Collecting a history of outages

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Question

I'd like to collect a history of outages to report to my provider. How can I do that?

Solution

PingPlotter was built for this, and there are several possibilities.

Using PingPlotter's built-in collection, analysis, and display capabilities.

This is usually the most effective way of building a case. Start PingPlotter, collect data over time, then focus in on the periods of problems to create the most compelling story for your provider (whether it be your ISP, your web host, or something in between).

We cover this technique in our Getting Started Guide, particularly in the middle 4 sections of "Finding the source of a problem" through "Building a compelling case to help solve a problem".

The great things about this method are that you can provide context around the problem, and show what is happening at other hops. Many ISPs don't like you pinging their gateways, and if you provide a report of downtime about one of their gateways that you are directly targeting with PingPlotter, they won't give it credibility. Instead, you may need to target some server or service (Google, your game server, your own website or your failed cloud service) and show the failure at that target and at their gateway server. If you show that your modem was responding, but their first hop failed and the final destination failed, that's compelling. Showing a list of downtimes for their gateway, or for another service isn't as compelling because there's not enough information available to eliminate other routers/servers/configurations as the source of the problem.

Logging or alerting when there are problems.

The PingPlotter alert system can help you collect data about your network connection - either by sending emails, logging to a file, or a variety of other event types.

If you want to have a list of downtimes/uptimes, you can do this by creating an alert that logs lost packets or failure periods to a log file. We cover alert configuration in our manual.

Reporting on collected data

We have a reporting tool that can aggregate final destination data from a bunch of different .pp2 save files and export that data to CSV. Using that, you can graph in an external reporting tool (like Excel) or extract out data that you're looking for. For details on that, see our knowledge base article on that (look at option 3).

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