

How do I reduce the number of alarms in the control room?

The best results come from a complete redesign of your alarm configuration. However, most people do not want to tackle that right away, if at all. A reasonable option that still delivers good results is to attack alarm problems from the top down, working on the worst problems first. Keep in mind that you may discover that the problem really doesn't lay within the alarm system itself, but it's a good place to start.

The TiPS LogMate product supports either approach. Choose your preference:

- Gradual Reduction - Good results, lower impact on resources
- Complete Redesign - Best results, higher impact on resources

Gradual Reduction:

In many cases, a program of gradually reducing alarms by attacking bad actors can result in substantial improvement. Using LogMate, you can quickly see how much improvement is possible and where to focus to get there.

Step 1: Collect Data

The first step is to collect data. 90 days of data generally gives you a good, representative sample of alarm activity, although some problem alarms can be identified much more quickly.

The LogMate Capture module is responsible for collecting and archiving alarm data in real-time.

Step 2: Analyze Your Data

Once you have data, you are ready to look at it statistically to identify alarms that are good candidates for change. In the same analysis you can visualize how much you stand to improve. The LogMate ACE module includes a thorough library of statistical tools for assessing alarm activity.

Step 3: Reduce Alarms!

Now all the tools are in place for you to start addressing problem alarms and reducing alarm activity. It's a simple, continuous process of analyzing alarm behavior and making changes that reduce alarm activity.

Step 4: Monitor and Maintain

If you want to prevent the loss of the alarm improvements you make, you will need to have a program for continuous measurement of alarm performance and some kind of change management mechanism. That will help ensure that you are continuously improving the alarm environment, not fighting a losing

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battle. The LogMate AlarmKB module can help you prevent reversal of the progress you make.

Optional But Recommended: Document Your Work

As you work through fixing alarm problems, you will most likely learn some interesting things about your operation. You will find it helpful to document your discoveries as well as the thought process you went through when reviewing alarm behavior. The information you put down will be helpful when you try to remember why you treated a particular alarm the way you did. The LogMate AlarmKB module provides a warehouse for alarm review notes.

Complete Redesign

In a complete redesign you start with a blank alarm configuration and work through the process of building one. This method of alarm management results in the greatest improvement, but it does place a load on resources. You may choose to temporarily supplement your staff with outsourced personnel. The good news is that this won't require specialized resources because all you are doing is applying standard good engineering practice.

Step 1: Redesign

The alarm management team (usually representatives from each of the business segments that has an interest in the quality and content of alarm delivery) meets and brainstorms through a fresh alarm design. The LogMate AlarmKB module gives you the ability to document team discussions and plan a good alarm design.

Step 2: Implement

In a "greenfield" operation, you would take the final design and implement it. In a "brownfield" operation, you would compare the new design to the current design, discuss any differences, add or change the new design based on those discussions, then implement the design.

Step 3: Monitor and Maintain

Once a new design is online, you will want to preserve it while still allowing for continuous review and change if necessary. No design will be perfect, but change needs to be controlled and managed within the context of the alarm environment as a whole. It is best to implement some kind of performance review and change management program. The LogMate AlarmKB module gives you the infrastructure to control the stability of your new design.