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Survey Highlights Inability to Solve Network Problems as Chief Concern Among IT Directors

Organizations Lack Information Necessary to Troubleshoot and Determine Cause of Network Problems

June 28, 2007 — Minneapolis, MN — 50 percent of network professionals responding to a recent survey ranked locating the source of an application problem as the biggest challenge they face in managing application availability and performance. The global study was released today by Network Instruments, a leading provider of innovative analysis solutions for in-depth network intelligence and continuous availability. The survey, which involved over 125 network engineers, IT directors, and CIOs across Europe and North America, also found that 43 percent believe a lack of information about problems and their causes is the most common problem on their network.

Highlights of the study included:

- 50% of respondents were challenged in identifying whether application performance problems were caused by the network or other applications
- 43% of respondents identified a lack of information about problem causes as the largest source of concern on the network
- 22% of engineers and directors identified prioritizing traffic as the largest network concern, followed by 17% who cited application availability as a major concern
- 40% indicated they needed to improve their ability to troubleshoot intermittent errors compared to 43% of respondents who were satisfied with their troubleshooting tools
- 44% of IT teams reported spending between 20 and 40 percent of their time locating the cause of network problems
- An additional 8 percent reported spending nearly half of their time isolating the source of network problems, whereas more than a quarter reported their IT teams spent less than 10 percent of their time troubleshooting network problems

"It comes as no surprise that IT directors are finding it difficult to identify whether the source of their network problems is the application or the network," said Ian Cummins, European Sales Director for Network Instruments. "Engineers and CIOs often tell me they find it challenging to identify latency and performance issues on their network and resolve the issues before they adversely affect the user. Without the right analytical tools, troubleshooting can be a lot like trying to find a needle in a haystack."

VoIP

Adoption of VoIP continues at a strong pace with 61 percent of respondents having implemented the technology and an additional 16 percent installing VoIP systems in the next 12 months. Despite widespread adoption, the majority of respondents did not have the ability to monitor VoIP service quality. Approximately 30 percent of respondents with VoIP implemented were able to monitor the application's quality.

"Many organizations have been adopting VoIP to save costs over their traditional phone systems without realising the sensitivity of VoIP to other applications on the network," said Charles Thompson, manager of sales engineering for Network Instruments. "Having the right network analysis tools that provide metrics for technologies like VoIP are critical to any successful deployment. With an enterprise-level analyzer, the network team has a view of both network and VoIP application performance to quickly identify and accurately troubleshoot any issue."

Engineers and directors in the study were keenly aware of the importance of VoIP quality and application performance: 56 percent of respondents were concerned with their ability to monitor VoIP performance; 53 percent noted managing issues with voice quality among their top concerns.