



Financial Services

# An Investment in Targeted Communications



## Reduce Alert Overload

With the help of xMatters, Principal turned a lengthy, manual process that slowed resolution times and required extensive call trees into an automated, self-service subscription system that reduces operational pain and protects against service issues by targeting the right people.

## Highlights

- ▶ Significant administrative time savings from having notification subscriptions maintained by individuals
- ▶ IT built more than 1,100 subscriptions in a month with xMatters
- ▶ International coverage automated for international holidays





## Challenges

Principal executives and IT leaders were buried with a deluge of alerts generated from Netcool Omnibus used to monitor its systems. With 323 groups and more than 12,000 users (including 219 in Netcool), the volume was overwhelming. During one month, 3,600 events produced more than 352,000 notifications.

Previously, resolution teams that were required to respond to some types of incidents, received notifications only through call trees. A lengthy and manual process that drastically slowed down resolution times.

## Solution

IT leadership implemented a set of subscriptions so executives and IT staff could choose and self-maintain their specific notifications. The result was an incredible 1,108 individual subscriptions. The available subscriptions vary by role and communication method for even better targeting.

“More areas of the company are using xMatters,” says Doug Ward, IT Senior Systems Leader. “You can set the level for which notifications you want to receive and what you don’t.”

Before xMatters, one notable event produced 9,000 notifications during one 12-hour period, and an avalanche of emails and phone calls, overloading the prior solution. Today, with xMatters, over 12,000 notifications have been sent in a 10-minute window with no adverse affects due to targeting and subscriptions.

Netcool detects whether systems are reaching key thresholds. When they are, xMatters sends targeted alerts based on required technical resolvers.

Principal has also instituted a method for detecting “heartbeat” issues by automating a second ping to a detected issue. If the issue is clear on the second attempt, “all clear” messages are sent via a phone message.



My favorite feature is creating groups on the fly for targeted secure notifications.

**RENAE GASKINS**  
IT Systems Analyst-Sr





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## Benefits

IT support staff at Principal leveraged xMatters to build more than 1,100 subscriptions in just a month.

“The great thing about subscriptions is that they are managed by the person. We have saved a ton of administrative time by not having to change a flat file every time someone wants to change the notifications they receive,” says Renae Gaskins, IT System Analyst-Sr.

Meanwhile, leaders at Principal replaced manual copy-paste processes for sending notifications with automated notifications based on severity, subscriptions, and roles.

“It’s all automated so it doesn’t have to go back to the data center to look up contact information for each escalation,” explains Ward.

Executives and IT staff choose which device they use to receive notifications, with mobile notifications on Android and iOS particularly popular in the executive suite.

With IT staff located in multiple locations worldwide, overseas holidays proved particularly tricky. With xMatters’ advanced scheduling capabilities international holidays (particularly in India) are covered with substitutes in the U.S.

As one of the leading Fortune 500 financial corporations, Principal relies on superior processes, rapid communication throughout the enterprise and global infrastructure. The intelligent communication enabled by xMatters now contributes to increased service levels for its employees and clients.



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