

RDBAE's Advanced Monitoring Offering

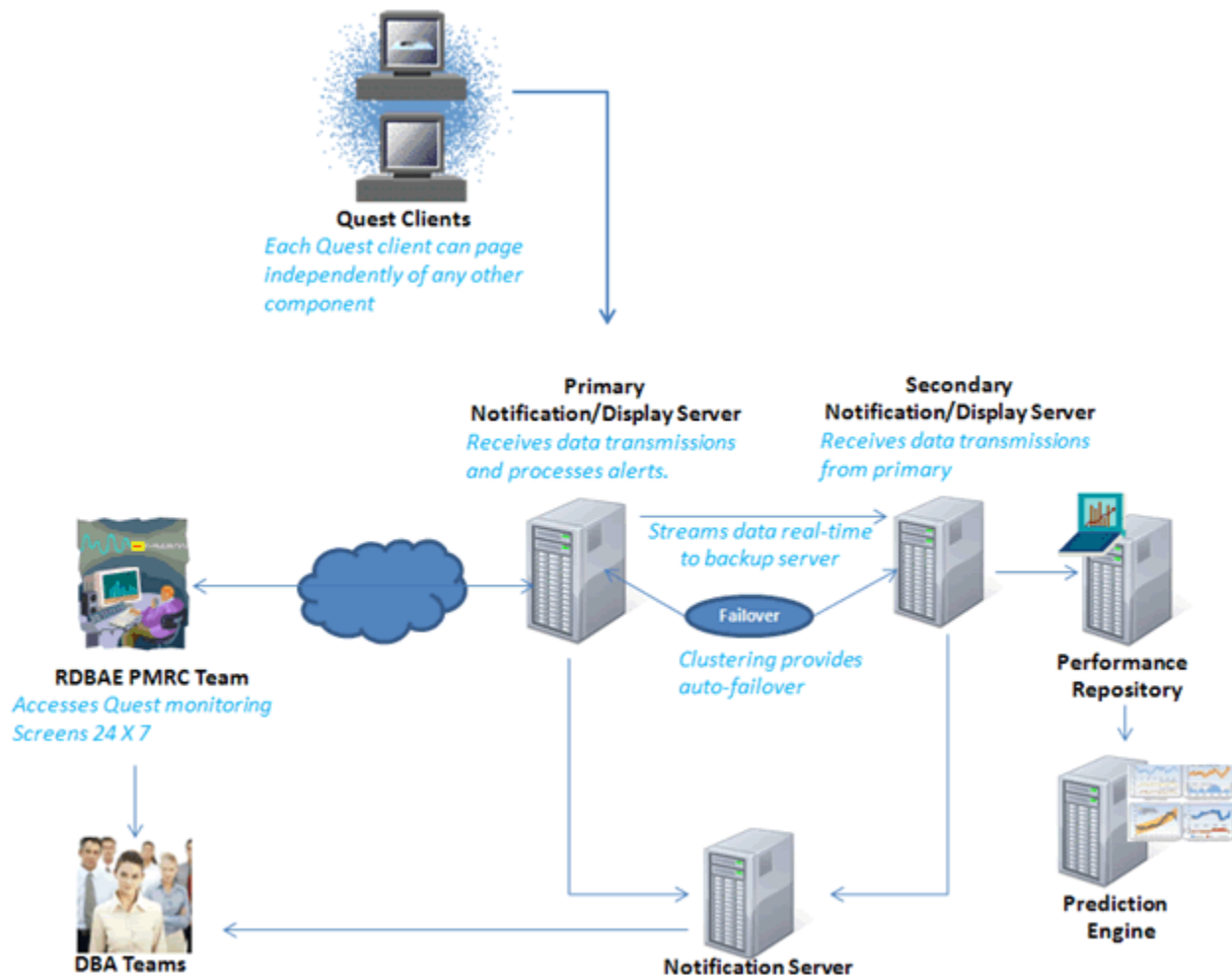
Although the database is one of the key ingredients of every application, it is important to understand it is not the only component that can prevent a critical application from being available to the end users. To ensure continuous 24 X 7 availability for all application components, Remote DBA Experts has chosen the Quest software monitoring product as the foundation of our monitoring architecture.

Quest's wide offering of monitoring agents allows our expert technicians to monitor every component of the application architecture including databases, middle tier servers and other hardware devices. From monitoring a database buffer cache hit ratio to a third-party application error log, our support team is able to quickly deploy a customized monitoring solution that meets each, individual customer's monitoring requirements.

Quest's Highly Available Monitoring Architecture

A small client-side monitoring program is installed on each monitored target. Monitoring data is streamed to the primary notification server contained at our hosting provider's data center. The primary server forwards all monitoring data to a failover server which ensures that both environments are in-synch. An automatic failover solution ensures no manual intervention is required to perform the failover.

RDBAE's Proactive Monitoring and Response Center technicians review notifications on a 24 X 7 X 365 basis. PMRC Technicians start at a high level screen that shows the status of key systems and devices, with indicators that highlight database availability, performance, disk/cpu/memory utilization, response time, etc.. Constant communications are held with product support teams to discuss problem prevention and problem resolution. Historical information is transferred to a database repository for historical reporting and trend analysis.



The Power of Plugins

Quest's monitoring program runs checks on hosts and services that technicians specify using external "plugins". These plugins return status information to the Quest Notification Server. Currently, Quest provides hundreds of monitoring plugins. RDBAE has created over 4 dozen custom plugins to allow "deep dive" availability and performance evaluations to take place. All monitoring data returned is automatically stored in a secured database repository which allows historical trending, forecasting of future utilization spikes and capacity planning. Quest's plugin architecture allows RDBAE to tailor a monitoring solution that meets each customer's unique requirements.

Security is of Paramount Importance

The push-only architecture limits security exposure because the client transfers monitoring data over an outbound only port. The monitoring data stream consists of numeric performance values and "on/off" indicators for availability and performance alerts. No decipherable customer identifiers are contained in the monitoring stream.

Quality Control

Because of the sheer number of plugins provided by Quest, RDBAE reviews new monitoring plugins that become available on a regular basis. In-house monitoring experts also contribute plugins designed to improve the organization's ability to provide a superior level of monitoring to its customers. Meetings are held to evaluate the potential benefits that each plugin has to offer. If a plugin is determined to be of value, it is submitted to the testing team for evaluation. The following activities are then performed:

- Initial plugin review
- Test case design
- Test environment setup
- Test case execution
- Final test documentation
- Internal test server implementation
- Internal production server implementation
- General release for customer test servers
- Final review
- General release for production servers

These well-defined rigorous test plans ensure that each plugin is of the utmost quality before it is available for release on production servers.

Around the Clock Support By Quest Inc.

Quest Inc. provides around-the-clock support for their monitoring offering. Quest currently has 3,400 employees in 60 offices worldwide and has been providing software tools since 1987. Quest Inc. states that it has over 120,000 customers. Quest's website also states that over 6 million unique targets are currently being monitored by their monitoring product.

