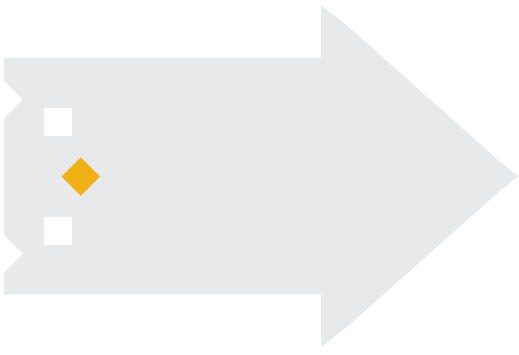
- ◆ Deep industry expertise and understanding of the demands of a trading firm.
- ◆ Experience with similar projects in a trading environment.
- ◆ Deep technical expertise across a variety of core competencies in addition to service management and monitoring. These included server platforms, database platforms and clustering, networking, storage, and back-up procedures.

FROM REQUIREMENTS THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION.

From its past work on ADM Investor Services' infrastructure, the West Monroe Partners project team was familiar with the company's environment. To complement this knowledge, the team used a well-designed approach for defining all requirements, systems, and needs from a business perspective prior to designing and implementing the solution. West Monroe Partners divided the project into four phases.

BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS AND ENVIRONMENT REVIEW.

West Monroe Partners thoroughly reviewed the company's service management requirements, including IT processes, reporting needs, compliance requirements, key systems and areas for monitoring, alerting, and triage needs. After reviewing and defining requirements, the project team compared the requirements to each specific area and system within the IT environment to ensure its review was comprehensive.



DESIGN.

West Monroe Partners conducted multiple “whiteboarding” sessions to develop a design and recommendations for hardware specifications, SCOM configurations, and database sizes, as well as applications, servers, services, and other key thresholds needed to monitor trends. Furthermore, the project team considered both current and future-state needs with respect to scalability, availability, performance, and security.

IMPLEMENTATION.

West Monroe Partners installed and configured the Operations Manager software, as well as the databases and appropriate management packs. In order to monitor devices in an un-trusted domain, the project team deployed a Gateway server and an ACS server for collecting security event logs. West Monroe Partners then worked with the company’s IT team to determine a set of pilot servers on which to deploy the SCOM agents, testing agent and agent-less monitoring prior to full production rollout. Finally, West Monroe Partners configured alerts and notifications, fine-tuned thresholds for monitors and rules, and configured reporting.

FINAL DOCUMENTATION AND ONGOING SUPPORT.

Lastly, West Monroe Partners worked with ADM Investor Services to develop detailed documentation, transfer knowledge to the company’s IT staff, and provide follow-up support on site, as needed.

ENTERPRISE SERVICES MANAGEMENT REALIZED.

In a short timeframe, West Monroe Partners was able to implement an enterprise-class service management and monitoring solution. This solution not only enabled ADM Investor Services’ IT department to be more proactive; it produced other key benefits for the organization:

- ◆ **Improved client satisfaction**—With deployment of an enterprise monitoring solution, ADM Investor Services has increased its system up-time and, as a result, its level of client satisfaction.
- ◆ **Increased response time**—ADM Investor Services’ IT team can respond to alerts and remedy issues, potentially before clients are aware of a problem.
- ◆ **More effective capacity planning**—ADM Investor Services is able to identify trends in many categories across its environment, enabling it to be proactive and to perform capacity planning.
- ◆ **Increased productivity**—Instead of spending hours manually monitoring system processes, the company’s IT team now can use that time to perform system upgrades and other critical tasks, thereby supporting ADM Investor Services’ key IT initiatives.

West Monroe Partners is an international, full-service business and technology consulting firm focused on guiding organizations through projects that fundamentally transform their business. With the experience to create the most ambitious visions as well as the skills to implement the smallest details of our clients’ most critical projects, West Monroe Partners is a proven provider of growth and efficiency to large enterprises, as well as more nimble middle-market organizations. Our more than 300 consulting professionals drive better business results by harnessing our collective experience across a range of industries, serving clients out of offices across the United States and Canada.