



Introduction

OPNET Technologies provides a broad set of solutions for engineering, monitoring, and managing networks and applications, primarily for large enterprises and government agencies, but also for service providers and small/medium enterprise. For this EMA Radar Report, OPNET offered details on ACE Live, ACE Analyst, APM Element Insight, and ACE Enterprise Management Server. With the breadth and depth of this solution, combined with advantages in overall cost efficiency, OPNET Technologies achieved one of two Value Leader awards in this analysis.

Architecture and Integration

OPNET’s solution scored well above average in our assessment of architecture and integration, based primarily upon strong results in scalability and breadth of applications supported. From a design perspective, the OPNET solution supports three of the four primary ANPM instrumentation types – packet, NetFlow/xFlow, and agents – though their agent technologies are designed to capture snapshots of performance data rather than acting as sustained monitoring elements. In terms of integrations, OPNET supports a respectable list of event management and service management integrations; however, they have not yet formalized integrations with any third-party CMS/CMDB solutions.



Functionality

The OPNET solution scored at or near the top (never ranked below the top quartile, in fact) for every functionality category measured in this report, with only two exceptions – active controls and roles supported. OPNET ranked #1 overall in features strength, supported by top rankings in application discovery/recognition, metrics and measurements, capacity planning, and advanced analysis. EMA found the path analysis features that are part of the new APM Element Insight product to be particularly innovative and valuable for understanding delivery paths on an application-by-application basis.

Deployment and Administration

The OPNET solution ranked slightly better than average overall in this category, due in large part to remarkably low implementation costs (for an enterprise-class solution), excellent training options, stronger-than-average support program options, flexibility on testing/migration facilities, and ample features for automating administrative functions. Hypervisor-based instrumentation options, where they are applicable, also bring down the cost and complexity of deployment. Lastly, OPNET's user community is much stronger than most, and the annual OPNETWORK user conference event is legendary for its fantastic training programs and broad topic coverage.

Cost Advantage

As an enterprise-class solution in terms of solution depth and breadth, including a number of capabilities out-of-the-box that other vendors lack, the OPNET solution is more expensive than many others in terms of license costs. However, their overall solution is competitively priced for the market, and their licensing model options and maintenance cost rankings were slightly better than average.

Vendor Strength

As a profitable independent public company, OPNET has shown remarkable resilience and flexibility over the years. They have developed a strong ANPM vision and a solid strategy for execution and are on stable financial footing. Perhaps the only challenge remaining for OPNET in this category is that of broad market recognition of their capabilities to deliver leading-edge ANPM solutions.

Strengths and Limitations

OPNET's Application-Aware Network Performance Management strengths are:

- Depth of application analysis – the OPNET solution offers best-in-class features for establishing a detailed understanding of application activity and behavior from the network perspective.
- Continued innovation – OPNET has made substantial investments in expanding their ANPM solution by adding new products and features at a rate that outpaces most other players in the sector.
- Dedication to customer success – as evidenced by their highly successful user community organization, OPNET demonstrates a long-term commitment to ensuring their customers get the full potential value out of the OPNET ANPM solution.

OPNET's Application-Aware Network Performance Management limitations are:

- Instrumentation types – the OPNET solution currently lacks a fully functional agent instrumentation option, does not support sFlow, and does not offer log file analysis.
- No existing/certified integrations with CMS/CMDB solutions.

