



Sentry-go Quick & Plus! Monitor Alerting

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<http://www.Sentry-go.com>

Be Proactive, Not Reactive!

Alongside monitoring itself, alerting is another important part of Sentry-go. Alerts are triggered in response to detected errors and allow you to be informed of the problem in a quick and convenient manner.

Alerts vs Responses

Unlike some solutions which merely notify you when a fault is detected, Sentry-go has the additional option of taking action automatically. Put simply, for some errors, the initial action may be obvious – for example, to restart a failed service, to clear down temporary files when disk space is low.

To enable this, Sentry-go has the concept of the “automatic response”. When defined, Sentry-go automatically performs the action when an associated error is detected, in order to resolve the issue itself. It then checks to see if the resolution has been successful - based on the re-running of the original check. If the response was unsuccessful, or none were defined, one or more alerts can be triggered in order to inform administrators, technicians etc.

 The auto-response itself will depend on the check being performed – e.g. to restart a failed service, removing temporary files to conserve disk space, deleting large prints from print queues, terminating blocked or blocking SQL processes.

You can also configure the monitor to alert you even when the response has resolved the problem, thus showing you that a fault occurred but has been resolved.

For more information, please see the “Configuring Automatic Responses” guide.

Types of Alert

Sentry-go allows a number of different alert types to be defined, allowing you to be notified in a variety of ways, or exporting details to external systems. Available alert types include ...

- E-mail, including authenticated and secure messaging.
- Network messaging, within the domain.
- SMS/text messaging direct using a connected modem.
- SMS/text messaging via a gateway bureau.
- Running an external command, application or custom script.
- Log details to a Syslog server.
- Write details to a file or Windows Event Log.
- Send details to a 3rd party system.

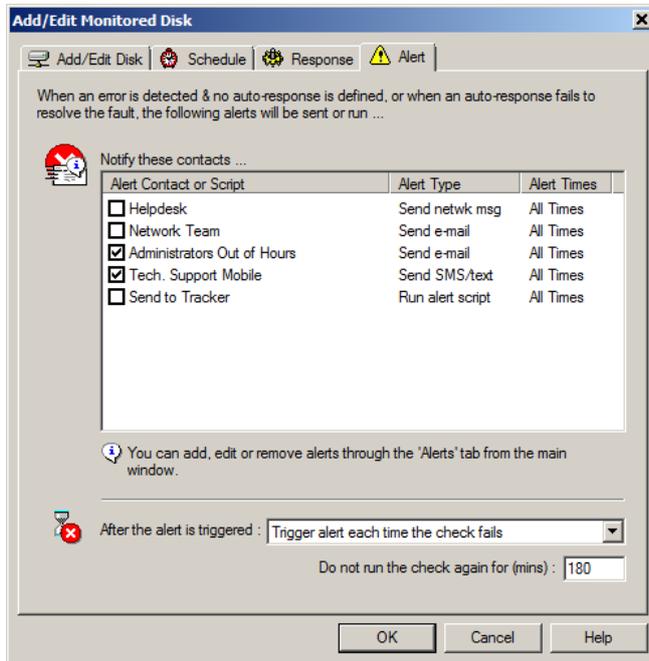
Direct Alerts vs Alert Groups

Sentry-go implements alerts in one of two ways, either “directly” or using “alert groups”.

- **Direct Alerts.**

For smaller installations, direct alerts offer a quick & easy way to configure the monitor. In this mode you simply define your alerts once – e.g. contacts such as e-mails, network users, SMS or scripts and these are then listed against each monitoring check.

To notify a contact, simply tick the ones you want to alert when defining the check.



- **Alert Groups**

For larger installations, where you’re more likely to have teams looking after an area of your environment – e.g. network, databases, e-mail etc., you can further divide your alert contacts & scripts into one or more “groups”. These might be, for example, “critical errors”, “warnings” & “information” or “network”, “DBAs” & “app. team”.

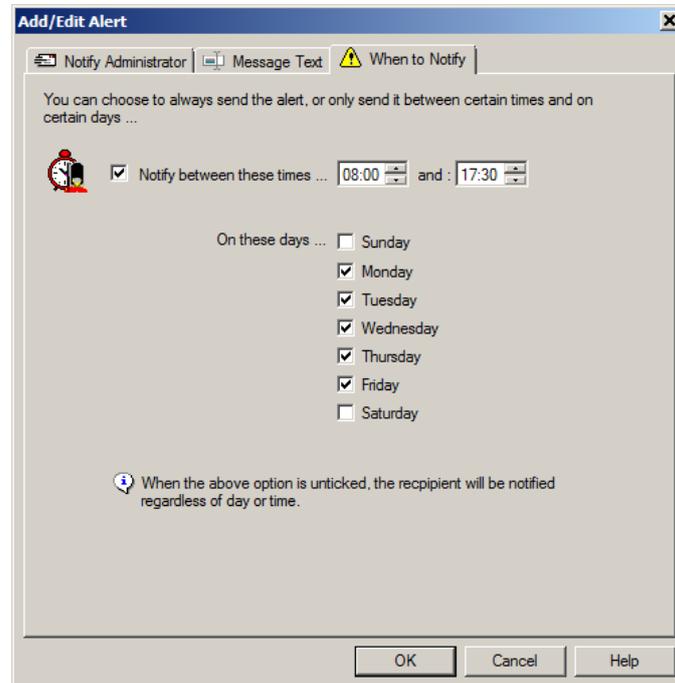
In this mode, you still define your alerts but each contact is additionally assigned to one or more alert groups. When you then define your monitoring checks, instead of selecting the individual contacts you wish to notify for each check, you simply choose which alert group to notify. This in turn determines who will be notified when an alert is triggered.

The alerting method is determined by configuring the monitor and opening the “Settings” tab of the appropriate Configuration utility.

See “Configuring Sentry-go Alerts” for more details.

Day & Time Sensitive

There may be times when the notification method depends on the time of day or the day of the week the fault occurs. For example, during office hours as opposed to out of hours support. By default, all enabled contacts are considered to be available 24 hours a day, but with Sentry-go, you can further define when you wish to be notified.



The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Add/Edit Alert" with three tabs: "Notify Administrator", "Message Text", and "When to Notify". The "When to Notify" tab is active. The dialog contains the following text and controls:

You can choose to always send the alert, or only send it between certain times and on certain days ...

Notify between these times ... 08:00 and : 17:30

On these days ...

- Sunday
- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday

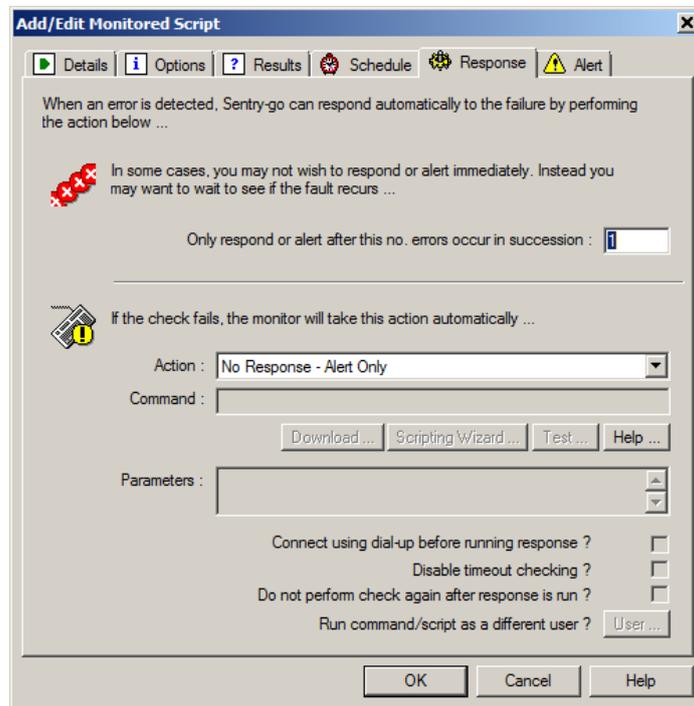
 When the above option is unticked, the recipient will be notified regardless of day or time.

At the bottom of the dialog are three buttons: "OK", "Cancel", and "Help".

Repeated Errors

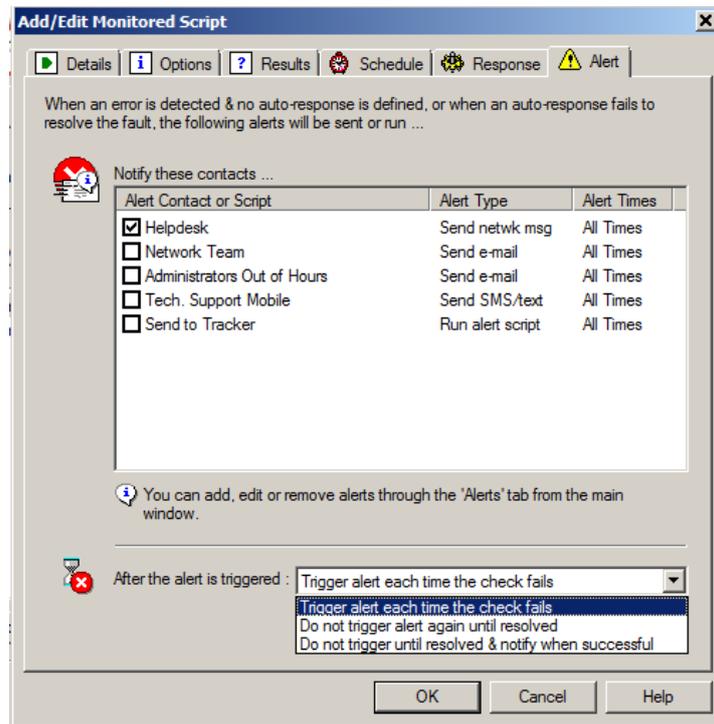
Although in most cases you'll want to be informed of a detected issue immediately, there may be times when this is less desirable. For example, when checking CPU usage, it would be quite possible to detect a short 100% usage whilst printing which would not be an error. Only if the CPU was *continually* high would you wish to be informed.

To enable this, Sentry-go allows you to define how many errors in succession must occur before the alert is triggered. By default this is 1 – i.e. to notify immediately, but for many monitoring checks can be increased to a suitable value if required.



After an Alert

Likewise, once an alert is triggered you may need time to investigate or resolve the underlying problem. During this time, you probably don't want alerts continually being triggered for the same fault and so to allow for this, you can define how long before the next alert for the same check is triggered.



This is called the "Alert Control Mechanism" or ACM and allows the monitor to automatically verify when the fault is resolved and only re-enable alerting after that.

“System Notifications”

System notifications are generated when the monitor cannot perform a configured task. For example, if ...

- A configuration option is not valid on the server
- An error occurs such that the requested action cannot be performed
- An associated task cannot be performed – e.g. web publishing cannot be performed because a connection could not be established with the defined destination.

When a system notification is generated ...

- Details are sent to all Client Consoles registered with the monitor
- Details are highlighted on web reports – e.g. the Recent Alerts report & Current Status reports
- Details are logged within the Enterprise database, if configured
- Users defined as “System Users” are notified by e-mail.
- Files/scripts defined as “System Scripts” are run.

You determine whether a user is notified and/or a script run in response to a system notification when you define the individual alert user or script. Simply tick the appropriate “Send config/system messages” option.

The screenshot shows the 'Add/Edit Alert' dialog box with the following configuration options:

- Notify Administrator** | **Message Text** | **When to Notify**
- When an alert is triggered, the monitor will notify you by e-mail using these settings ...
- Refer to this contact as : Administrators Out of Hours
- Send an e-mail to this address : OOH@Company.com
- Send config/system messages to this user
- Send a daily summary report to this user
- Connect using dial-up before sending e-mail
- E-mail Server (SMTP) Name : [Your SMTP Server] port : 25
- Send e-mail from : Sentry-go@YourDomain
- Using : Standard, non-auth SMTP
- SMTP User : Password :
- Auto Detect Available Options ...
- Notify this user when this alert level(s) is triggered : [Monitor not configured for Alert Groups]
- Test ... Clear Select All
- OK Cancel Help

Alert & Notification Types

Sentry-go allows you to specify different types of notifications depending on your requirements.

Direct Notifications

Direct notifications allow you to notify a user directly, without the need to call a script, batch file or executable. These include ...

- **E-mail notifications.**

This is a very common & popular choice for alert notifications, especially out of normal office hours. Using e-mails, message can be received on a variety of devices including mobile phones & pagers.

- **Network messages.**

If the user is logged on to the domain, the network message is often the fastest way of notifying them of a detected failure. This option allows you to notify a user by network message when an alert is triggered or optionally when automatic action is taken to resolve a problem.

- **SMS/text messages.**

Another popular option allows you to send SMS messages direct to a mobile phone, giving you near immediate notification of an error. SMS messages can be sent either directly using a connected modem or USB key, or indirectly through a gateway bureau (e.g. via e-mail).

Implicit Script-based Notifications

Some notifications use "implicit" scripts. These are selected just like other options but automatically invoke the Scripting Wizard. This in turn requests information before (implicitly) generating a script for you ...



This script is then defined automatically to allow Sentry-go to run the associated logic when required.

 No scripting knowledge is required, although you can further customise the generated file afterwards if required.

Other Script-based Notifications

The remaining notifications are script-based and provide the ultimate in flexibility. With Sentry-go, script-based options are further enhanced by the "Alert Engine", an integrated part of the Sentry-go monitor. When a script-based notification is called as a result of an alert being triggered, the file is first compiled and then executed. This allows error-specific information to be included that would otherwise be unavailable when the monitor is being configured.

Example scripts can be found on-line at <http://www.sentry-go.com/sentry-go-scripting-library.aspx>.

The files themselves are standard text files run through the appropriate interpreter. However, they can optionally include one or more special place-markers – formatted strings such as "<\$\$ERROR>" and "<\$\$SERVER>" which are then expanded at runtime by the Alert Engine to include the actual error message and server name prior to running the script.

For more information, please see the "Sentry-go Place-markers" guide.

Here is an example ...

```
'
' Sentry-go Alert Engine Script to log alert information via a an
' external LogInfo.exe routine.
'
' See associated documentation for more details on how to specify
' the information to send via this file.
'

' ----- Local declarations -----
Dim strTextToSend

' ----- Set up parameters -----
strTextToSend = "Error - <$$ERROR> on <$$SERVER>"
Set Shell = CreateObject("WScript.Shell")

' ----- Create & execute the target command -----
Shell.Run ""c:\program files\Inhouse\LogInfo.exe"" "" & strTextToSend & "",True

' ----- Cleanup -----
Set Shell = Nothing

' ----- End of Script -----
```

In addition to scripts, other specially formatted files can also be processed by Sentry-go in order to make the required notification.

- **Windows Batch File.**

Defines a standard batch file containing one or more Windows commands, external command-line utilities or other batch files as well as error-specific information. Batch file are simpler than scripts & are best used when you wish to run a series of commands that need little or no programmatic control. Batch files are run through the Windows command interpreter (CMD).



Example scripts can be found on-line at <http://www.sentry-go.com/sentry-go-scripting-library.aspx>.

- **VBScript or Windows Scripting Host file.**

Defines a VBScript or Windows Scripting Host file. Scripts provide greater programmatic control over batch files, but are more complex to develop, requiring programming knowledge. Script files are run through the CScript interpreter (e.g. a .vbs file).



The Scripting Wizard can be used to generate scripts without the need for programming or scripting knowledge.

For more information, please see the “Sentry-go Scripting Wizard” guide.

Example scripts can be found on-line at

<http://www.sentry-go.com/sentry-go-scripting-library.aspx>.

- **SysLog file.**

Allows you to log an alert to a SysLog server.

- **SMTP e-mail file.**

Sends a custom/preformatted e-mail to one or more users or external systems. This can be a formatted e-mail containing your own text as well as error-specific information that can be sent to one or more users, or an external system such as an SMS gateway bureau.

- **HTTP web file.**

Sends error/alert information to an external system using an HTTP (web) interface. As with the SMTP option above, the HTTP protocol can often be used to forward information on to an external system such as an SMS gateway bureau.

More Information

If you need more help or information on this topic ...

- Read all [papers/documents on-line](#).
- Watch [demonstrations & walkthrough videos on-line](#).
- Visit <http://www.Sentry-go.com>.
- Contact our [Support Team](#).



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