Technical Brief

Introduction to SANWatch – Notification Manager

Abstract

This document introduces SANWatch's event notification utility, Notification Manager, its main features and provides the suggested practice.

Why Notification Manager

To maintain business continuity, it's important that IT managers can always have control over the system status and respond to the intimidating problems in a short time after they happen. Since IT managers can't stay with the installations 7/24, an efficient way of notification is necessary to help them ensure the health of the system. Infortrend's proprietary management suite, SANWatch, provides an powerful event notification utility, Notification Manager. It alerts users to occurrences of EonStor subsystems in abundant configurable ways. Tuning the notification parameters, including methods, frequency and event severity level, according to their needs via the intuitive GUI, users can on the one hand avoid being bombarded by minor events and on the other ensure that they won't miss any critical problems which may lead to system downtime.
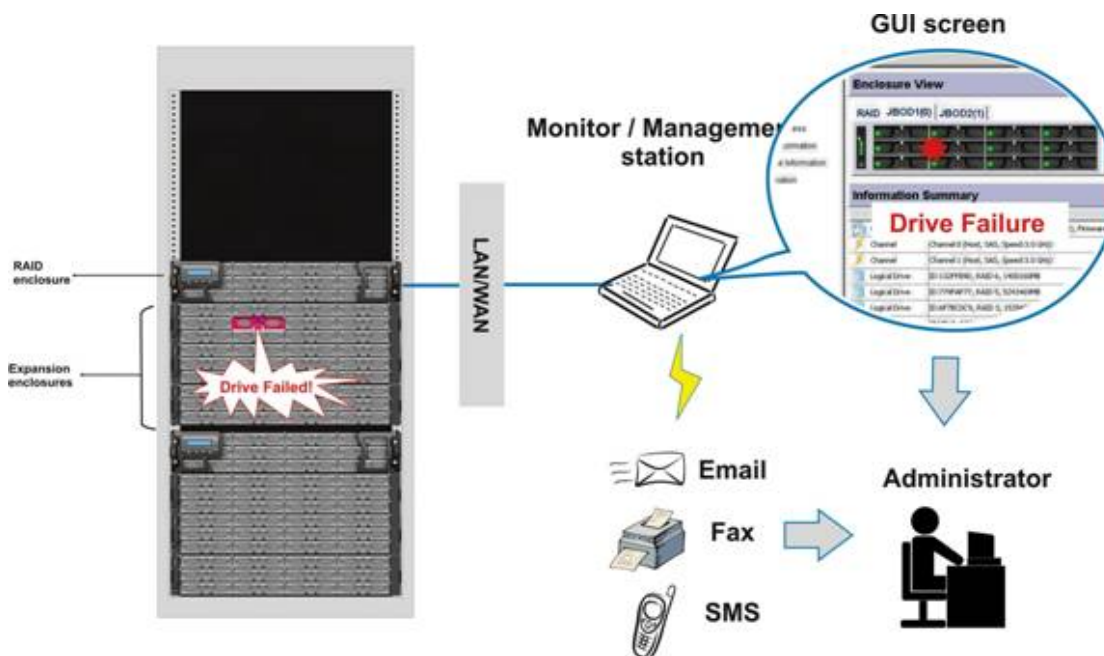
Collective and Individual Event Notification

SANWatch Notification Manager provides collective event notification and individual event notification. Collective event notification can only be sent through SMTP email service. When enabled, the service will deliver to the designated email address a collective summary of all events occurring on a group of EonStor RAID subsystems managed by the Management Host Agent[1]. Users can configure the frequency at which they want to receive the summary by hour. For example, when **Notification Period** is set as two, users will receive a log every two hours. The log summarizes all the events happening to the subsystems in the past two hours.

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[1] Management Host Agent is an independent agent of the SANWatch software. It permits one management station to monitor and collect the operating statuses from multiple RAID systems within the same subnet. When users need to access groups of RAID arrays in a different subnet, they should first install this agent on a remote server within that subnet and then connect to it through a local machine.

Users can also choose to get real-time notifications for individual events. Notification Manager provides six pre-set methods of sending notifications: SNMP traps, Email, LAN broadcast, Fax, SMS and MSN Messenger. Users can enable more than one way in which they want to be notified when an event occurs. If the default notification methods fail to t satisfy users' needs, Notification Manager also supports plug-ins for functionality extension. As simple as placing plug-ins under the program subfolder and a few clicks, advanced users can customize the notification methods and event messages. To free administrators from the bother of uncritical events, Notification Manager allows users to set the severity level of the events they want to be notified of through each method. The severity level includes **Notification**, **Warning**, and **Critical**. **Notification** level events are informational events, such as the completion of the logical array creation process, the adding of drives to a chassis, and etc. As to the **Warning** level events, they present host-/drive-side signal problems and the occurrence of incongruous configuration. Those events which may lead to data loss or system failures are rated as **Critical**. They include component failures, data drive failures, and etc.

Suggested Practice

Effective monitoring relies on the smart combination of collective and individual event notifications. For enterprises implementing MIS automation, Notification Manager can be integrated with their Network Management Center through SNMP traps. In this way, IT managers can centrally monitor the health of the whole system. When any critical events are detected, they can ask on-site maintenance staff to immediately handle the problems. If IT managers would like to get a periodical overview of the events, they can enable the collective event notification feature and set the parameter of **Notification period** as they prefer. Then they will get the log at the set frequency. For SMBs with limited IT staff, IT managers can choose the ways most easily accessible as the individual event notification methods. For example, if an IT manager brings the mobile phone with him/her most of the time, he/she can enable the SMS option and set the severity level of the events he/she want to be notified of. If the level is set as **Warning**, he/she would be notified of both **Critical** and **Warning** level events as long as he/she brings the mobile phone with him/her. Similarly, if IT managers would like to get a periodical overview of the events, they can enable the collective event notification feature and set the parameter of **Notification period** as they prefer.