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**Network Instruments Launches Major New Release: Version 8.0 of Observer<sup>®</sup>, Expert Observer<sup>®</sup>, and Observer<sup>®</sup> Suite**

*Windows XP compatibility, a wire-speed Gigabit and Frame Relay analyzer and a Frame Relay option, over 20% more protocol decodes, and a more user-friendly interface takes network analysis for shared and switched LANs and WANs to the next level.*

MINNEAPOLIS – October 17, 2001 – Network Instruments, LLC, today announced a major upgrade of its Observer protocol analysis software for LAN/WAN networks, dramatically enhancing its user interface and performance in monitoring, troubleshooting, and trend analysis of shared or switched environments. The upgrade includes performance enhancements across the Observer product line, and the addition of a number of new topologies analyzed. The key features include:

- Windows XP compatibility
- An updated user interface, with an intuitive menu layout organized by functionality, and a larger view area based on streamlined use of layout area
- 20% more protocols decoded, bringing the total to well over 500 protocols decoded, and 4000 unique frames recognized
- The real-time expert in Observer has been enhanced to offer analysis of NetBIOS/NetBEUI, IPX/SPX, Frame Relay, and SQL events and errors
- The ability to compile and display any SNMP MIB for detailed decode descriptions
- Time synchronization technology to troubleshoot WAN delay. Expert Observer can now capture two ends of a conversation across a WAN link and determine response time measurements across the WAN.
- A full-duplex, wire-speed Gigabit analyzer in various formats, including a ruggedized luggable PC and hardware-based Probe
- A hardware-based Frame Relay Probe and ruggedized analyzer offering with two capture speed options: T1/E1 and lower, or T1/E1-T3/E3 and DS3

The company said that most of the enhanced features of Observer 8.0 are available immediately. The hardware-based Gigabit analyzer will be available later in the fourth quarter, and the Frame Relay analyzer is slated for release early in the first quarter of 2002.

“These enhancements make Observer the most complete and cost-effective network analysis product on the market,” said Douglas Smith, President of Network Instruments. “Observer now offers a breadth of products unparalleled in features and price point. Observer is a considerably more robust software analyzer solution than any competing



product, and adding this level of functionality to Gigabit and Frame Relay analysis environments is an industry-first.”

### **Upgrades To The Entire Observer Product Line**

With this announcement, Network Instruments becomes the first in the industry to add Windows XP compatibility. Administrators and technicians transitioning to XP will be able to use Observer seamlessly.

Observer’s new intuitive menu layout has been designed for ease of use and consistency with industry standards for user interface. Divided by functionality, main menu headings now represent common task structures. Also, folder style tabs have replaced sidebar navigation to improve accessibility and to provide a larger view area. “We have made some subtle but significant changes to our user interface,” stated Smith.

The number of protocols that Observer can process as part of its packet capture/decode has increased from over 400 to well over 500, giving Network Instruments a leadership position throughout the industry in this important benchmark. In addition to the new decodes, Observer now recognizes over 4000 unique frame types.

For troubleshooting in an SNMP rich environment, any vendor’s MIBs can now be compiled, and descriptions for objects appear in the decode display. An extensive pre-compiled MIB library is included on the Observer CD.

Observer 8.0 has stepped up performance in terms of scalability for users. The Router Observer function now tracks up to eight routers, up from one, and Web Observer now tracks up to eight Web servers, also up from one. Similarly, the trending function now supports eight routers and eight Web servers. The Web-based reporting system in Observer 8.0 has been greatly enhanced to allow for quicker navigation, and a finer granularity of data.

### **Upgrades To Expert Observer**

In addition to the features and enhancements added to the basic Observer, Expert Observer now includes a unique WAN compare/capture feature that can capture two ends of a conversation across a WAN link. This feature quantifies transaction time between PC and server using Network Instruments’ time-synchronizing technology for dual captures. This new feature is useful primarily to large companies, which previously had to use expensive time synchronization equipment. An example would be a large retail firm needing to track and analyze transaction times between each point of sale system and its server.

New expert event identification functionality has been added, specifically IPX/SPX, NetBIOS/NetBEUI, Frame Relay, and SQL expert analysis is now available. In addition, the TCP/UDP/ICMP Expert has been enhanced with over 30 percent more identified problems.

A full-duplex, wire-speed Gigabit analyzer will be added in three formats: a Gigabit Probe kit (can be used local or remote) including 64-bit Gigabit analyzer adapter, cabling and optical/copper splitters, a rack-mounted Gigabit hardware Probe, or as a ruggedized luggable PC Gigabit analyzer.

The Frame Relay analyzer will also be offered in similar formats, including options for two frame-speeds: T1/E1 and lower, as well as T1/E1-T3/E3 and DS3 speeds, a very rapidly growing segment. The Frame Relay option will be targeted to major telecoms and other large companies requiring high speed analyzation, expert diagnosis, SLA and QoS verification. Observer will provide Frame Relay analyzation at less than one-half the cost of competing products.

### **Upgrades To Observer Suite**

In addition to the features and enhancements added to Expert Observer, the Observer Suite now provides new SNMP trend charting options. Timelines are now accessed with convenient zoom-in and zoom-out controls, and new data representations are available including three-dimensional graphs. Also, all SNMP charts now offer timetable reference lines to pinpoint each event. "Network Instruments is the first and only network management firm to offer SNMP device analyzation in a switched environment," Smith commented. "With these enhancements, we have improved this unique capability, and continue to lead the industry with the merging of customary analysis and complete switch visibility."

Observer 8.0 is priced at \$995, Expert Observer 8.0 at \$2,895 (includes Observer) and Observer Suite at \$3,995 (includes Expert Observer). Wire-speed Gigabit options will start at \$8,000, and Frame Relay options will start at \$9,000.

### **About Network Instruments**

Network Instruments is the developer of Observer, Expert Observer, and Observer Suite, a line of protocol analyzation products that offer the ability to detect network abnormalities and report device or route failures. Network Instruments also develops and sells Link Analyst™ device-mapping software.

Network Instruments is a privately held company based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with offices throughout the United States and Europe, and distributors in over 48 countries. Information on the company and its products can be obtained by calling (952) 932-9899 or by visiting the company's Web site at [www.networkinstruments.com](http://www.networkinstruments.com).

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**Press materials for Observer® 8.0, Expert Observer® and Observer® Suite are available for downloading at our Press Center web site:**

[www.networkinstruments.com/html/observer\\_8\\_0\\_press\\_center.html](http://www.networkinstruments.com/html/observer_8_0_press_center.html)

**These materials include:**

- Observer 8.0 Press Release
- Observer Product Literature
- Observer Logos in various formats
- Network Instruments Logo in various formats

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**Observer, Expert Observer, and Observer Suite**  
**Version 8.0**

October 16th, 2007  
**Version 8.0 Released**

Windows XP compatibility, a wire-speed Gigabit analyzer and a Frame Relay option, over 20% more protocol decodes, and a more user-friendly interface takes network analysis for shared and switched LANs and WANs to the next level

**Observer** **EXPERT OBSERVER** **OBSERVER SUITE**

**Version 8.0 Information**

[Press Release](#)  
[Version 8.0 bitmaps/screenshots](#)

[Observer Product Literature \(Web format\)](#)  
[Observer Product Literature \(Adobe PDF format\)](#)

[Expert Observer Literature \(Web format\)](#)  
[Expert Observer Literature \(Adobe PDF format\)](#)

[Observer Suite Literature \(Web format\)](#)  
[Observer Suite Literature \(Adobe PDF format\)](#)

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