

**Opmantek**

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# WHITE PAPER

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# Using Process Automation Compared To Adding On Staff

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**S**ince the invention of the assembly line, business leaders are continually looking at ways to drive efficiency. Like the process line, using computer systems to reduce manual effort through the automation of processes and tasks is one way to reduce costs and free up senior staff for other more intellectual work.

## **But where do you start?**

When looking at automation solutions to scale your business, the critical variable to look for is the time saved through automation compared to the amount of time that task will take if performed by staff members. This concept is not new, and it is the fundamental basis of making impactful decisions on how your organization can scale. To look into this, I will work through an example of a smaller managed service provider we encountered and how a shift in philosophy, from scaling with people to scaling with process automation, helped their business run more efficiently.



## Background

The network we encountered is located on the Gold Coast, Australia, not far from our Australian office. They are a service provider that approached Opmantek to help design a solution that extended our NMIS software and would allow them to grow the amount of monitored devices (without increasing troubleshooting time), while also driving further efficiencies that allow them to offer more aggressive SLAs with a new premium level service they could sell on top of their existing sales and service strategy.

## The Challenge

The cost of implementing our software and achieving the desired SLAs were equivalent to one full-time employee (FTE) and they were posed with the challenge of deciding whether to scale by adding a new employee or by implementing process automation. This goal could be achieved using either solution, but the company wanted to know the most efficient way to handle this scaling.



# The Solutions

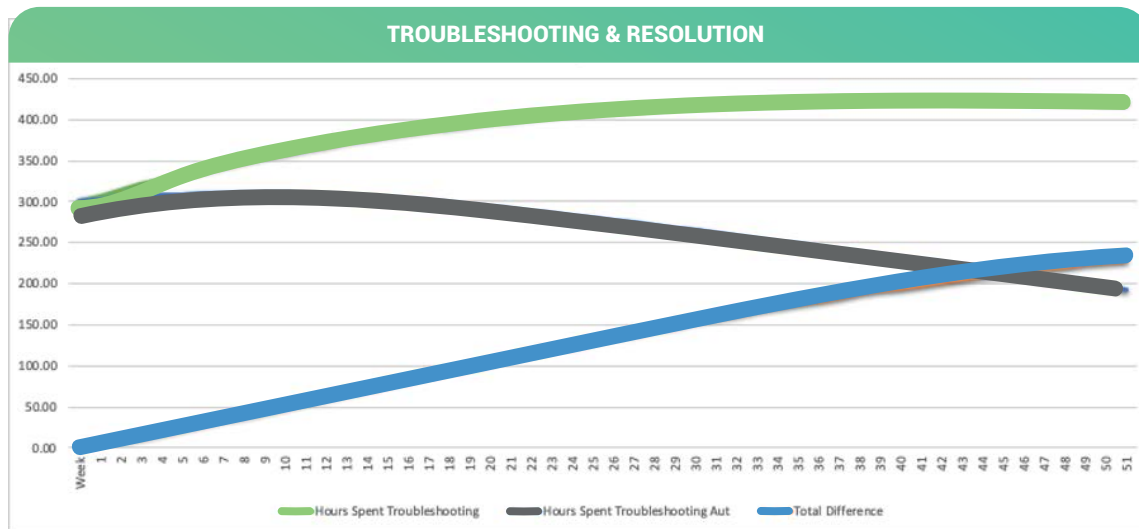
To work through this challenge, a few standardized markers needed to be identified:

- The starting quantity of devices is 500 and this will increase by 20 per week for a period of 12 months.
- Total possible weekly uptime per device 168 hrs based on the 24x7 support contracts.
- To begin there are 200 network events per week, with the new devices, it is predicted that 8 new events per week would occur.
- The Mean Time to Resolve (MTTR) failures is 1.5 hours
- The proficiency component for both methods that was chosen was 3% for automation and 2% for people.

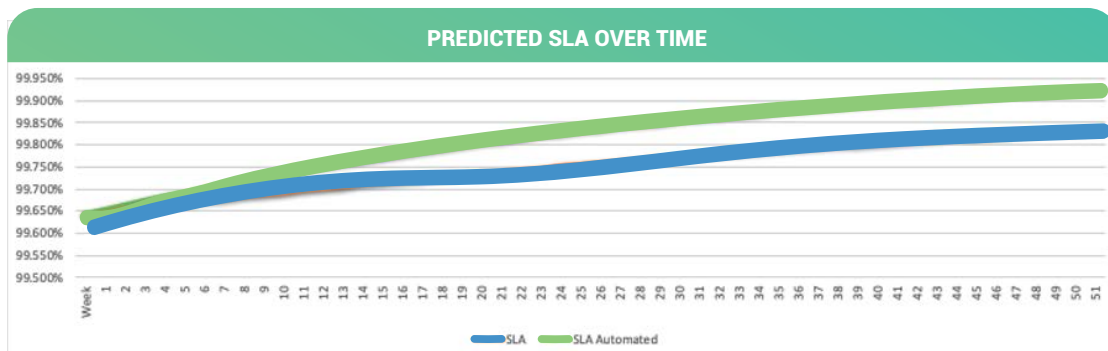
Using the data from above we can map out some predicted metrics for this company during their expansion period. The key part we want to focus on is the amount of time spent troubleshooting and remedying events. The company has outlined that they expect 200 events per week with the resolution time of an hour and a half, this starts the total committed time per week to be 300 hours.



On the graph below we can see the difference between the two approaches with regards to how much time is committed to troubleshooting. In both scenarios the addition of devices will cause the overall troubleshooting time to increase, but as the new employee gets better and more automation is implemented the overall time it takes to troubleshoot will get below the initial 300 hour figure. For scalability purposes, the automation path would take 19 weeks and with people, it would take 115 weeks to reach the initial 300 hour figure.



This particular business wanted to sell a premium level service with an identified SLA target of 99.7% uptime, to begin, three 9s will be for a second stage and finally four 9s. Both scenarios can achieve this result. To achieve the first stage with process automation it would take 7 weeks and with new staff it would take 13 weeks.



# The Result

When looking at the key milestones this company would like to achieve, there is a reduction in the time to achieve the milestones when they implement an automated solution.

The first milestone was to increase their monitored device count, without increasing the hours that were spent troubleshooting. Using both methods and the inherent automation efficiency and employee proficiency, the company can achieve the same commitment to troubleshooting time while monitoring more devices. In the table below it is shown that it would take 19 weeks for automation and 115 weeks for a new employee to reach this milestone. One point to note is that initially both methods increased the troubleshooting hours and then slowly reduced this, therefore the ideal scenario is a shorter time and fewer devices.

| Hours Troubleshooting | Automation (Devices) |     | People (Devices) |      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----|------------------|------|
| 300 hours             | 19 weeks             | 860 | 115 weeks        | 2780 |

The second milestone that the company wished to achieve was introducing a premium level of service with a 99.7% availability as their first step and included are the next two milestones the company wished to achieve. Both methodologies have the ability to achieve this milestone, using automation will reduce the time to achieve the first stage by a significant gap and become more efficient over time.

| SLA    | Automation (hrs Troubleshooting) |           | People (hrs Troubleshooting) |           |
|--------|----------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------|
| 99.7%  | 7 weeks                          | 310 hours | 13 weeks                     | 370 hours |
| 99.9%  | 43 weeks                         | 224 hours | 85 weeks                     | 367 hours |
| 99.99% | 117 weeks                        | 49 hours  | 245 weeks                    | 90 hours  |



In this example, the client was not only looking to scale, but also:

- Improve the quality and reliability of their monitored network.
- Improve their overall revenue per customer.
- Introduce a second tier of pricing that was delivered to satisfied customers.



The client was able to implement a secondary tier of service that increased their top line revenue. They achieved this by introducing process automation to their existing tool set; they now have troubleshooting information as tickets are created, they introduced automated remediation and they can now monitor with increased visibility across their network.

Every network that we have encountered is different, and these are generalizations that should be used to guide decision making. There are certainly occasions where you will need “boots on the ground” to handle issues. For most organizations that are looking to scale, a combination of people and process automation will yield the best results.

**For more information** on how to leverage Opmantek software and help your business scale through process automation [request a demo now.](#)



# Learn More

If you would like to learn more about 'Using Process Automation Compared To Adding Staff' and the sorts of processes that can be automated within a modern enterprise IT team, contact our engineering team for a free network assessment.

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