Kentik Extends its Network Analytics Platform with Synthetic Monitoring

Abstract

Kentik, a provider of cloud-delivered network analytics, has announced Kentik Synthetic Monitoring. This active monitoring solution enhances Kentik's existing visibility into network traffic and connectivity with targeted insight into the heath and performance of critical network paths.

Kentik Previews Synthetic Monitoring

Kentik is enhancing its cloud-delivered network analytics solution with Kentik Synthetic Monitoring, an active monitoring capability that tests the health and performance of network paths. Kentik Synthetic Monitoring is currently in customer preview mode with general availability expected later in the summer of 2020.

Kentik's synthetic capability will come to market with a network of 180 global agents deployed in cloud regions and colocation facilities that can actively test internet health and performance. This will provide customers with the ability to test network paths globally.

Network managers can also deploy private agents in their on-premises networks to extend the total visibility of the solution. Private agents are deployable on Docker containers and on common Linux distribution today, and Kentik will add support for other operating systems and platforms in the future.

Enhancing a Global Network Analytics Platform

Kentik's core platform provides deep visibility into global network traffic and network paths. By correlating and analyzing a variety of data, including network flows, BGP routes, and cloud flow logs, Kentik can reveal security incidents and performance insights, and identify opportunities to optimize the network. Many Tier 1 service providers and large enterprises rely on its platform today.

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With the addition of Synthetic Monitoring, Kentik can now actively test the health and performance of the paths that it previously only monitored passively. Kentik has fully integrated this active monitoring with its core platform, which consolidates and streamlines alerting, monitoring, and workflows. Network engineers who license the capability will be able to examine reports and analyze global traffic and connectivity side by side with synthetically derived reports on packet loss, latency, and jitter.

This integration also enables synthetic test automation and scenario-based tests. Kentik leverages its insight into global traffic to identify network paths of interest and then automatically creates synthetic tests for those paths. If traffic patterns change, the platform can adjust those tests to cover emerging paths of interest. It can reveal which paths matter and why, and then show the health and performance of those paths. The integration also extends to Kentik's alerting capabilities, allowing network managers to view reports on the health and performance of networks and services, rather than reports on individual tests.

EMA Perspective

EMA research found that network operations teams are increasingly turning to active, synthetic monitoring tools to improve their visibility into network and application performance. Enterprises revealed to EMA that synthetic data has become a strategically important data source of operational network monitoring and troubleshooting.

This interest in active monitoring is driven by a number of factors. First and foremost, the internet has become the corporate network. Enterprises have migrated much of their wide-area connectivity from MPLS to the internet to facilitate cloud connectivity, network agility, and cost savings. Legacy MPLS services offer guaranteed performance via service-level agreements (SLA) and visibility via customer portals. With this migration to the internet, network operations teams have lost those SLAs and some of their visibility. Synthetic monitoring helps close that monitoring gap by actively measuring the health and performance of internet paths. Kentik offers added value by combining active monitoring with its global traffic visibility so enterprises know exactly which paths they must actively test.

Enterprises have also experienced a surge in employees working from home in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, splintering the network edge into countless thousands of home office connections. EMA projects that much of the increased work-from-home population is permanent. With this change, network managers need more visibility into the health and performance of the many network paths that user traffic is traversing. Synthetic monitoring will be critical to understanding the user experience of remote workers.

EMA believes this synthetic monitoring capability will bring tremendous value to enterprises and service providers.

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