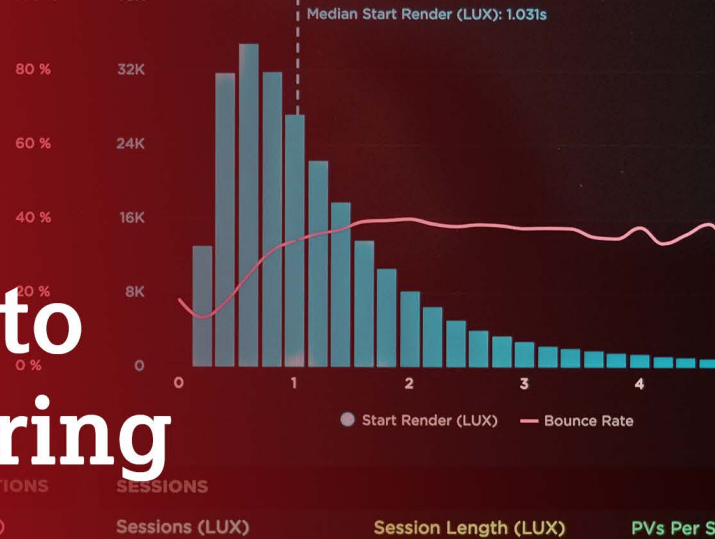


An SME's Guide to Software Monitoring



🕒 READ TIME: 2 MINS

👥 AUDIENCE: BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY

Monitoring software is software which alerts you to different issues or variables within your development stack. Through the use of different tools, it gives you real time information for you to understand your system better and intervene with changes when necessarily.

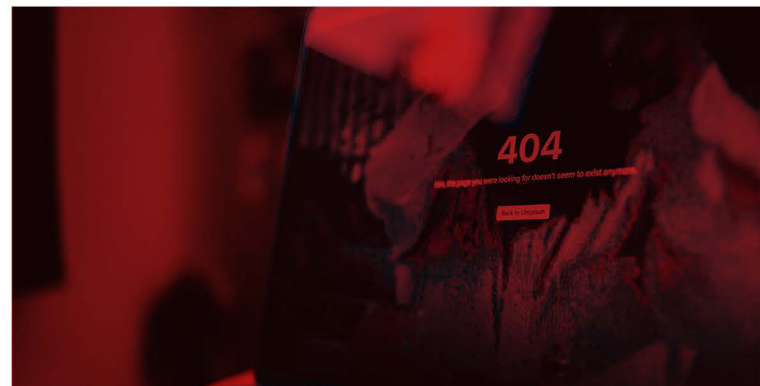
There are lots of different ways you can monitor your software, but this report will focus on only two types of monitoring: Availability Monitoring and Error Monitoring. For an SME with a limited budget these are the most critical to implement.

WHAT IS AVAILABILITY MONITORING?

Availability monitoring software is designed to keep your system online around the clock. Some software simply alerts you to when your system is down whereas others actively seek to intervene if there's an issue. Often these updates are the form of either a live dashboard, if you have 24-hour support, or email notification, if you don't.

Even if your business doesn't have a software product, you're likely to have a website and knowing if that website is

down is useful. If your website uses WordPress as a CMS, there are many availability monitoring plugins. If you use a CMS which doesn't have that built in such as Squarespace, there are lots of services online which you can subscribe to that will monitor it for you.



WHAT IS ERROR MONITORING?

It is inevitable that your code will generate errors, whether or not it's you who wrote it. This can quickly create a bad user experience if left unresolved. Error

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monitoring software gives you a clear view of what's working and what isn't. It can also show you reoccurring trends and issues for you to quickly intervene with.

Again, this doesn't need to be just for a software product but also on a website, particularly if you have an eCommerce website. As eCommerce websites include more complexity, there's probably some statistics you want to monitor around whether the cart systems and payment systems are working. If your customers can't buy your products – even briefly – you could lose revenue.

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SO WHAT DO I DO NOW?

Probably the first step if you want to add some software monitoring to your IT Systems is to audit what IT system you have and what systems they use. E.g., a Website that uses WordPress, an app that's hosted on AWS etc. From there you can then search to see the availability monitoring software options and prices. Generally, there are lots of free options for website but the more specialised the software the more expensive it can get.

We run a series of business strategy and cyber workshops specifically designed for SMEs in Lancashire. We're passionate about seeing Lancashire business become more cyber aware and innovative and so offer funded places for companies to come and learn how to defend, innovate and grow their business.

To find out more about how your business can access support or register on one of upcoming workshops contact us: cyberfoundry@lancaster.ac.uk

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Geraint Harries

Before starting at Lancaster University over 4 years ago, Geraint had worked in software development roles in both IBM and the Civil Service. In addition to being a qualified teacher, Geraint has worked freelance with a varied client base as a software developer and graphic designer.

