Why On Earth
Was I Not Notified?!?

Retrofitting Zabbix With An Action Simulator
Who Am I?

- Medical University of Vienna
- Monitoring handyman
- Fedora/EPEL
- #zabbix, #zabbix-de
- blog.zabbix.com

http://www.geofrogger.net/review/my_zabbix_patches_desc.txt
Our Setup

• 1,500 hosts
• 22,000 items
• 11,000 triggers
• 150 NVPS
The Challenge

- Know what's going to happen
- Don't miss an event
- Avoid duplicates
- Stop guessing and hoping for the best
- ZBXNEXT-97 (2009)
What Makes It Difficult

- No direct connection between triggers and actions by design
- Limited flexibility when constructing action conditions (ZBXNEXT-1133)
- Debugging is cumbersome (ZBXNEXT-1533)
What Can Go Wrong (I)

- Plain mistake
- Action disabled
- Action conditions don't match
- User is member of a disabled group
- No permissions
What Can Go Wrong (II)

- Media type disabled system-wide
- Desired user media not defined
- Desired user media disabled
- Severity settings for user media don't match
- Temporal settings for user media don't match
What Is The Action Simulator?

• Frontend implementation of server business logic
• Not intrusive at all
• Just an informational dry-run
A Brief History

- v1: Figure out matching actions
- v2: Show resulting notifications, but ignore temporal constraints
- v3: Major bug-fix to v2, better output formatting
- v4: Remote commands, lots of minor improvements and bug-fixes
What's Missing in v4?

• Escalation
• API integration
• Temporal settings
• Maintenance periods
Demo time!
Conclusion

• Pressing need
• Not just for beginners
• Simple
• Does the job – Stomach ulcer gone
• API integration allows for auditing

22:23 < ejames123> volter: I just cleaned up some alerting strangeness I've seen. All because of your tool. I think you should take the rest of the day off.
Why On Earth Was I Not Notified!?  
6th September 2013  
Volker Fröhlich

References

• Blog article -- blog.zabbix.com/why-on-earth-was-i-not-notified/2027/
• Wiki article, development goals, bugs, concepts  
  https://www.zabbix.org/wiki/Docs/action_simulator
• Code, Screenshots --  
  http://www.geofrogger.net/review/actionsim/
• Upstream ticket --  
  https://support.zabbix.com/browse/ZBXNEXXT-97

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