



CHECKLIST

Top 5 Capabilities To Look For in AI Network Operations Solutions

Managing a large, complex network can be time-consuming, but taking advantage of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) can help make network management easier. When evaluating AI Network Operations solutions, look for these 5 key capabilities:

Complete Visibility

An AI/ML system can reduce IT workload, but it can't reliably do that if it has a limited view of the network. An AI system should have as wide coverage as possible, including local-area network (LAN) elements, wide-area network (WAN), and security. The more data that feeds the AI, the greater the results from ML. Be careful of solutions that cover only one or two areas of the network or that specialize in only one technology. The system should be able to gather a wide set of information and give insights to the whole network natively.

Low Overhead

More data coming into an AI engine can mean more network overhead, so it's important to understand how much additional overhead a solution adds to the network to operate. A new solution shouldn't make performance worse with more data across the LAN and WAN to feed the AI. Ideally, the system shouldn't require additional overhead beyond what is already allocated for management traffic and use the communication and information already in place. Data reporting should also be consolidated, so information is collated and consolidated before being sent to the AI system. It should not replicate similar, separate information sets from every device throughout the network.

Trend Analysis

An AI Network Operations solution shouldn't just see errors and use intelligence to fix them. It should also include trend analysis. Trends can give powerful insights into the network, changes in use patterns, and potential future issues. By building on the trend information, ML should be able to adjust thresholds and service-level agreement (SLA) considerations, so it reflects the current network, not how it was initially set up.

Simple Operations

AI Network Operations solutions are designed to simplify operations, but be careful not to replace one set of screens with another just because it is powered by AI and ML. Simplified feedback and actionable intelligence need to be brought to the forefront for IT to get full value from the system.

Network Management Integration

An AI Network Operations solution should be integrated with the management solution, so complexity isn't introduced in the effort to marry the two. Look for solutions that integrate as a natural extension of the overall management suite rather than separate offerings.

AI Network Operations solutions have the potential to change the way networks are managed. By focusing on key capabilities, a solution can be selected that best positions a team for success.