Overview
This U.S. financial services firm provides solutions for banking, insurance, mergers and acquisitions, and wealth management through its various business units. The company has operations in more than one U.S. state and held assets worth more than US$2.5 billion at the end of 2012.

Challenge
This multi-billion dollar financial services company serves the complete financial needs of businesses, business owners and professionals in its target markets. The company strives to offer clients unparalleled attention, highly personalized service and the independence they need to succeed.

To meet these goals, the company’s business units manage their business-critical processes using approximately 200 applications, which are managed and maintained by the internal IT department.

The IT team must ensure that applications are constantly available, and must solve problems quickly to avoid impact on the business and its customers.

The company’s previous application monitoring solution did not reliably provide alerts at an application level. Too often, the IT team learned about problems through phone calls from business users. In some cases, applications were unavailable for prolonged periods of time, because the IT team was unaware of any problems.

The company wanted a solution capable of monitoring its large and diverse applications efficiently and precisely, enabling rapid identification of issues and minimizing false-positive alerts.

Solution
The financial institution decided to leverage AppManager, which monitors operating systems and applications automatically and triggers customized escalation workflows when it identifies issues.

The company had previously used the tool to monitor the availability of its online banking system and decided to extend it to monitor the performance of its business-critical and customer-facing applications.

“Deploying AppManager helped us reduce application downtime significantly!”

SPOKESPERSON
U.S. financial services firm

At a Glance
- Industry
  Financial Services
- Location
  Undisclosed
- Challenge
  The IT team needed an application monitoring solution that would provide reliable alerts at the application level.
- Solution
  Use AppManager to manage and monitor a wide range of applications in an efficient and structured manner.
- Results
  + Provided the ability to quickly identify issues with applications and databases
  + Improved the availability of internal and customer-facing services
  + Automated monitoring
A spokesperson for the company said, “NetIQ helped us identify gaps in our application monitoring, and we discovered that we could address 99 percent of these with the AppManager technology that we already owned.”

AppManager features a range of modules that are designed to centrally manage the performance and availability of many commercially available third-party applications. The financial institution uses the AppManager ResponseTime for Web module to help ensure its online banking system is available for customers, and it relies on AppManager for Microsoft SQL Server to manage the health of its databases.

“AppManager helps us manage a wide range of applications in an efficient and structured manner,” said the spokesperson. “What we do is very time-sensitive for most of our business lines, so we need to be able to identify and resolve issues rapidly to keep systems up and accessible to internal and external users. AppManager gives us complete peace of mind when it comes to application management, as we know we will be informed of any problems that occur.”

AppManager helps the company monitor log files associated with data-import tasks. The company has an application that imports financial data continuously; it can take several hours of administrative work to rectify problems caused by interruptions in service. AppManager alerts the relevant staff to any communication problems, helping them avoid additional work later on.

Results
With the solution, the financial services firm can identify issues with applications and databases as they emerge, helping it improve the availability of internal and customer-facing services.

“AppManager informs us of errors as soon as they occur, helping us solve problems before users even notice that a fault has occurred,” said the spokesperson. “Deploying AppManager helped us reduce application downtime significantly.”

“Boosting application availability helps us provide a better service both to internal business units and external customers,” said the spokesperson.

“If faults occur in applications, we can now send messages to business units to let them know that we’re already working on the solution. This has improved the reputation of the IT department within the organization, making us proactive rather than reactive.”

Automated monitoring also helps save time on application management, allowing staff to focus on more productive activities.

“Being aware of faults early gives us time to address small problems before they turn into bigger ones, which take much longer to fix,” said the spokesperson. “We save a considerable amount of time and effort each week on application management with the NetIQ tool. And we are also no longer slaves to our BlackBerrys over the weekend!”