

Ascend

NetClarity

FAQ

1. *What is NetClarity?*

Ascend NetClarity network management software is the first tool designed for managing both points of presence and enterprise environments. It is the only end-to-end, multivendor solution designed specifically for ISPs, carriers and corporate WANs.

Starting with an unprecedented, comprehensive view of the thousands of elements found at the access layer of the network, Ascend NetClarity reaches across the enterprise to bring everything into clear focus: network devices (routers, switches, hubs); network services (Frame Relay ISDN, ATM); and physical interfaces (T1, E1, ISDN, BRI).

2. *What Ascend devices does NetClarity support?*

NetClarity provides extensive management capabilities for the full line of Ascend products, including:

- MAX™ Family (200Plus, 1800, 20xx, 40xx, MAX TNT)
- GRF™ Family (400, 1600)
- Pipeline® Family (25-Px and 25-Fx, 50, 75, 130)

In addition, NetClarity supports all cards that are utilized in these devices.

3. *Does NetClarity support devices from other vendors?*

Yes. NetClarity provides extensive management for devices from many vendors, including Cisco (routers and Catalyst switches), 3Com, Bay Networks, Digital Equipment Corporation and Novell.

4. *Will NetClarity help me troubleshoot problems on my network?*

Yes. NetClarity provides a wealth of tools that will help you pinpoint and resolve network problems. As a problem situation begins to develop on the network, such as high utilization rates or an excessive number of dropped calls, an alarm is sent to the console warning the operator of the situation. The operator can then begin to drill-down into the network using simple point-and-click actions, and quickly locate the source of the problem.

Because NetClarity has tools to monitor all aspects of the enterprise, it can locate the source of the problem, such as a faulty router interface, a problem with a T1 line, an excessive number of incoming calls, an erroneous configuration file or anything else that will negatively affect network operations.



5. *Will NetClarity help me plan for my future needs?*

Yes. With the most complete suite of performance tools of any management product, NetClarity provides all the critical utilization information you will need to ensure successful capacity planning. Through the use of automated historical trending reports, NetClarity delivers a steady flow of detailed graphical and numerical information, giving you complete understanding of all performance related issues.

No product offers as complete a look at performance. Only NetClarity delivers details on: remote access devices; network protocols; multi-vendor routers, switches and hubs; network services; physical interfaces; Frame Relay; virtual circuits; CIR; Ethernet; TokenRing; FDDI; packet flow statistics, and much more. Whatever your network is running, NetClarity can track it, trend it, and report it back to you in clear, easily understood formats, making capacity planning a logical process rather than a guessing game.

6. *Will NetClarity reduce the time it takes me to add new devices to my network?*

Yes. There are several features that will help you get new devices up and running in record time. First, NetClarity allows you to maintain a database of configuration templates for the devices on your network. With these templates, only minor modifications are needed in order to configure a new device. You do not need to recreate the configuration file each time a device is added. Once the device is turned on, NetClarity provides an easy-to-use point-and-click interface for uploading configuration files. This avoids the often error-prone use of Telnet sessions. NetClarity also maintains full chassis information for devices, detailing both the hardware and software running on each box. With this information readily at hand, it is easy to create duplicate configurations on new devices.

7. *How does NetClarity know what devices are on my network?*

NetClarity uses an SNMP-based process to automatically locate all the devices on your network and add them to the NetClarity database. Unlike typical discovery tools, NetClarity finds not only routers, but switches, hubs and remote access devices.

8. *Given the power of NetClarity, I am concerned about misuse of the product. How can I insure against this?*

NetClarity has a number of security functions that protect your network. Less experienced operators can be limited to managing only specific devices or device groups. A variety of password and lockout options prevent unauthorized users from accessing the product. And automatic console locking provides protection if a console is left untended.

9. *My network contains thousands of access ports and very high call volume. Can NetClarity help me manage this environment?*

Yes. Because of its ability to create logical device groups, NetClarity can reduce your thousands of ports into a manageable number of device groups. It then reports aggregate statistics for these groups, giving you a true picture of the overall performance of your access layer.

10. *My network contains a large number of devices that produce a tremendous volume of messages. Can NetClarity help me deal with this message volume?*

Yes. Through the use of intelligent event monitoring, NetClarity spots trends in the event stream and isolates severe and chronic problems, thereby reducing the number of messages returned to the console. Also, through the use of threshold settings, you can configure NetClarity to report errors only if they reach a significant level, based on your particular network's behavior.

11. *I am an ISP having a very hard time gathering usage and performance statistics about the access layer of my network.*

Will NetClarity deliver that information?

Absolutely. NetClarity is a generational leap in the management of the access layer, and it delivers both performance data and user accounting. You can use it to check the modem and channel utilization of the access layer, call rates, number of dropped calls, and more. User data is continually gathered — such as number of connections, time on-line — and NetClarity even relates user data to quality of service received, ensuring that you know not only who is calling and when, but what kind of service they're getting.

Add in NetClarity's ability to group large numbers of access ports into easily manageable, logical entities, and you have an unmatched tool for knowing exactly what is taking place at the access layer.

12. *I'm running an HP OpenView shop. Will I be able to use NetClarity?*

Yes. NetClarity is available as an OpenView application. It is tightly integrated with HPOV events, maps and SNMP APIs. In addition, NetClarity extends and enhances the mapping and discovery capabilities of HP OpenView.

NetClarity is available for HP OpenView on Solaris 2.5 and on HP UX 10.0 (Q3 1997). It is also available as a stand-alone application on Unix and Windows NT. The stand-alone version includes features often associated with management platforms (discovery, event handling, MIB browsing, etc.) but at a much lower entry point.

Worldwide and North American Headquarters
One Ascend Plaza
1701 Harbor Bay Parkway
Alameda, CA 94502, United States
Tel: 510.769.6001
Fax: 510.747.2300
E-mail: info@ascend.com
Toll Free: 800.621.9578
Fax Server: 415.688.4343
Web Site: <http://www.ascend.com>

European Headquarters
Rosemount House
Rosemount Avenue
West Byfleet
Surrey KT14 6NP, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 1932.350.115
Fax: +44 (0) 1932.350.199

Japan Headquarters
Level 19 Shinjuku Daiichi-Seimei Bldg.
2-7-1 Nishi-Shinjuku
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 163-07, Japan
Tel: +81.3.5325.7397
Fax: +81.3.5325.7399
Web Site: <http://www.ascend.co.jp>

Asia-Pacific Headquarters
Suite 1419, Central Building
1 Pedder Street
Central, Hong Kong
Tel: +852.2844.7600
Fax: +852.2810.0298

Latin, South America and the Caribbean Headquarters
One Ascend Plaza
1701 Harbor Bay Parkway
Alameda, CA 94502, United States
Tel: 510.769.6001
Fax: 510.747.2669

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Solutions That Work.™**