

NetTrace Frequently Asked Questions - Business

General

Q What does NetTrace do?

A NetTrace is a software and services company for computer security and tracking. NetTrace provides the simplest, most cost effective and efficient solution to tracking your computer hardware, software, location and user information.

Q Who should be using NetTrace's services?

A You are a NetTrace customer if you want to take control of your PCs and are experiencing any challenges in the following areas:

- Reducing the costs of managing and protecting your PCs;
- Optimising the productivity of those personnel supporting and using your PC assets;
- Optimising the deployment, use and movement of your PC assets;
- The automatic, tamper-resistant, real-time auditing of your computer hardware and software;
- Assessing the condition and configuration of your computer hardware and software;
- Monitoring any hardware, software, locations and user changes in your PC fleet;
- Managing your software licenses and computer leases;
- Planning and budgeting for PC hardware and software upgrades, as well as PC retirement,
- Monitoring the whereabouts of your computers, located anywhere;
- Controlling and preventing PC loss and monitoring security policy violations;
- Recovering stolen and missing computers;
- Identifying and providing the means to remove the "bad element" within your organisation that you suspect might be stealing from you;
- Reducing the cost of insuring your computer hardware.

Q What is NetTrace's core service offering?

A At the core of NetTrace's offering is the **NetTrace Inventory** service, a secure asset tracking and inventory management solution, designed to help IT departments automatically perform daily computer tracking and management functions, including hardware and software inventories. Think of it as an automated audit of your computer hardware and software assets that also proactively alerts you if any changes occur!

Q Why would we need a service like this?

A The essence of beginning to understand how to maximise the returns on your PC assets begins with understanding what you are dealing with. If these assets are not proactively managed, and there is no ability to secure and protect them, the potential for short and long-term loss and efficient utilisation is enormous.

Solving the problem of managing and protecting the PC asset base is achieved through empowering IT professionals to easily manage corporate PC resources. The fundamental core to this end is that of PC asset/inventory tracking.

Q What is PC asset/inventory-tracking?

A It is the automatic tracking your computer assets, providing your organisation with an up to the minute inventory of your entire online, remote PC population. At any time you will know:

- Where your PCs are – control your loss by identifying each unit and pinpointing its location, whether in a regional office, at an employee's home or on the road;
- What hardware and software you have, the condition thereof and how your PCs are configured;



- Who is using your PCs - legally and illegally;
- When your PCs are moving, how they are changing and who's responsible therefore; and
- Why you might be losing money on your PC investments.

Q What should I look for in an inventory tracking solution?

A Ideal tracking and inventory management solutions automate the collection of PC inventory data, including PC location, hardware and software inventory, user information, lease information, and software licensing. The solution should:

- Rely on data that should be captured both inside and outside the corporate firewall and delivered accurately, consistently and regularly;
- Simple solution, not relying on any user-intervention, not affect the network, and should operate stealthily and be extremely robust;
- Be based on a straightforward tool, easily implemented, effective immediately within the existing process framework, not require a major corporate training initiative, and allow for the development and improvement of processes as the tool is used;
- Enable the configuration of alerts to receive automatic notification of specified events;
- Allow administrators to manage their PC population by generating customisable, self-serve web-reports on the fly whenever they need information or need to make a decision about their computer inventory.

Q So how can NetTrace assist me with PC asset tracking?

A NetTrace's proven tracking technology utilises the power of the Internet and dial-up networks to provide up-to-the-minute listings of all computers and their location history - an IS manager's secret weapon for knowing where every computer is. Our 24 x 7 inventory tracking service provides comprehensive, web-based asset reporting tools to authorised users. These tools access the auto-discovered computer hardware, software, user and location specifications and provide an accurate and real-time audit of all NetTrace-protected PCs.

Q What is NetTrace's prime deliverable?

NetTrace's prime deliverable is that of a high-level awareness within the organisation. When people know that you are accurately tracking your organisation's PC assets, to the extent that your administrator's know exactly when PC configuration, user or location information changes (change management), they will think twice about removing components, illegally using PCs or altering the PC configuration, or blatantly stealing the asset.

It is this awareness that will directly impact on the security surrounding your assets, business interactions and intellectual property and will have a direct bearing on the company's profits.

Q What makes NetTrace's Services unique?

A While NetTrace provides numerous benefits to customers, below is a list of key features that make NetTrace unique in the marketplace:

- **MSP model** – NetTrace's Managed Service Provider (MSP) model means that users are not required to buy and maintain servers, hire or train costly IT personnel to manage the system, or pay maintenance and upgrade fees;
- **Simplicity** – NetTrace's services are simple and flexible. No internal systems are required; no integration or re-engineering is necessary and service activation occurs from one central point. Simply deploy, utilise and realise immediate results and payback.
- **Secure inventory tracking**- because the tracking agent is not visible in file directories, it cannot be detected or deleted by end-users, making NetTrace inherently more secure than other asset tracking/inventory management solutions;
- **Hands-free** - while some products require the user to download an e-mail or be connected to the corporate network in order to initiate the tracking process, NetTrace requires zero user intervention;



- **Remote tracking** - NetTrace can track a PC (inside or outside the organisation) when connected to the Internet or dialled out via modem, thus providing customers with the most complete picture of their total PC population.

Q What else does NetTrace do?

A NetTrace's Loss Control service is a managed computer security service that ensures PCs and the data they contain are secure and locatable. NetTrace uses both IP and Caller Line Identification (CLI) to track missing or stolen computers, and incorporates both criminal and civil actions and procedures in its integrated process of recovering stolen PCs.

NetTrace protects your desktop and portable computers in the office, at home and on the road. NetTrace's unique ability to stealthily track the whereabouts of PCs, means that NetTrace's Loss Control service is ultimately an extremely effective theft preventative measure.

To protect data in addition to hardware, NetTrace **Data Delete** provides customers with the option of deleting valuable corporate data from a stolen machine. This prevents a thief from accessing and potentially compromising that data. Think of it as a search and rescue operation for your computers!

Future products and releases include an encryption and firewall solution that is centrally managed through a security console and distributed and upgraded to individual PCs.

Q Will I need additional staff/infrastructure to support NetTrace's services?

A No. NetTrace's service provider model means customers do not need to buy and maintain servers, write code or install expensive databases or staff their own facility with IT professionals to benefit.

Q Why is keeping track of corporate assets important to my business?

A The ability to track and obtain current data from the enterprise (both inside and outside the corporate firewall) will enable your business to determine what its assets look like today, as well as the speed and direction of their change. This will help your organisation to make more informed decisions that, in turn, will lower costs and increase the return on your IT investments.

Functionality

Q What information is collected during the inventory process?

A The tracking agent gathers a comprehensive set of data points including information about:

- **Location:** phone number, local IP address, routable IP address, MAC address, date, time
- **User:** Electronic Serial Number (ESN), user name, PC name, e-mail address
- **Hardware:** processor type, processor speed, hard disk size, hard disk space available, RAM, PC make/model/serial number, BIOS version, BIOS date, video device description and resolution, video display colour depth, firmware revision, hard drive summary, CD-ROM/DVD-ROM description, removable drives description, modem description, modem speed rating (if available), networking device description, second processor information
- **Software:** operating system, service packs for operating systems, software title, software version, software description, software company name, virus protection title, virus protection version, virus protection definition title, virus protection definition description

Administrators also complete a number of manual entry fields to support lease management reporting, and to associate additional information with their PCs (e.g., cost of PC) for a more complete asset picture. These include, for example:

Asset number, user department, department (responsible for lease), lease start date, lease end date, lease number, lease vendor, service contract vendor, service contract start date, service contract end date, software application name, number of software licenses purchased, number of software licenses installed on non-NetTrace PCs, 6 administrator-definable fields.



- Q Can NetTrace inventory any device attached to my network?**
A NetTrace's focus is on tracking and securing devices that house valuable corporate information or pose a risk to the company from external sources. Therefore, the NetTrace service does not track devices such as hubs and routers, printers, or input devices (mouse and keyboard).
- Q Does NetTrace only inventory networked devices?**
A No. NetTrace can inventory remote, mobile and desktop PCs as long as they are connected to a phone line or the Internet.
- Q Does NetTrace only scan/collect the *changes* that occur to an IT asset?**
A Yes. The tracking agent only gathers the changes that occur to an IT asset, whereas most programs require a full data transfer each time an inventory is taken. This "delta" data transfer approach means customers' networks are used efficiently by the tracking agent and the data it passes to keep accurate, dynamic and timely inventories.
- Q Does NetTrace store historical data?**
A Yes. The Monitoring Centre archives all tracking transmissions, providing an accurate current and historical audit trail on each PC. This allows administrators to see how their assets are changing over time, enabling them to better plan and budget for their IT needs. NetTrace stores up to three years of information online, and archives an additional three years.
- Q Is it necessary for end users to engage in the inventory process?**
A No. NetTrace is a "hands-free" service, meaning zero user intervention is required to install or execute individual PC audits. Because NetTrace does not require any action from the end-user, inventories are as secure and accurate as possible.
- Q Is the service always "on"?**
A Yes. As part of NetTrace's proactive approach to monitoring assets, the service is always on and always tracking, while remaining invisible to the end-user. This allows customers to monitor asset changes as they unfold (e.g., the drift of machines from location to location inside and/or outside the organisation).
- Q Are NetTrace's services offered only for laptop PCs?**
A No! NetTrace's Inventory and Loss Control services are for both laptop and desktop PCs, including local and out-of-offices devices.
- Q How many users can NetTrace's system accommodate?**
A The Monitoring Centre can accommodate as few as 50 and up to tens of thousands of users.

Reports

- Q How do I monitor assets and generate reports?**
A The NetTrace Customer Centre, a secure area of www.nettrace.co.za that allows customers via the web to monitor their IT assets and generate reports based on the data the tracking agent collects.
- Q How often will I receive reports?**
A The reporting capability available on the Customer Centre is "self-serve", meaning that administrators are free to generate reports on-the-fly, whenever they need information or need to make a decision about their computer inventory.
- Q Do I need additional software like Crystal Reports to view reports?**
A No, all you need is an Internet browser. For access to the full capabilities of the Customer Centre, NetTrace recommends the use of Microsoft Internet Explorer, version 5.0 or higher or Netscape Navigator, version 4.0 or higher.
- Q What kind of pre-configured reports are provided?**
A The following reports are available to AbsoluteTrack customers:
- Asset Inventory Reports, hardware and software
 - Configuration Change Reports
 - User Information Change Reports
 - Loss Control Reports



- Lease Management Reports
- PC Readiness Reports
- License Compliance Reports
- Microsoft Audit Reports
- Security Reports
- Saved Reports

Q Can reports be tailored? If so, what are the advantages of this feature?

A Yes. Reports can be filtered to focus on key areas of interest, by selecting specific machines to view and by filtering various search criteria. They can also be downloaded through CSV file output for further manipulation and analysis, or for integration to other applications. Filtering the data displayed in reports enable administrators to glean data in precisely the matter it is needed, without having to sort and scrub information, thus freeing up time to work on more valuable initiatives.

Q Can administrators grant access rights to other users?

A Yes. The multi-level security features of the Customer Centre allow an administrator to grant different access rights and privileges to different users. Three different user groups can be defined - Administrator, Power User & Guest User.

Q Can user defined PC groups be created?

A Yes. Administrators can create PC groups to filter reports or alerts to specific groups of machines. PC groups can be created based on department, geographical area, or any other criteria. PC groups can also be used with access rights to restrict a particular user to view only a certain PC group within the Customer Centre.

Q Can I create alerts?

A Yes. With the NetTrace Inventory service you are able to configure alerts (based on single assets or groups of assets) for certain events. An alert notification is delivered via e-mail or SMS message to notify users when specific, user-definable conditions have been met (e.g., a lease is due, a new modem has been added). This functionality helps the IT administrator save time by not having to log in to keep track of critical asset status information.

