

Greatwaves is a premier commercial Internet Service Provider based in the Netherlands, and a Cronitor customer since 2017. Founder Wouter Zijlstra tells us how they rely on Cronitor to help deliver on their promise “good internet, everywhere”.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the Greatwaves story starts with bad internet. Zijlstra, running an IT consulting firm, was trying to help his landlord provide better wifi to both himself and his fellow tenants in their office building. After learning a bit about the subject he convinced his landlord that he could build a better network and set off to prove just that.

Five years later, having read more network device manuals than he can remember, Greatwaves is consistently rated one of the best service providers by the companies with the most challenging wifi environments, including sports stadiums, campuses, and local tech companies HackerOne and CataWiki.

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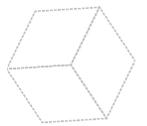
Every router, every switch, and every firewall that we sell is monitored by Cronitor.

“We learned very quickly that building wifi networks is all about stability and consistency. People hate inconsistency in wifi networks more than anything else. They want to trust that the network works just as well on floor one as floor three. If we build a network that’s a little bit slower than it could be, but 100% consistent, you’re unlikely to notice or care about that small difference in speed.”

Consistency and stability are not just the keys to building wifi networks, but also turn out to be the keys to building a business on top of them as well. “Our job is to know exactly what is going on with our customers’ networks at all times and to proactively fix problems before our customers notice them. That’s where Cronitor comes in.”

In order to scale their business nationwide, Greatwaves has turned to human-in-the-loop automations to provide their customers with a truly exceptional level of service and support. By monitoring the health of every device their customers are running, they are alerted to any disruptions in service, however minor, often before customers have even noticed that there’s a problem.

“We couldn’t operate this business without automation. We have devices all over the Netherlands and we want to know the instant any of them go offline. Every router, every switch, and every firewall that we sell is monitored by Cronitor.”



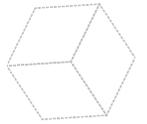
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Cronitor is a critical piece of our system. It’s the trigger for all our proactive support and enables automation.

When Greatwaves provisions a new hardware device they install their network management system (NMS) to allow them to perform automated updates and adjustments to these devices from anywhere in the world. Using Cronitor’s REST API the provisioning package creates a new monitor URL that is unique to the device.



Once the device becomes active it begins sending its metrics directly to the NMS, but it pings Cronitor directly every twenty seconds. If the device doesn’t check in for at least a minute, Cronitor sends a webhook into the NMS to alert them of the downtime.



“The key thing about this is that we do not have to have servers on-site or have a permanent VPN connection to our customers’ networks. Just a simple command that makes an outbound HTTPS request from the customers network. This reduces attack surface a great deal, and cuts down significantly on the management overhead.”

“Detailed monitoring and automatic responses to alerts have really been the key to scaling our business.” says Wouter. Most ISPs hire huge customer support teams to handle incoming customer tickets. At Greatwaves customer support is distributed among the team, and even complicated updates to customer hardware can often be performed from a mobile device.

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Building wifi networks is all about stability and consistency.

“Cronitor is a critical piece of our system. It’s the trigger for all of our proactive responses and automations. We can rollout automated updates to an office building at 10 p.m. on a Friday night because we know that Cronitor will tell us if anything goes wrong with these updates. It really helps us sleep easier at night.”

