

USING ON-LINE ALGORITHMS FOR IT HEALTHCHECKS

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What is an IT healthcheck?

Most IT organizations “get the job done” supporting their business users. Systems are available, data is stored and analyzed, applications are created and enhanced, networks run, servers hum, users seem to be happy, and all is right with the IT world. But is it?

Very often, behind-the-scenes the reality is quite different. Your data center may be full of aging, hard-to-maintain hardware; applications may be strung together in ways that no one really understands (especially if something goes wrong); there may be security and compliance risks; perhaps, too much money is being wasted on the wrong things rather than being invested in the right things. If you are a new to IT leadership, you may be unfamiliar with your IT environment and its history and be vulnerable to – but still accountable for - hidden problems. A merger or acquisition may be underway (or under consideration) and you will soon be responsible for an IT operation you know little about. Maybe the strengths of the two IT organizations will be compatible and the ‘whole will be greater than the sum of the parts’...or maybe not.

An IT healthcheck can help you find these and other problems and decide what to do about them. An IT healthcheck is like a visit with your doctor. Most doctor visits start with a check of your vital statistics - pulse, blood pressure, reflexes, etc. - before continuing to a discussion of your symptoms. The vital statistics provide a context for those symptoms, ensuring there isn't an unknown fundamental problem that needs to be addressed first. An IT healthcheck does the same thing. It can provide a quick overview of your current situation, highlighting any potential problems which you may – or may not – already know about.

How is an IT healthcheck typically performed?

Given all the good reasons why an IT healthcheck makes sense, what's the best way to conduct one? The good news is that consulting firms have been doing IT healthchecks for years and have well-established processes and techniques for performing them.

The bad news is that these techniques typically involve a team of consultants traveling to your location, conducting lots of interviews, collecting lots of data, running workshops, and asking lots of questions. Meanwhile your IT staff is wondering what's going on and what it means for them. The consultant's billable time clock is ticking and the expense account is growing. Finally, after three or four weeks, the consulting team will produce and present a very credible and detailed assessment of the IT organization, complete with lots of recommendations and next steps...and a large bill for their services.

Is this the only way to conduct an IT healthcheck?

Despite its effectiveness, the traditional on-site approach is not right for every organization. It's expensive, time-consuming, and intrusive. While underway, it makes it very clear that the IT organization is under a microscope, with all that

implies. What if there was a simpler, faster, less expensive, and less intrusive way to conduct a comprehensive IT healthcheck?

There is: the RAITH (Rapid Algorithmic IT Healthcheck) service from Chordia Consulting.

What is RAITH?

Chordia Consulting's Rapid Algorithmic IT Healthcheck (RAITH) is an on-line service that provides an objective, high-level diagnostic of an IT organization. Based upon answers to a portfolio of carefully-designed questions, RAITH's sophisticated algorithms built into our Rapid IT Estimator (RITE) analytics tool identify opportunities for improvement across the whole spectrum of IT activities. After you and other members of your IT leadership team complete the on-line questionnaire, the pattern of answers will accurately reflect a prioritized diagnostic view of your unique IT situation.

The results of the RAITH analysis are delivered graphically using the IT Component Business Model (IT/CBM), a proven framework which has been used with hundreds of clients around the world for understanding, assessing, and improving IT organizational effectiveness. IT/CBM is a two-dimensional grid, a matrix of activities vs. planning horizons that shows all the activities on a single page necessary to manage IT. RAITH provides an IT/CBM "heatmap" supplemented by detailed text documentation.

You can learn more about IT/CBM at <https://www.chordiaconsulting.com/about-itcbm>

How are algorithms used in RAITH?

The Miriam-Webster dictionary defines an algorithm as "a step-by-step procedure for solving a problem or accomplishing some end." Google uses proprietary algorithms for web searches. GPS devices or apps use algorithms to help you get to your destination. Chordia Consulting has defined its own algorithms and codified them in the RITE analytics tool. The RITE tool uses these algorithms to analyze your on-line questionnaire answers, develop a composite assessment that

factors in all of your conditions, and provide prioritized results in the form of a highlighted heatmap and detailed supporting text.

RAITH's algorithms and analysis results have been designed by Chordia's founders to reflect their years of experience conducting IT healthchecks with many different clients. They include weighting factors, relationships among the various questions and relationships between the questions and the different output categories. Because your entire IT management environment is included in the analysis, RITE's algorithms can suggest priorities you may not have previously considered. And the process is rigorous and repeatable.

Algorithms are just a tool, however, a means to quickly deliver Chordia Consulting's capabilities at an attractive price to a broad range of global clients. Just as you may validate the route your GPS has suggested, Chordia also validates the algorithm results with a personal review, supplementing those results with additional commentary and insight.

How can an IT healthcheck be done on-line?

There is no substitute for an in-person visit to the doctor. But, when a visit may be too difficult or otherwise not be possible, access to an on-line diagnostic service can be the next best thing. Many of the questions a doctor would ask have specific answers, answers that can be provided on-line. An IT healthcheck is the same. Many of the questions a consultant would ask in a live interview can be answered quickly, in simple terms. The analysis based on this on-line "interview" can provide you with a preliminary diagnosis, a first look at where your prioritized opportunities may be. Then you can follow-up with more in-depth review with your own team or with Chordia Consulting or other trusted advisors.

What is the value of a RAITH IT healthcheck?

The first section of this whitepaper describes why any kind of IT healthcheck is valuable: as a way of identifying underlying problems that affect your day-to-day

IT activities; as means of proactively addressing IT issues and risks before they become, perhaps, painfully apparent; as a tool for a new CIO to gain a better understanding of the IT landscape for which he/she is now responsible; and as a means to learn more about the IT characteristics of an acquired business. And there are lots of other benefits too.

Given this range of benefits, why is Chordia's RAITH service the best choice for many IT organizations around the world? It's simple to conduct, it's inexpensive, it can be delivered totally remotely, it's unobtrusive, and it produces results fast, allowing you to tackle problem areas more quickly.

How can you learn more about RAITH?

You can learn more about RAITH at <https://www.chordiaconsulting.com/raith>. Or you can contact Chordia Consulting using our on-line chat service on our website, via email at info@chordiaconsulting.com, or by phone. RAITH is also available for purchase by credit card or PayPal at www.chordiaconsulting.com/buy.

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