



# What to ask before buying a DR monitoring application

Issue	Questions to ask/Key points to consider
<b>General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do you want to monitor?</li><li>• What information do you want to collect? Is it for the entire IT environment (on-site and off-site) or just parts?</li><li>• Who will use the monitoring systems?</li><li>• Will the system work in a virtualized environment?</li><li>• Is output only data or data analyzed against metrics?</li><li>• Can system find dependencies and other relationships, single points of failure and any other weaknesses before mapping them to your requirements?</li></ul>
<b>Existing IT environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define a “normal” operating environment.</li><li>• Do you want software to look for all possible risks?</li><li>• Is just flagging unknowns enough?</li><li>• How will the monitoring tool integrate with daily operations?</li><li>• What data and parameters are essential for optimal knowledge of the backup environment?</li><li>• Does the tool replace or complement existing monitoring apps?</li><li>• Can existing monitoring systems be adapted, modified or upgraded to support DR monitoring capabilities?</li></ul>
<b>Integration into DR plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What results are required to support the DR plan?</li><li>• Define the data you’ll need prior to conducting an exercise.</li><li>• Can the DR monitoring system replace DR exercising? How will it supplement exercises?</li><li>• Do overall backup strategies need to be changed with the introduction of DR monitoring tools?</li></ul>
<b>Cloud-based technologies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you use cloud storage services, how should the DR monitoring system integrate with them?</li><li>• Will the system operate outside data center boundaries? Will it be used to monitor external applications?</li><li>• Will DR monitoring tools enhance the value of cloud services?</li></ul>
<b>Network</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do DR monitoring systems have to examine network infrastructures or are current systems adequate?</li><li>• Will the system have to monitor VoIP systems or older PBX systems?</li><li>• Will the monitoring system be used for unified communications, call center environments or audio/videoconferencing systems?</li><li>• Will the monitoring tool provide performance and DR data across multiple communications environments?</li></ul>
<b>IT management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Will the DR monitoring tool be used as part of a normal change management process?</li><li>• Are there any limitations related to the number and type of systems that can be analyzed by the DR monitoring tool?</li><li>• Conduct a risk analysis of what might happen if no DR monitoring applications were being used.</li><li>• Determine the return on investment of a DR monitoring application.</li></ul>
<b>Outsourcing and managed services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you use a third-party service provider (e.g., hot site firm, managed services vendor, outsourced data center) does the service offer DR monitoring as a value-added extra or fee-based service?</li></ul>