

EMC IONIX STORAGE CONFIGURATION ADVISOR

Improve service levels and efficiency in virtual environments through automation

ESSENTIALS

- Helps storage teams meet service levels with near-realtime change tracking and policy-based compliance validation
- Addresses the most significant cause of service-impacting events—improper configuration
- Automating configuration policy design and validation helps storage teams do more with less
- Eliminates management complexity and overhead while simplifying deployment through agentless discovery
- Ensures compliance with key EMC E-Lab recommendations by comparing your SAN's configuration against the EMC Support Matrix
- Dashboards and reports on configuration, compliance metrics, and service levels help prioritize activities to more efficiently manage service levels

Server virtualization changes the way organizations manage storage in critical ways. It introduces a more dynamic infrastructure where virtual guests move between servers to optimize performance and availability. It also accelerates the pace at which new capacity can be allocated to new applications. In this more dynamic environment, it becomes increasingly difficult to ensure compliance with the configuration best practices and interoperability requirements necessary to ensure service levels.

“Experience has shown that more than half of SAN outages occur due to improper configurations that are a result of either a poorly designed or executed change,” says Bob Laliberte, analyst at Enterprise Strategy Group. “With all the moves, adds, and changes that take place daily, SAN administrators struggle to maintain adequate service levels for the business.”

Today, most IT organizations adhere to high-availability best practices by building redundancy throughout their production storage environments. However, improper configurations often thwart these best practices, generating a false sense of security. In an improperly configured SAN, a failed component can eliminate a redundant data path resulting in reduced performance or forcing applications to go offline.

Manual processes for validating compliance with best practices have proven to be cumbersome and ineffective. The more dynamic environments introduced through increased adoption of virtualization compounds the issue causing old manual processes to break down. What is required is a configuration and change management solution that automates the process of validating your storage infrastructure's configuration against industry and internally defined configuration best practices and interoperability requirements. In addition, maintaining an audit trail of changes, understanding the rate at which things change and how fast IT responds to potential service-affecting events are essential parts of the planning and measurement processes required for complying with service-level agreements and improving operational efficiency.

A HELPING HAND IN A WORLD OF CHANGE

EMC® Ionix™ Storage Configuration Advisor helps your storage team manage the complexity of ensuring compliance with internal configuration policies, industry best practices, and key EMC E-Lab™ interoperability recommendations across your storage infrastructure. It leverages agentless discovery, near-realtime change tracking, and configuration policy validation to identify issues before they can impact service levels. It also provides change history and service analytics to help IT improve processes and resource planning. And it always provides you with an up-to-date view of your SAN's configuration.

KEY CAPABILITIES OF IONIX STORAGE CONFIGURATION ADVISOR

BEST-PRACTICE POLICY MANAGEMENT

Built-in templates enable you to quickly define and modify policies to meet your operational requirements. Templates are designed around common industry best practices for physical and logical connectivity, path management, and hardware and software configuration and support. Policy wizards help you through the process of modifying templates to define or update policies.

AGENTLESS DISCOVERY AND CONFIGURATION ANALYSIS

Ionix Storage Configuration Advisor leverages quick, easy-to-deploy, agentless discovery. It uses non-intrusive, standards-based discovery of all physical and logical SAN elements and relationships.

By creating and maintaining an accurate map of the storage infrastructure from virtual guest through storage, Ionix Storage Configuration Advisor helps IT operations ensure availability of critical IT services by:

- Validating infrastructure alignment with organizational policies and industry best practices
- Linking configuration problems with associated changes

In addition, these processes can be automated to eliminate reliance on external scripts or error-prone, manually intensive activities.

PATH REDUNDANCY BREACH AND ASSOCIATED MAP

The screenshot displays the EMC Ionix Storage Configuration Advisor interface. The top section, titled 'Investigate', shows a table of active breaches. The table has columns for Severity, Active?, Ack., Breach, Policy, Rule, Affected Objects, and Age. Several breaches are listed, all with a severity of 'Critical' and an age of '3 minutes'. The breaches are related to 'I/O Path Redundancy' and 'Path Management' policies. Below the table, there is a section for 'Vulnerability I/O Path Redundancy' which includes a network diagram. The diagram shows various components like Clusters, Hosts, VMS, Disks, Root Devices, HBA's, Connectivity, Indicators, and Storage, with lines representing connections between them. The interface also shows navigation tabs like Dashboard, Investigate, Configuration Changes, Policies, Templates, Search, Reports, and Administration. At the bottom, there is a status bar showing 'Running', '63 Active Breaches', '74 Today's Changes', and user information.

CHANGE TRACKING

Ionix Storage Configuration Advisor monitors for change to objects discovered in the data center, providing an audit trail for all changes made to the storage environment. When changes are incorrectly implemented, it enables users to quickly recognize a policy breach. It also documents change history to help analyze breaches and trends to improve change processes and resource planning.

EMC SUPPORT MATRIX VALIDATION

Ionix Storage Configuration Advisor downloads the EMC Support Matrix and validates your SAN's compliance with its recommendations to give you peace of mind in knowing your configuration has been thoroughly evaluated by key EMC E-Lab standards.

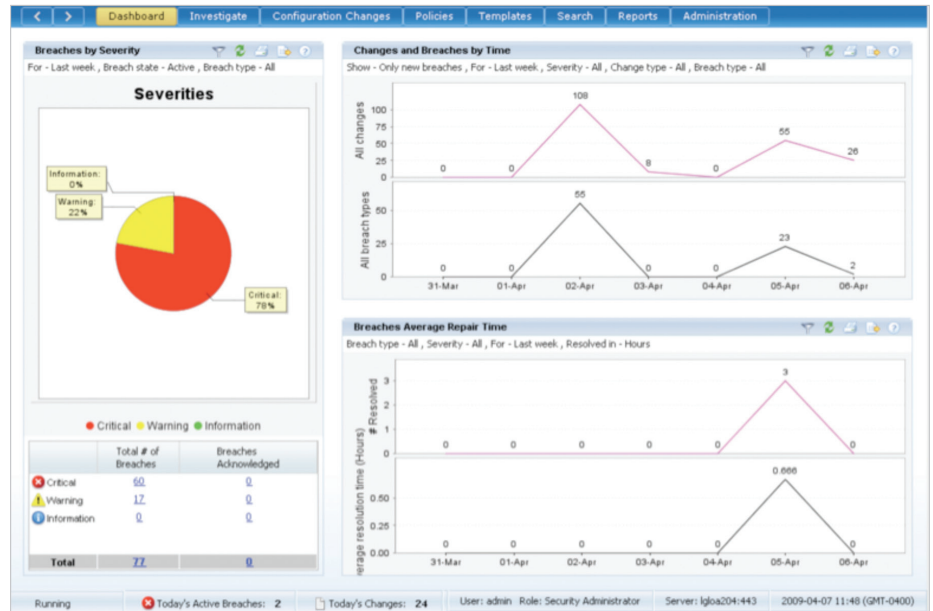
STORAGE SERVICE ANALYTICS

Once best-practice policies are enabled, violations can be viewed and propagated through the dashboard, SNMP traps, or email. Ionix Storage Configuration Advisor gives you visibility into active policy breaches, configuration changes, and breach resolution times.

A number of built-in reports are included:

- Configuration reports: Provide detailed configuration analysis of your storage infrastructure
- Compliance and service reports: Display metrics on policy breaches, causes, and resolution
- Interoperability reports: Show compliance with E-Lab recommendations published in the EMC Support Matrix

DASHBOARD WITH CURRENT AND HISTORICAL INFORMATION



EMC GLOBAL SERVICES

More than ever, organizations are demanding maximum value from their information assets and investments. EMC Global Services provides the strategic guidance and technology expertise organizations need to address their business and information infrastructure challenges. EMC Global Services is committed to exceptional total customer experience through service excellence. Staffed with over 14,000 professional- and support-service experts worldwide, plus a global network of alliance partners, EMC Global Services delivers proven methodologies, instills industry best practices, and shares industry-leading experience and knowledge. EMC Global Services provides rigorously tested and qualified solutions that reduce risk, lower costs, and speed time to value. Call EMC Global Services to address the full spectrum of requirements across the information lifecycle including: strategic, advisory, architectural, implementation, management, and support services.

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