



## THE SYMPHION DIFFERENCE: STIMULATING YOUR IT ECONOMICALLY

### I. Executive Summary

*“The economic peace of the past generation is over. We’re in a war for survival, beset by fear, uncertainty and doubt. As on any battlefield, conditions demand a seriously different kind of leadership from that which is appropriate in peacetime.”<sup>1</sup>*

In this time of intensifying economic pressure and increasing stakeholder demands, IT leaders are forced to make strategic, structural, financial and operational changes, many of them drastic, in a hurry, and with incomplete information. Hence, the need for more effective asset management and configuration reporting capabilities is not only necessary – but essential – in lowering costs and improving decision-making.

CIOs are caught weighing the risk of deploying new applications against the risk of sticking with current ineffective processes. However, doing the wrong thing can be fatal and doing nothing can be dangerous. What CIOs need is better IT intelligence, or “IT intel,” from a software solution that is both easy-to-deploy and easy-to-use: one that is extensive in its breadth of reporting and its depth of forensic interrogation. What’s more, they need a high-performing CMDB application that functions as part of a managed solution that’s affordably priced.

This white paper examines how Symphion has positioned itself as the go-to choice among its competitors in the realm of IT asset and configuration management solutions. It does this in two ways:

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<sup>1</sup> Charan, Ram. “Leadership in the Era of Economic Uncertainty”: The new rules for getting the right things done in difficult times, McGraw-Hill Publishing, 2009.



1. **The Symphon Network Instrumentation (“Intelligence”) Framework SNIF™:** A cutting-edge CMDB solution, which gathers, inventories and reports on enterprise-wide IT assets and their configurations and that’s faster, more accurate and easier to use than the competition.
2. **Symphion as a Managed Service Provider (MSP):** Symphon offers SNIF™ as part of a fully-managed solution – that is, Symphon’s virtual management solution team will install, deploy, configure, troubleshoot and manage SNIF™ remotely for a fixed low cost.

By choosing Symphon as their MSP, which includes SNIF™’s cutting edge asset interrogation and reporting capabilities, IT leaders will see an instant right sizing and optimization of their existing IT resources and witness a significant and substantial drop in their IT costs.

## ***II. The Challenge: The need for low-cost, high-quality IT intelligence gathering***

Times are tough. Budgets have been frozen, projects are being discontinued, consultants have been let go, and full-time IT staff is leaner. Compounding matters, executive management is making more demands on IT: more reports, more accountability, more streamlining, and better intelligence about the enterprise’s IT capabilities.

IT leaders are under siege and cannot fight a war without good intelligence. The quality and quantity of IT intel helps them make more effective decisions, aligning technology with the core goals and objectives of the organizations they support. But intel is only as good as the processes used to gather and collect it. In some cases, IT departments assign personnel to gather intel manually, which may put IT staff members on bended knee extracting circuit boards from servers, checking serial numbers on desktop PCs, and recording the configuration information with pen and paper. Not only is this process inefficient, but it leaves room for human error, which alone can be costly.

The IT leader can automate the gathering and reporting process through software, but even this does not guarantee an efficient or cost-effective outcome. Once installed, some solutions fail to measure up to expectations: either in their breadth of asset discovery or their depth of asset interrogation for forensic data. Still, other solutions end up costing too much to deploy and manage, or turn out to be ill-suited to the needs and operational processes of the organization, altogether.

In the meantime, decision-making suffers under the yoke of inaccurate or outdated intel, which results in costly setbacks or mistakes. More time is devoted to “fighting fires” reactively when problems arise than by dealing



with them proactively. Mired by tactical setbacks, IT leaders have less time to focus on the long-range strategic planning or supportive projects designed to remedy these everyday IT challenges.

Through the lack of accessible, accurate intel, IT leaders are continually stuck in a never-ending game of catch-up, struggling to get ahead but almost always falling behind.

However, CIOs can turn challenges into opportunities by finding a solution that provides them with effective, accurate IT intel. Ideally, it would be a single solution that creates instant visibility about all assets on their network(s) and provides up-to-date information in a way that's easy-to-use, installs and deploys rapidly, and includes a dedicated solutions team ready to assist in the ongoing solution management. They especially need a solution to be risk-free and affordable – one with a budget-neutral impact.

### ***III. The Symphonion Difference***

Symphion has positioned itself as the go-to choice among other competitor solutions by offering a faster, more accurate CMDB software application. What's more, Symphonion offers several deployment options for their CMDB software, including a managed service provider (MSP) solution, which eliminates the risks associated with software acquisition and deployment. Furthermore, the solution installs and works in a way that's neither disruptive nor expensive to the organization.

Symphion's solution is the Symphonion Network Instrumentation ("Intelligence") Framework™ (SNIF), its flagship CMDB: a comprehensive enterprise-wide IT asset management and configuration reporting solution, designed to cut expenses and maximize existing IT resources. SNIF™ scans and identifies enterprise-wide assets – even those assets that are geographically disparate – capturing detailed configuration information about each asset (e.g., the make, model, serial number, last login, O/S used, disk space used, etc.), and stores it in its centralized repository. SNIF™ then produces powerful IT intel for comparison, analysis and viewing in SNIF's feature-rich user console and generates comprehensive exportable reports.

From this repository, the end user can generate more than 100 reports that provide a variety of forensic or analytical data pertaining to: how each asset operates; where each asset is located; what relationship(s) exist between assets or asset groups.

But Symphonion provides more than the SNIF™ software. IT leaders have the option of getting a complete managed solution: one solution that's not only installed and configured, but fully managed for them and provides extensive, evergreen and essential IT intel easily and effortlessly. Through a virtual



private network (VPN), Symphonion's managed service team acts as remote staff, operating SNIF™ proactively, assessing and reporting on IT assets, and delivering key "IT intel" as needed.

Under this managed service option, the Symphonion team handles the following:

- Installation and deployment of SNIF™
- Management of desired enterprise implementation
- Support help and maintenance
- Ongoing solution management and consultation

And all of this is done for one low, fixed cost. As a managed service, the SNIF™ solution works to free up resources and allows the CIO or IT leader to maximize their roles within their department: IT staff, who would otherwise have to collect and inventory assets manually or field questions, would now have more time to accomplish other business critical tasks. IT leaders, who would otherwise languish in a malaise of indecision and doubt from incomplete intel, would now – through SNIF's in-depth asset reporting – make better decisions and fulfill the core goals and objectives of the organization's they support.

#### ***IV. Three ways to achieve better IT intel through Symphonion***

Symphonion helps IT leaders execute their tactical and strategic goals with greater ease and efficiency. The SNIF™ solution is a cutting-edge CMDB that captures a breadth and depth of asset information and packages the information into comprehensive reports that help IT leaders make better decisions. Symphonion even offers SNIF™ as part of a fully managed CMDB solution available for a fixed, low monthly service fee, giving the end user the benefits of:

1. **A cutting-edge CMDB:** As a high-performance software application, SNIF™ automates the processes of gathering and reporting IT assets with a speed and accuracy that's better than the competition. SNIF™ handles both:
  - a) Breadth of Asset Discovery: SNIF™ needs only a few hours to scan all assets in a selected discovery field,
  - b) In-depth Asset Interrogation: SNIF's advanced algorithm interrogates the details of each asset configuration, stores the configuration data in a versioned CMDB repository, and makes the data available via the SNIF web-browser User Interface and exportable comprehensive reports.

SNIF's speed and accuracy allows it to make multiple scans, several times a day if needed, providing fresh, up-to-date IT intel. It's so effective that even IT outsourcers (i.e., "the pros") use it to save costs and maximize resources.



2. **Up-and-Running Delivery:** As a managed service provider, Symphion's virtual management solutions team will install, deploy and configure the SNIF™ solution in 3 days or less. To do this, Symphion requires that the end user have Symphion's "10 Easy P's," or prerequisites, in place. These prerequisites ensure a smooth and painless integration of the SNIF™ into any organization's current operational processes.

The "10 easy P's" and how the customer fulfills them :

Prerequisites	Customer requirements
1. Purchase	Pays at <a href="http://www.symphion.com">www.symphion.com</a> , receives license keys
2. Preferences	Completes environment and preference questionnaire
3. Parts	Sets up SNIF server with software and access
4. Person	Assigns internal staff to serve as network admin, server admin + database administrator during 3 days
5. Privileges	Provides the selected deployment staff with required privileges
6. Participation	Agrees that those persons will be uninterrupted for 3 days
7. Private Network	Provides 2 VPN accounts with 24 hour access
8. Performance	Is Dedicated to achieving maximum solution performance in 3 days
9. People	Provides Employees to be trained scheduled for 2 hour recorded session on day 3
10. Process	Plans how to incorporate solution into daily operations

By allowing Symphion to get the SNIF™ solution up and running in their department, end users receive the following benefits:

- i) **Experience and expertise:** Expert level rapid implementation of their new CMDB solution. Symphion's company background is rooted in handling system integration for major corporations. Symphion has designed the most efficient enterprise implementation process to make implementation as seamless and hassle-free as possible. Symphion understands the absolute necessity of accurate IT intel.
- ii) **Immediacy:** There's practically no wait time in using SNIF once it's up and running. Symphion's management solution team



grants the end user with speedier turnaround in the installation and deployment process, allowing the end user to get to work using SNIF™ faster.

- iii) **Bounded risk:** With SNIF™, there are no agents to install, no consultants, and no ancillary equipment to purchase and no hidden fees.

**3. Ongoing Solution Management:** In addition to Up-and-Running Delivery, Symphon management solutions team will manage the everyday use of the SNIF™, thus freeing up IT leaders and staff to focus on more business critical projects.

Customers receive the following benefits of using the Symphon MSP:

- i) **Peace-of-mind:** The Symphon management solution team will provide the customer with the right reports needed and handle any and all maintenance issues associated with SNIF™.
- ii) **Single point-of-contact:** All questions, requests for reports, and consults flow through the management solution team, thus relieving the time and undue stress of tracking down or contacting staff members who are away from the office.
- iii) **Lowered Total Cost Ownership (TCO):** The SNIF™ managed solution is a minimal monthly operating expense that won't impact budgets and is priced for less than what most organization's spend each year on coffee. IT leaders achieve lowered TCO through:

One monthly subscription allows unlimited user access.

The cost for the entire MSP option is priced for what competitors charge in licensing rights alone.

In providing high-quality IT intel, IT leaders will discover immediate cost savings to their organizations through a reliable SNIF™ solution that pays for itself. Customers risk is further bounded by Symphion's 30-day money-back guarantee, if they're not completely satisfied.

## **v. Conclusion**

Amid these trying economic times, IT leaders are seeing a need, now more than ever, for an effective CMDB that optimizes their existing processes while creating a significant and substantial drop in IT costs. The SNIF™ solution takes the headache out of asset information gathering and reporting by allowing the Symphon management support team to handle it all – from installation to the ongoing solution management.



As part of its function in providing effective, efficient and accurate IT intel, the SNIF™ solution grants IT leaders with a more structured and disciplined approach to asset management. By using this powerful CMDB solution, CIOs will instantly establish many essential best practices for IT, which include:

1. Establishing and Maintaining An **Accessible, Accurate Information and Communication Platform**
2. Setting, Auditing and Enforcing **Technology Standards with Automation**
3. Establishing **Evergreen IT Asset Inventory** and Asset Management Platform for Efficiency and Planning
4. Establishing and Efficiently Performing **Daily IT Operations** and Infrastructure Management Practices
5. Performing IT **Problem Diagnosis and Trouble Management** with Real-time and Historical Data

Establishing a system of essential best practices creates a sense of order amid the continual change and volatility that occurs regularly within an IT environment (**Read our white paper, titled: “How SNIF works to provide Essential IT Practices”**). Symphon’s managed CMDB solution will instantly imbue your organization with proven, well-known operating practices and procedures, effective in addressing tactical everyday IT challenges while fulfilling strategic long-range goals.

These essential practices are your best line of defense and most trusted ally when economic conditions have you in peacetime, or when dire economic conditions have your suited up and ready for battle.