

Top 10 Automated Network Assessments



While network automation has become a game-changer for those who have adopted it for ongoing network operations, a bigger challenge has been how to prevent outages in the first place. As it turns out, no-code network automation is the key to making that a reality.

By continuously assessing the network services and all of their underlying components you deliver, you can spot problems long before they manifest into production impacts. Using NetBrain's intent-based network automation and its continuous network assessment capability, you can verify every aspect of the network continuously to identify potential issues. These include identification of network changes and drift, the status or health check of each networking components, the operational status of all security boundaries and control policies, the performance of network service to support key applications, performance of cloud services and overall capacity, and even the verification that previously seen problems are not being seen elsewhere in the network.

Network Assessments: Automated for Complete and Continuous Assurance

NetBrain Next-Gen, the no-code network automation platform, now provides comprehensive ready-to-use network assessment templates which can be customized on demand. It uses the power of no-code automated Intents to summarize and make sense of the network's expected results and behaviors. These automated Intents unlock the ability for anyone to leverage network automation to not only diagnose and troubleshoot and make safe network changes, but also continuously assess the network against internal and external standards to prevent outages and service degradations due to unidentified network problems, risk, and bottlenecks.

Top 10 Continuous Network Assessments and Dashboards

Is it possible to gain deep insight into the operational health and service delivery capabilities of your hybrid cloud-connected network? Yes. With NetBrain NextGen and its Continuous Assessment technology, you can quickly craft any number of operational assessments along with rich drill-down dashboards for any operating condition you can imagine- without writing a single line of code. And to get you started, NetBrain includes its robust assessment library with hundreds of the most common assessments that network professionals need to maintain production. Continuous Network Assessments addresses critical infrastructure and service delivery challenges with confidence.

The Next-Gen platform provides the ability to create and modify assessment summary dashboards on the fly without code for any possible use case. Use the Summary Dashboard feature to easily monitor critical information across thousands of devices and discover the root cause for issues in one view.

1. Change Assessment

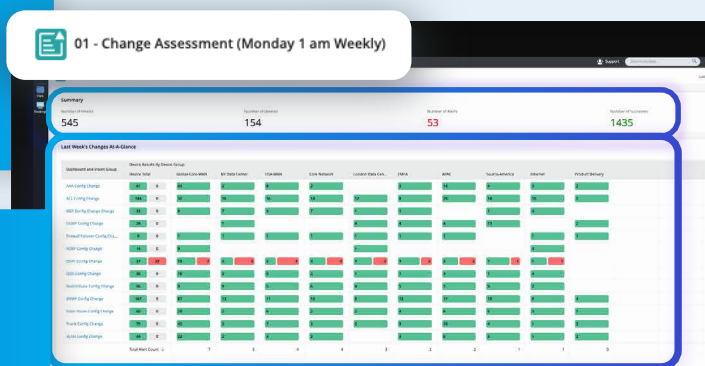
As Monday morning arrives, reports of a few network outages spark concern. The immediate question arises: What has changed over the weekend, and where have these changes occurred? This brings up the need to more quickly identify network changes that transpired over the weekend. The urgency stems from the need to determine if these reported outages share a common origin or if they are disparate incidents. This becomes pivotal in swiftly addressing and resolving the issues at hand, ensuring the network's stability, and minimizing disruptions.

After weekend network changes, Monday morning brings outages. Now, you're left pondering the changes' details, their locations, and their potential ties to network issues, amidst the complexity of thousands of devices and contributions from multiple teams.

How can you gain awareness and determine the starting point for investigation?

Use No-Code Automation to continuously evaluate and summarize a Change dashboard for:

- Device results by device group
- ACL configuration changes
- Routing configuration changes
- Switching configuration changes
- Failover configuration changes



2. Anti-Drift Assessment

Human error, often stemming from manual network changes, has emerged as a leading cause of network outages. To address this challenge, network anti-drift assessment plays a crucial role in identifying and rectifying deviations from established configuration rules and best practices. By automating the enforcement of these rules, organizations can significantly reduce the prevalence of human error and safeguard network stability.

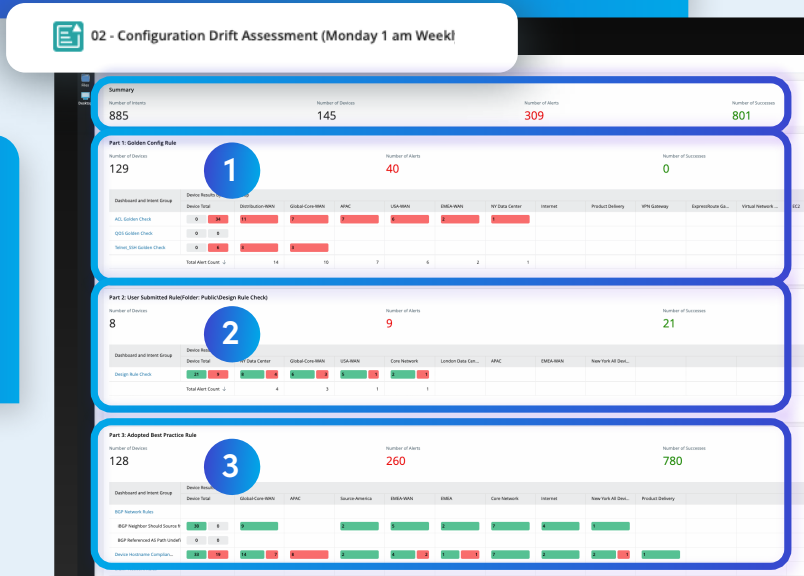
Anti-drift assessment encompasses three primary categories of rules:

- 1. Design and Best Practice Rules:** These rules outline industry-wide best practices for network configurations, ensuring that the network aligns with recognized standards and guidelines.
- 2. Golden Config Rules:** These rules represent the organization's specific configuration standards, mandating adherence to internal policies and procedures.
- 3. User-Submitted Design Rules:** These rules capture network architects' and engineers' expertise, encapsulating design principles and guidelines tailored to the organization's unique network topology and requirements.

Too many outages were caused by human errors...

How can we identify all the places where the config has drifted in the entire network?

Use No-Code Automation to continuously enforce three types of rules via automation can cut down human errors drastically.



By automating the enforcement of these rules, organizations can effectively prevent configuration drift and minimize the risk of human error. This proactive approach not only enhances network stability but also improves overall network performance and security.

3. Network Health Assessment

Sophisticated network redundancy provides reliable and high-performance connectivity. However, these features, if not properly monitored and maintained, can become sources of potential issues. Continuous network health assessment plays a critical role in identifying and addressing potential problems before they escalate into major outages.

Networks are designed with many features and redundancy: are they functioning?

Get the health of the entire network and see the metrics very quickly on a dashboard.

Continuously Assess:

- L3 Routing
- L2 Switching
- Failover
- VPN
- Wireless
- Error log
- ...

Across entire network.

Network health assessment encompasses a comprehensive evaluation of:

- Core Routing Health: Analyze BGP, OSPF, and multicast stability.
- Edge Routing Health: Analyze EIGRP and OSPF stability.
- L3 Routing: Assess the health and performance of routing protocols, ensuring optimal path selection and traffic flow.
- L2 Switching: Monitor the health and performance of switching infrastructure, including switch utilization, error rates, and spanning tree operations.
- Failover: Verify the functionality and readiness of failover mechanisms, ensuring seamless network transitions in the event of primary device failures.
- VPN: Evaluate the security and performance of VPN connections, ensuring secure and reliable remote access.
- Wireless: Monitor the performance and security of wireless networks, including signal strength, coverage, and access control mechanisms.
- Error Log: Analyze network error logs to identify potential issues and proactively address them before they impact network operations.

By continuously assessing these critical network components, organizations can proactively identify and resolve potential problems, ensuring optimal network performance, availability, and security.

4. Critical Application Assessment

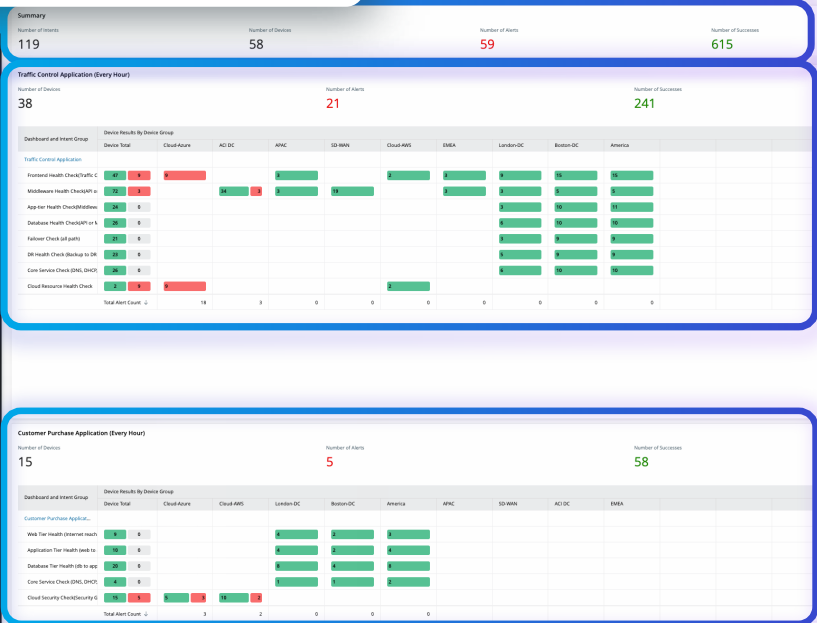
By continuously monitoring and evaluating the health of mission-critical applications, organizations can identify and address potential issues before they impact users or disrupt business processes. This proactive approach helps prevent costly outages, optimize application performance, and enhance overall system reliability.

Very quickly, anyone can drill down from all apps to critical apps to paths to devices and find what actual issues are generating alerts.

04 - Critical Application Assessment (Every Hour)

We know critical apps are the lifeblood of the organization and they rely on the networks. How do we get a health summary for all the applications and their devices, and paths across regions to assess application performance?

Is it affecting my front end or cloud resources?



Application health assessment encompasses a comprehensive evaluation of various application metrics and components, including:

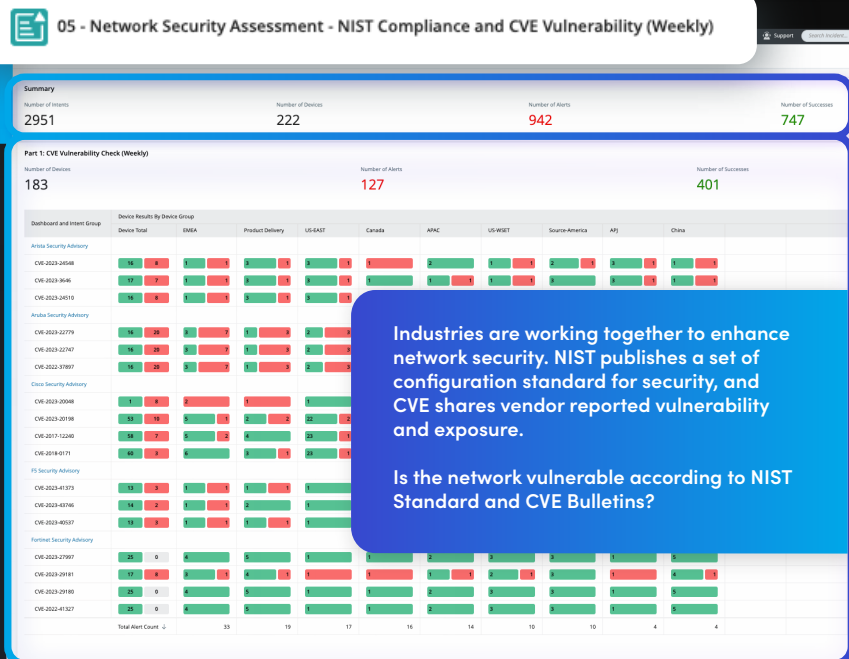
- CPU Capacity: Monitor CPU utilization to identify potential bottlenecks and ensure that applications have sufficient resources to handle their workloads.
- Memory Capacity: Track memory usage to detect potential memory leaks or insufficient allocation, ensuring that applications have adequate memory to operate efficiently.
- QoS Drops: Analyze Quality of Service (QoS) metrics to identify packet loss or latency issues that could affect application performance.
- Critical Interface Utilization: Monitor the utilization of critical network interfaces to ensure that data traffic is flowing smoothly and not causing performance bottlenecks.
- Tasks: Automate tasks such as log analysis, event monitoring, and resource threshold alerts to proactively identify and address potential application issues.

By continuously assessing these critical application metrics, organizations can gain valuable insights into application health, enabling them to optimize performance, prevent outages, and maintain a positive user experience.

5. Security Assessment

Is the network vulnerable according to NIST Standard and CVE Bulletins? From security compliance to vendor recommendations, assess any vulnerabilities and fix them before problems occur. Regular network security assessments are essential to identify and address vulnerabilities that could compromise sensitive data, disrupt operations, or damage an organization's reputation.

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Industries are working together to enhance network security. NIST publishes a set of configuration standard for security, and CVE shares vendor reported vulnerability and exposure.

Is the network vulnerable according to NIST Standard and CVE Bulletins?

Network security assessments should encompass a comprehensive evaluation of various security aspects, including:

- **Compliance with Standards:** Evaluate adherence to industry-recognized security standards, such as those established by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).
- **Vulnerability Detection:** Identify and prioritize vulnerabilities found in network devices, operating systems, and applications, utilizing the Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures (CVE) catalog.
- **Misconfigurations:** Detect and rectify misconfigurations that could create security gaps, such as weak passwords, insecure protocols, and unauthorized access permissions.
- **Intrusion Detection/Prevention (IDS/IPS):** Analyze IDS/IPS logs to identify potential intrusion attempts and take appropriate corrective actions.
- **Network traffic analysis:** Monitor network traffic to detect anomalies that could indicate suspicious activity or network attacks.

By automating these security assessments, organizations can continuously monitor their network posture, proactively identify, and address vulnerabilities, and maintain a robust defense against evolving cyber threats.

6. Lifecycle Assessment

A comprehensive lifecycle assessment dashboard helps organizations stay informed about the lifecycle status of their network hardware, ensuring timely upgrades and replacement decisions.

All network devices have a certain shelf life. When you have a network of thousands of devices, you need to know what's going EoL/EoS. Throughout the year, this could be assessed on a monthly basis for any risks and vulnerabilities across multi-vendor networks. Don't spend hundreds of hours finding this information anymore.

Is My Hardware End of Life, Out of Maintenance?

Automatically make API call to hardware vendor (like Cisco) to get up-to-date advisory of end of life, maintenance, service, warranty information of your network.

06 - Life Cycle Assessment (Monthly)

Summary

Number of Intents	Number of Devices	Number of Alerts	Number of Successes
195	22	434	156

Cisco Advisory Assessments

Number of Devices	Number of Alerts	Number of Successes
22	434	156

Dashboard and Intent Group	Device Results by Device Group									
	Device Total	EMEA	APAC	NY Data Center	US-EAST	US-WEST	Canada	Core Network	China	London
Cisco Software Suggestions	0	14	5	2	2	1	2	2	1	1
Cisco Warranty Date	0	28	2	4	4	2	2	4	1	1
End of External Announcem...	0	75	51	13	13	11	4	4	2	5
End of Routine Failure Analy...	0	92	56	13	13	11	11	4	7	5
End of Sales	0	82	56	13	13	11	6	4	2	5
End of Security Vulnerability...	91	3	56	13	13	7	3	11	13	4
End of Service Attach	0	71	54	13	13	10	11	4	4	2
End of Service Contract Ren...	65	3	51	13	13	7	3	11	4	2
End of SW Maintenance Rel...	0	68	51	13	13	10	11	4	4	2
Total Alert Count: ↓		71		71		71		67		58
										33
										26
										17

By leveraging automated API calls to hardware vendors, such as Cisco, the lifecycle assessment dashboard provides real-time information on:

- End-of-Life (EOL) Status: Identify hardware that is approaching or has reached its EOL date, allowing for proactive planning and replacement strategies.
- Maintenance Status: Determine the maintenance status of hardware, ensuring that it is covered under vendor support for timely issue resolution and security patching.
- Service Contract Status: Monitor the validity of service contracts to avoid unexpected lapses in vendor support.
- Warranty Information: Track warranty coverage to ensure that hardware is eligible for repairs or replacements if necessary.

The dashboard empowers organizations to make informed decisions about hardware lifecycle management, optimizing their network for performance, security, and cost-effectiveness.

7. Hybrid-Cloud Network Assessment

By applying automation to hybrid-cloud network assessment, organizations can continuously monitor and assess their cloud networks across multiple cloud providers, including Microsoft Azure, Amazon AWS, and Google Cloud for insights into:

- Network Resource Utilization: Track metrics, such as CPU, memory, and network bandwidth, to identify potential bottlenecks and optimize resource allocation.
- Network Connectivity: Continuously monitor network connectivity between cloud environments and on-premises infrastructure, ensuring seamless data transfer and application performance.
- Virtual Appliance Health: Assess the health and performance of virtual appliances, such as firewalls and load balancers, that are critical for network security and traffic management.
- Cloud-Specific Metrics: Gain deeper insights into network performance and resource utilization in each cloud.

Cloud networks are virtual, but its problems are not. Organizations are moving to the cloud, and they need to have more visibility into the cloud. Not just a map or paths, but more metrics on interconnectivity so they're not blind to what is happening and potential issues.

Is my cloud healthy?

- Apply automation to continuously assess your cloud network:
- Microsoft Azure
 - Amazon AWS
 - Google Cloud

07 - Cloud Infrastructure Assessment

Assess and diagnose the Public Cloud including Azure/AWS/GCP resources health status and network pro...

Summary

Number of Incidents	573	Number of Devices	372	Number of Alerts	207	Number of Successes	187
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Part 1: Azure Health Assessment (Every 4 Hours)

Number of Devices	72	Number of Alerts	55	Number of Successes	123
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Dashboard and Intent Group	Device Total	Virtual Machine	Virtual Network	VPN Gateway	ExpressRoute Co...	Load Balancer	NSG Gateway	Virtual Network	Firewall
Azure Infrastructure Assess...	47	6	28	5	1	2	1	2	2
Configuration Drift Assessm...	8	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Provisioning Compliance Asses...	8	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Resource Health Assessment(CI...	8	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Network Security Assessment(C...	18	18	18	18	0	0	0	0	0
Critical Metrics Assessment(Cr...	21	21	21	21	0	0	0	0	0
Total Alert Count	4	37	10	7	1	0	0	0	0

Part 2: AWS Health Assessment (Every 4 Hours)

Number of Devices	300	Number of Alerts	152	Number of Successes	64
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Dashboard and Intent Group	Device Total	Load Balancer	VPC	EC2	TGW	NSG Gateway	Interface VPC End...	DR Gateway	Gateway VPC End...	VPC	Internet Gateway	Firewall	DR Router
AWS Infrastructure Assessm...	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
AWS Infrastructure Health Che...	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
EC2 Health Check Report	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8

By continuously assessing the hybrid-cloud network, proactively identify and address potential issues, optimize performance, and maintain a secure and resilient cloud infrastructure.

8. Triggered Automation

The triggered automation dashboard serves as a centralized hub for monitoring and responding to network incidents in real-time. By harnessing the power of automation, the dashboard streamlines incident management processes, enabling rapid diagnosis, prioritization, and resolution.

Customers get 1000s of incidents a month. What issues have occurred in the last hour and how many triggered and which have been auto-diagnosed?

What are the issues found at this hour?

- Apply auto-diagnosis to incoming incident via API, leading to:
- Auto-closing ticket if problem is a noise
 - Auto-opening if issues are found
 - Auto-priority if impact is high

Triggered Automation Dashboard

Displaying Intent Dashboards created by Triggered Automation in the last hour/last 24 hours/last 7 days

Summary

Number of Incidents	4	Number of Devices	3	Number of Alerts	26	Number of Successes	80
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Auto Closing - Intent & Device Results

Number of Incidents	2	Number of Devices	1	Number of Alerts	16	Number of Successes	18
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Dashboard and Intent Group	Intent Results	Device Results	Device Total	CA-PR-01
NSG Flapping	2	1	1	1
Dashboard NSG Template	0	1	1	0
Dashboard NSG Template	0	1	1	0
Dashboard NSG Template	0	1	1	0
Dashboard NSG Template	0	1	1	0
Intent Dashboard(NF) by	2	1	1	1
Total Alert Count	4	3	3	3

Auto Update - Intent & Device Results

Number of Incidents	1	Number of Devices	2	Number of Alerts	10	Number of Successes	59
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Dashboard and Intent Group	Intent Results	Device Results	Device Total	US-BOS-01	CA-TOR-01
Dashboard AD7 Template	1	1	1	1	0
Impacted Application	0	1	1	1	0
Impacted Application	0	1	1	1	0
Intent Dashboard(NF) by	1	1	1	1	0
Total Alert Count	1	2	2	2	2

Auto-Opening - Intent & Device Results

Number of Incidents	2	Number of Devices	0	Number of Alerts	0
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Dashboard and Intent Group	Intent Results	Device Results	Device Total
Dashboard NSG Template	2	0	0
Dashboard NSG Template	0	0	0
Server Unavailable	0	0	0
Total Alert Count	2	0	0

Upon receiving an incoming incident notification via API, the triggered automation dashboard applies intelligent auto-diagnosis capabilities:

- **Auto-closing Ticket:** If the incident is identified as noise, the ticket is automatically closed, reducing the workload for network engineers, and eliminating unnecessary escalations.
- **Auto-opening Ticket:** In cases where a network issue is found, automatically open a ticket, ensuring that the incident is promptly addressed and documented.
- **Auto-prioritizing Ticket:** If a high-impact issue is found, automatically assign the ticket to a high priority, alerting network engineers to the urgency of the situation and enabling rapid intervention.

By automating these critical incident management tasks, significantly reduce response times, minimize downtime, and enhance overall network resilience.

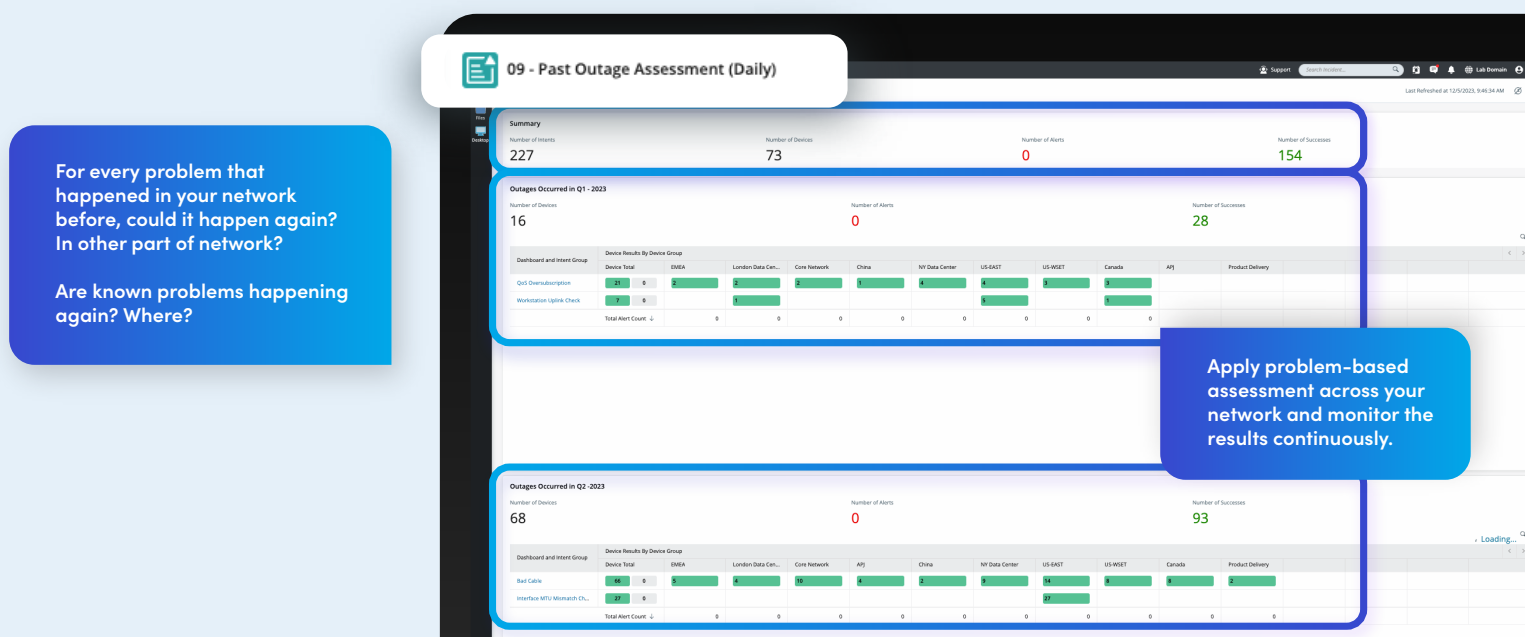
9. Past Outages Assessment

Are known problems happening again? After a network outage, assess any similar problems across a network. For every problem happened in your network before, could it happen again? In other part of network?

It could. Apply problem-based assessment across your network and monitor the results continuously. To effectively prevent future outages, organizations must conduct thorough post-outage assessments, analyzing the root causes of past incidents and identifying potential vulnerabilities that could lead to similar issues.

By analyzing past outages, organizations can:

- **Identify Common Causes:** Determine the recurring patterns and underlying factors that contribute to network outages, allowing for targeted mitigation strategies.
- **Detect Unforeseen Vulnerabilities:** Uncover hidden vulnerabilities or misconfigurations that may have been overlooked during initial assessments, preventing future outages.
- **Enhance Network Resilience:** Implement preventive measures and strengthen network infrastructure to reduce the likelihood of similar outages occurring again.



Continuous monitoring of past outage assessments is crucial to ensure that mitigation efforts are effective and that new vulnerabilities are not introduced. By proactively addressing past issues and learning from them, organizations can significantly enhance their network resilience and minimize the risk of future disruptions.

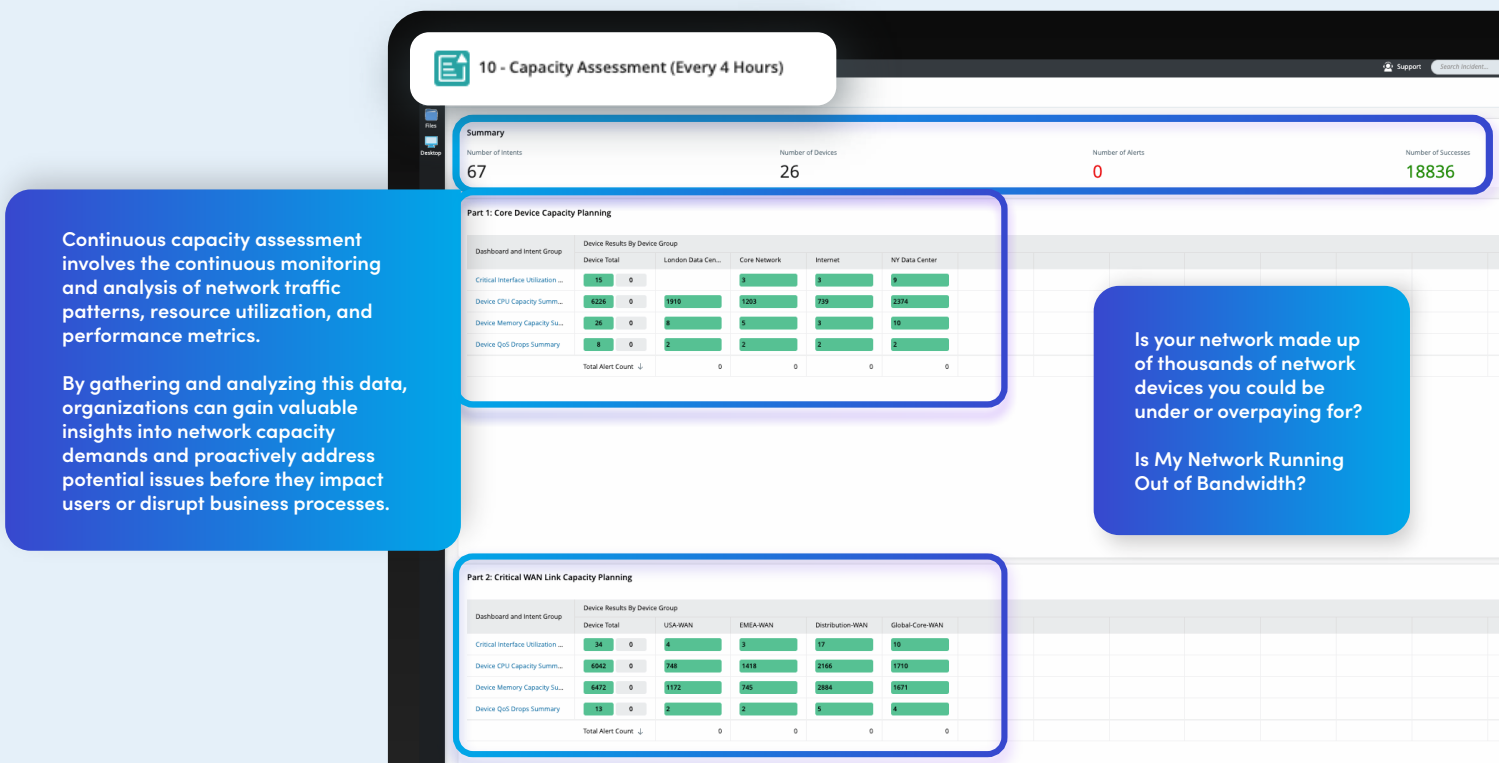
10. Capacity Assessment

Is the network running out of bandwidth? Continuous capacity assessment reduce the risk of over-utilization and under-utilization across network.

Capacity assessment involves the continuous monitoring and analysis of network traffic patterns, resource utilization, and performance metrics. By gathering and analyzing this data, organizations can gain valuable insights into network capacity demands and proactively address potential issues before they impact users or disrupt business processes.

Capacity assessment helps organizations avoid both over-utilization and under-utilization of network resources that could lead to congestion, latency, and packet loss, wasted resources and inefficient network operations.

Continuous capacity assessment enables proactive planning and scaling strategies by anticipating future capacity needs to avoid costly reactive measures and ensure that the network infrastructure can support evolving business requirements.



Several key metrics play a crucial role in capacity assessment:

- **Bandwidth Utilization:** Monitors the percentage of available bandwidth being consumed, indicating potential congestion points.
- **Device Resource Utilization:** Tracks the utilization of CPU, memory, and other resources on network devices, identifying potential bottlenecks.
- **Application Performance Metrics:** Evaluates the performance of critical applications under varying network conditions, highlighting potential capacity constraints.

By continuously monitoring these metrics and analyzing trends, organizations can gain a comprehensive understanding of their network capacity and make informed decisions to optimize performance and ensure scalability.

Get Started

It's time to stop settling for outdated snapshots and blind spots in your network security and performance. NetBrain Next-Gen's 10 pre-built, customizable assessments empower you to continuously monitor and optimize your entire hybrid network, from core infrastructure to critical applications. Take control of your network with no-code automation and unlock a world of agility, efficiency, and resilience. Download your free trial today and experience the future of network assurance.

[Schedule](#) a demo to see the assessments in action.

About NetBrain Technologies

Founded in 2004, NetBrain is the market leader for NetOps automation, providing network operators and engineers with dynamic visibility across their hybrid networks and low-code/no-code automation for key tasks across IT workflows. Today, more than 2,500 of the world's largest enterprises and managed service providers use NetBrain to automate network problem diagnosis, generate real-time documentation, accelerate troubleshooting, and enforce enterprise architectural rules.

