

Same website monitoring for \$2 or \$76, a sign of an immature market?

A cost comparison between well-known uptime monitoring services reveals very large differences. The highest and lowest prices differ by a factor of 38.

Uptime monitoring services are used to monitor the availability and response time of websites and servers on the internet, and are used by for example server administrators, website owners and web hosting companies. This survey compares what the cost is for monitoring one website with a one-minute monitoring resolution. Ten well-known uptime monitoring services are included.

Surprisingly, even though ten of the most visible and discussed uptime monitoring services out there were chosen to be in the survey, five out of these ten don't offer a one-minute monitoring option. This should be available in any website monitoring solution concerned with a high level of accuracy.

Price per month for monitoring one website every minute:

Uptime monitoring service	Price per month
Alertra	\$59.95
Hyperspin	\$12
Monitis	n/a
Pingdom	\$1.99
ServiceUptime	\$17.50
Site24x7	n/a
SiteUptime	n/a
Uptrends	n/a
WatchMouse	n/a
WebSitePulse	\$76

Note: Prices are from the homepages of the respective companies on October 23, 2007.

As this table shows, there is a large difference in prices between the different services. The highest and lowest prices, WebSitePulse's \$76 versus Pingdom's \$1.99, differ by a factor of 38. And this is for the same kind of monitoring.

Where does this huge price difference come from?

The older uptime monitoring companies have often built their business on a small user base that pays relatively high prices. If they were to adapt their pricing to current market conditions, their income would be cut in half or more, something they are most likely not willing to do. Newer uptime monitoring companies instead rely more on volume, which allows them to have lower prices but still provide the same or similar services. The difference in approach basically comes down to this: having few users who pay a lot, or having lots of users who pay less.

This survey has revealed wildly varying prices for the same kind of monitoring. The logical conclusion to this is that when you are looking for a website monitoring solution it pays to shop around. The difference could be hundreds or possibly even thousands of dollars per year depending on your monitoring needs.

About the survey:

The prices are the ones listed on the homepages of the included companies on October 23, 2007. If there was a different price between HTTP monitoring and other monitoring types, HTTP monitoring was selected (which is what should be used for monitoring websites). If more than one check was included in an account, that price was divided by the number of checks included. For example, a Pingdom account is \$9.95 per month and comes with the ability to monitor five websites or servers (any extra cost \$0.50 each, but that price was not used in the survey since the initial five do cost the equivalent of \$2).

It should be noted that some services charge extra for SSL connections (HTTPS), HTTP authorization and keyword checks. Many also offer some form of discount when you monitor a large number of websites or servers.

It should also be noted that there can often be a difference between the services when it comes to the number of monitoring locations (servers that test your websites), what kind of reports are offered, etc. Just like phone carriers and operators have slightly different setups and offers, so do uptime monitoring services.

Disclaimer: Pingdom is an uptime monitoring company, so this cannot be called an independent survey by any means. However, Pingdom has been as accurate and objective as possible when collecting the data.

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About Pingdom:

Pingdom is an uptime monitoring service with a global approach, monitoring websites and servers from multiple locations across the world to ensure the best reliability and accuracy possible. The company is growing fast and today has customers in 127 countries, ranging from small one-man businesses to large, international corporations. Find out more at www.pingdom.com.