

## Oracle's Proactive Support Success Relies on Customer Adoption

Rob Addy

Proactive support capabilities in My Oracle Support now span Oracle's entire product portfolio. Barriers to service adoption are likely to be nontechnical, such as a lack of awareness.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

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### Event

On 14 October 2009, Oracle CEO Larry Ellison formally launched the My Oracle Support offering during his keynote presentation at Oracle Open World. Described as "proactive," My Oracle Support alerts users of potential technical issues. The offering is integrated with Oracle Enterprise Manager and Oracle's user communities, and spans most Oracle product lines. My Oracle Support is available without additional charge to all standard support customers. Further details are available at <http://www.oracle.com/support/premier/myoraclesupport.html>

### Analysis

According to Oracle, My Oracle Support is used by more than 50% of its customer base and it plans to migrate the remainder in the next few months. Of the current users, Gartner estimates that a fifth (that is, 10% of the user base) are using the proactive support capabilities. These capabilities require that customers periodically upload their system configuration metadata to Oracle so that it may be compared with known conflicts and parameter combinations shown to be susceptible to performance issues or system instability.

Considering these figures and Oracle's claim that 250,000 system and module configurations have been uploaded to date, Gartner estimates that most of the early adopters are still testing the service on a limited basis. This is to be expected; however, the service would be more effective for prevention-based analytics if it were used more widely and users added more configurations to the collective knowledge pool.

Based on early participant feedback, Gartner believes that a relatively small effort is required to implement the data collection infrastructure and deploy the collectors needed to access the proactive service, especially if the organization has good change management processes and uses software deployment tools.

Oracle appears to have addressed the technical challenges posed by My Oracle Support; thus, the barriers to adoption will likely be customer apathy, ignorance and organizational inertia. To rise to these challenges, Gartner believes Oracle must:

- Offer service incentives, such as improved response times for proactive-based customers. Comparative incident rates for customers taking advantage of the proactive service are not yet available. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, in the future, they will show a marked reduction in outage and incident volumes compared with organizations running in the traditional reactive mode.
- Engage with IT operations management. Oracle's services messaging traditionally targets the technical ranks; however, if Oracle is to make adoption of the service a business priority, it must focus on convincing IT executives of its benefits.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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#### Oracle support customers:

- Investigate the usage of the My Oracle Support portal and the associated proactive support services within your environment.

- Plan to deploy the Oracle collector infrastructure within all of your environments and install configuration collectors on all nodes.
- Actively participate within Oracle's community programs, giving peers feedback on patch usefulness, stability and other issues.
- Use the proactive system alerts received from Oracle as part of a formal prevention-based strategy for change management within IT operations.

## **RECOMMENDED READING**

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- "Oracle Waives Uplift for Selected Products Going Into Extended Support"— Oracle's response to feedback from customers and user groups brings needed expense relief, but does not mitigate the necessity of continuing to plan for upgrades. **By Bob Igou, Pat Phelan and Rob Addy**
- "Emerging Technology Analysis: Peer-to-Peer Support (How Crowdsourcing and Virtual Support Networks Are Changing the Support Paradigm)"— Peer-to-peer and community support are gaining widespread acceptance as a means for enterprise customers to access technical guidance on IT products and technologies. **By Rob Addy**

(You may need to sign in or be a Gartner client to access the documents referenced in this First Take.)

## REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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### **Corporate Headquarters**

56 Top Gallant Road  
Stamford, CT 06902-7700  
U.S.A.  
+1 203 964 0096

### **European Headquarters**

Tamesis  
The Glanty  
Egham  
Surrey, TW20 9AW  
UNITED KINGDOM  
+44 1784 431611

### **Asia/Pacific Headquarters**

Gartner Australasia Pty. Ltd.  
Level 9, 141 Walker Street  
North Sydney  
New South Wales 2060  
AUSTRALIA  
+61 2 9459 4600

### **Japan Headquarters**

Gartner Japan Ltd.  
Aobadai Hills, 6F  
7-7, Aobadai, 4-chome  
Meguro-ku, Tokyo 153-0042  
JAPAN  
+81 3 3481 3670

### **Latin America Headquarters**

Gartner do Brazil  
Av. das Nações Unidas, 12551  
9º andar—World Trade Center  
04578-903—São Paulo SP  
BRAZIL  
+55 11 3443 1509