

Network-watching gadget Monitor-I0 chooses a graceful, owner-friendly death

Enlarge / The Monitor-I0 in its natural habitat, glowing green to let you know that everything is copacetic with the network to which it's connected.

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Monitor-I0 was a gadget that did one thing: live near a router and tell you how its network is doing. It did this both with detailed reports you could access from the local network and with a screen that glowed one of three colors: green for good, purple for problems, and red for dead. It could replace, or at least augment, typing a bunch of IP addresses into a browser and waiting for them to time out.

We liked the device when we reviewed it in August 2018, despite our broad understanding of it as a “butter-passing robot,” a device that relays information you could otherwise find out on your own. It had, beyond color-coded awareness, “obvious technical chops and real, careful attention to detail” in how it measured and what it could report. However, we also noted that the \$100 price made sense for a small business but “might be a bit steep” for a household on a tight

budget.

Monitor-I0 seems to have run out of people willing to pay for better network awareness. In an “End-of-service” notice posted on its site, the company cites “rising costs and supply chain issues,” among other “numerous headwinds.” Faced with no better option, Monitor-I0 is shutting down its business and monitoring service on April 15, 2023. (Support will be offered through May 30, 2023.)

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Does that mean Monitor-I0 boxes are bricks? Far from it. The company is making available an SD card image (4 GB minimum) that you can use to set up the device for life after Monitor-I0’s servers go down. The little box will still reach out to several IP targets to test your network’s speed and stability, but if you want to change its targets or make any other modification, you can reach the box via SSH on your local network.

The Monitor-I0 fan community can seemingly do a lot more with the device, based on the README for NetMonitor, the standalone system the company is offering. It’s a “standard Linux operating system,” so you should consider keeping it on an uninterruptible power supply to avoid file corruption during power outages. Instead of the colorful and useful charts you’d see when Monitor-I0’s servers were up, there is now a data file showing the last few test results. Don’t be surprised if someone offers a different, perhaps upgraded version of this system as a flash-able image at some point.

Monitor-I0 also notes that it will be deleting all data from its servers before shutting them down.

“Once again, we thank you for your support over the past many years. We do hope you found the service useful. We are so sorry that it had to come to an end,” Monitor-I0 posted on its site.

It's a polite, honest ending, paired with a good amount of help for their users after their business ended.

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