

Maindec Advanced Remote Services - MARS

Version: 1.5

Overview

For the past few years, Maindec have been offering telephone support based on a ticket system, which has proven very successful. However, where critical systems are concerned and lengthy downtime is unacceptable, we have found the telephone support to be lacking, as it could take too long to ascertain the root cause of the problem. This is largely down to the GUI nature of most modern systems, and our systems analysts find it difficult to picture what is happening on the console. Coupled with this is that event logs emailed to our support department may prove useless as the required application DLL's needed may not be resident on their workstations. Therefore, Maindec is pleased to announce a new remote-monitoring service, codenamed MARS, which should make diagnosis and resolution a faster process and is an alternative to our telephone-support ticket based system.

How does MARS work?

The MARS Service is a normal business hours remote monitoring service (Mon-Fri 09:00-17:00 excluding public holidays).

A monitoring system is placed on the clients network and into the clients Domain (see attached graphic). This Network Management station, or MARS Server, is accessible via ISDN-2 and has all the customers relevant administration applications loaded. Such as HP InSight Manager™, Microsoft administration tools (Exchange™, SQL Server™, Event Viewer etc), backup administration tools (BackupExec™ & Arcserve™), network configuration software like ClearVisn™ or Intel Device View™. The exact configuration depends on the client's applications and requirements.

Each server registered for MARS will have a HP™ Lights-out Remote InSight Board (LORIB) installed and will be actively monitored by the MARS Server. On a weekly basis a call will be automatically logged by our call handing system and our analysts will connect via ISDN to the MARS Server and run routine health checks and version control tasks. Such as: -

- . Check error logs on all MARS Registered servers using the installed DLL's.
- . Check backup log files to ensure adequate backup procedures are in place.
- . Check anti-virus software is up-to-date
- . Perform version control on all Maindec MARS registered servers and Maindec maintained software on those servers.
- . Check if the latest Operating System Service packs have been applied.
- . Check if the latest Microsoft application service packs have been applied.
- . Check firmware version of HP hardware and revisions of HP software.
- . Check maintained router and networking h/w firmware revisions and errors if possible.

Once complete, a report will be generated of our findings and recommendations and emailed to the Systems Administrator. By using this service on a weekly basis, we can be confident that, should the need arise, we have quick connectivity

to the MARS Server and the customers network. The MARS Server is also configured as an ftp server which allows our analysts to upload files onto the MARS Server should they be required.

Our aim is to be able to do as much diagnosis as possible from the MARS Server, however, on occasion it may be necessary to connect to a specific server and remote control its console. We have two ways of doing this. Firstly, we will use VNC™, which is a freeware remote control package available from AT&T. This is installed as a service on each MARS registered server and gives very fast console access and has very little overhead. However, sometimes this service may not be running or the system may be administratively down, in this instance we can connect from the MARS Server to the Installed Lights-out RIB, which gives us total control of the system. Using the LORIB, we can shutdown, restart or even power off the system without losing connectivity to the server. This gives our analysts the feeling of actually being in front of the system and a very high level of control.

Even though the MARS Server has two network cards installed, it is configured NOT to act as a router and therefore is not directly connecting the two networks. This is known as the break-point for the two networks. Our analysts will connect directly to the MARS Server and then onto the clients network from there.

A terminal emulation package will also be loaded onto the MARS Server allowing our analysts to connect to character-based systems and devices such as OpenVMS™ systems, UNIX™ hosts and routers if required.

Early Fault Notification

As the MARS server is actively monitoring the HP ProLiant™ Systems, InSight Manager™ will also be configured to email our support department should the MARS server receive an alert. This email will use the clients existing Internet mail systems and therefore is limited to this being operational.

Lastly, as the MARS service is an enhanced replacement to the telephone-ticket option offered by Maindec, UNLIMITED telephone support is offered during normal business hours in response to faults logged on Maindec maintained applications on MARS registered servers on a best-endeavours basis.

How much does this service cost?

MARS is only available on Maindec maintained HP hardware. After the initial setup fee, MARS costs only £100 per server per month, which is less than the cost of a telephone ticket.

Furthermore, as MARS is an off-site service, should on-site assistance be required (applying patches, firmware upgrades etc) then this will be done at a cost of 80% of our normal daily rate. If required, Maindec will use best endeavours to get a support person to attend site as soon as possible, but no response time is guaranteed. It is advised that the customer budgets for at least 4 visits a year to apply the necessary firmware and service pack updates.

Each MARS Registered Server has a £500 setup fee, which includes the preparation of the server ready for the LORIB. This fee is based on the server being available during normal working hours, and assumes that all the work can be completed in one day, for very complex installations additional days may be

required. Multiple Sites may require multiple MARS Servers dependant on Customers WAN links & available bandwidth. Each MARS Server installed incurs the minimum setup fee of £2000 and will require a dedicated ISDN link. The setup fee does not include the monthly server registration fee. The MARS Server and router remain property of Maindec, whereas the lights-out remote insight boards become property of the customer.

For example: -

Example A

3 Servers in 1 location Setup fee = £2000 [+£300pcm for server registration]

Example B

5 Servers in 1 location – setup fee = £2500 [+£500pcm for server registration]

Example C

5 Servers in 2 locations – setup fee = £4000 [+ £500pcm for server registration]

In addition

Example A would require the installation of 1 ISDN-2e line and 3 LORIBS.

Example B would require the installation of 1 ISDN-2e line and 5 LORIBS

Example C would require the installation of 2 ISDN-2e lines and 5 LORIBS.

Service Period and Payment Terms

The MARS setup fee and the first quarter support charge for the registered servers will be payable on completion of the installation of the MARS server and the LORIB modules. There is a 90 day cancellation period should the service be terminated. At the end of the 90 days Maindec will remove the MARS server and the network router from site, all the LORIB modules are the customer's property and will not be removed.

All prices are exclusive of VAT.

What are the requirements?

Prior to the setup, Maindec will perform a site survey to ensure that the assigned servers are compatible with the RIB boards and that an appropriate PCI slot is available. Maindec will also be required to update the System ROMS / Option ROMs / Insight Agents and Operating System service packs etc prior to installing the RIB. This is to ensure that the server is up to the latest versions ready for the MARS service.

Prior to the installation of the MARS Service the following are required to be in place.

- BT ISDN-2e [128-kbps] line made available. The customer is responsible for the installation and rental charges on this line. The MARS router is not

configured with a dialler string and therefore should not incur any call charges. The router is configured for receive only.

- The Customer is required to purchase HP Lights-Out Remote Insight Boards – these become property of the customer and will be added to their maintenance schedule.
- The Customer will make available a 13-AMP power socket or UPS port and a UTP port for each LORIB being installed
- The Customer will make available a suitable secure location for the MARS Server and router. This must be close to the ISDN-2e line with 3 13-Amp sockets and a UTP port available.
- Customer will provide a valid IP address for each of the LORIB's being installed and an IP address for the MARS Server itself.
- Mars registration fee is charged quarterly and is subject to a 90-day cancellation period.
- The Full MARS Service is ONLY available on Maindec Maintained HP ProLiant hardware running Microsoft NT™ or Novell NetWare™. Partial MARS Service may be available on other OEM Servers at the same cost as the LORIB cards are only supported in a HP environment. In particular, Maindec are currently testing Dell PowerEdge™ Servers and OpenManager™ SNMP software in conjunction with their Remote Assistance Card™ option.

Notes

- Unlimited telephone assistance related to faults logged on Maindec supported applications on managed servers during normal business hours.
- Setup Fee does not include server registration, Remote Mgmt boards or ISDN installation and is subject to a site survey and minimum charge of £2000 per MARS server installed.
- MARS for NetWare is still in the development stage and expected to be available 4Q01.
- Our daily rate is subject to change and this reduction is based on our daily rate at the time of the incident.
- Maindec plan to add further reporting and functionality and support over the coming months.

What to do next?

If you are interested in hearing more about our MARS service, then please contact our support department on 01628 810977 or email support@maindec.com or contact your Regional Manager.

Maindec Professional & Technical Support Services

Maindec Advanced Remote Services [MARS] Schematic

