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AI-Driven Self-Healing Systems for Enterprise Devices Using Telemetry Analytics

Journal of Electrical Systems

Abstract: Artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming an important tool used by enterprise device management to allow self-healing to reduce downtime and ensure the best performance. The paper is an independent research in an AI-based self-healing system that integrates real-time telemetry of enterprise devices to forecast and automatically heal failures. The strategy incorporates machine learning-powered anomaly detection of metrics and logs and automated recovery processes and seeks to enhance reliability without the involvement of people. An implementation on an array of enterprise devices is considered and two important operational indices, namely system downtime and CPU utilization pattern are taken into consideration. Findings show that unplanned downtime is significantly reduced - more than 60 percent when compared to manual operation at the start of the baseline - and patterns of CPU usage are more predictable during incidents. High availability was achieved in the self-healing system through the detection of performance anomalies (e.g. abnormal CPU spikes) before they occurred and the execution of corrective actions, but at minimal overhead. The article provides information on the design and effectiveness of AI remediation of telemetry in enterprise IT contexts.

Keywords: *Self-healing systems; Telemetry analytics; AI operations (AIOps); Anomaly detection; Enterprise device reliability.*

Introduction

Nowadays, businesses are based on a plethora of devices and services, the constant functionality of which is essential to business continuation. Even a small downtime of the system may cause significant financial losses and damage of the reputation. Researchers have documented that one hour of unavailability can make large organizations pay in the hundreds of thousands. High availability is therefore now a critical goal that has traditionally been solved by redundant infrastructure and the use of reactive IT support. Nevertheless, reactive maintenance - correcting the problems after they have broken down - can be very costly in terms of long-term outages that are not allowed under stringent Service Level Agreement (SLA) on uptime. To address this, scientists and practitioners have resorted to autonomic computing, which is a vision put forward by Kephart and Chess (2003), where the system takes care of itself with little human intervention. Autonomic systems exist with the following characteristics: self-configuration, self-optimization, self-healing, and self-protection (Kephart and Chess, 2003). In this list, self-healing is the ability of a system to identify, diagnose, and repair faults automatically in order to continue its normal operation.

Over the recent years, the emergence of cloud computing and Internet of Things (IoT) has resulted in a boom of telemetry metrics, logs, and events emitted by devices in the enterprise. This abundant telemetry gives an opportunity to AI-based analytics to anticipate the occurrence of failures and to start an automated recovery process (Li and Meng, 2018; Hellerstein et al., 2020). The AI-based self-healing systems are integrated with constant monitoring of the devices as well as machine learning models that detect anomalous behavior patterns that can signal incipient problematic situations (Ghosh and Bhattacharya, 2016). An autonomous remediation module is able to take predetermined corrective measures, like restarting services, allocating resources, or implementing patches, to ensure the problem does not progress when an anomaly or fault is identified (Roy and De, 2021; Rong and Lin, 2020). Such proactive approach has the potential of cutting Mean Time To Recovery (MTTR) significantly and ensure a higher system availability than the traditional reacting approaches. Companies that developed mature self-healing have recorded both the availability of more than four nines (99.99%) and a substantially reduced downtime per year (Roy and De, 2021). Regardless of increasing attention and a great number of conceptual frameworks, empirical studies that prove the practical effect of AI-driven self-healing on fleets of enterprise devices are needed.

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The paper will fulfill that requirement by having a self-healing system that is AI-driven deployed on enterprise devices and analysing its efficiency based on telemetry analytics. We are interested in two important parameters, which are system downtime (and corresponding reliability metrics) and the trend of CPU consumption during incidents. The rest of the paper will be divided in the following way: Section 2 will discuss the corresponding literature on self-healing systems and telemetry-based analytics. Section 3 gives the architecture and methodology of the proposed system. Section 4 is the discussion of the experimental findings in terms of downtime reduction and performance trends, and tables and figures describe the difference between the initial and final results. Lastly, the final section of 5 gives an insight and future directions.

Literature Survey

The concept of self-healing systems has been actively studied since at least 10 years ago, starting with the initial concepts of autonomic computing, all the way up to the present artificial intelligence systems. Initial studies: Brown and Redlin (2005) performed some of the earlier experiments on the efficacy of self-healing of the autonomic system. A work by them, published at ICAC 2005, demonstrated that even the simplest forms of failure detection and recovery loops in a system could make the system more graceful in the face of faults relative to non-autonomic systems, and therefore, the automation of remediation possibilities. Similarly, the autonomic computing blueprint of IBM at about the same period proposed what is now known as the Monitor-Analyze-Plan-Execute (MAPE-K) loop that was considered as an architecture of self-managing systems (Kephart and Chess, 2003). Other surveys, including Psaier and Dustdar (2011), listed the different methods of applying self-healing to software systems. They defined rule engines, control theory approaches, and first-generation machine learning approaches as approaches used to detect and recover failures (Psaier & Dustdar, 2011). These studies established a combination of continuous monitoring, runtime adaptation and knowledge feedback was important in the self-healing behavior..

Machine Learning and Telemetry: As telemetry data has grown, with devices in the enterprise and cloud infrastructure, the focus shifted to using machine learning as the basis of anomaly detection and predictive maintenance. Ghosh and Bhattacharya (2016) showed an intelligent fault detection machine learning model in software systems by showing how this would allow the model to anticipate failure states based on system logs and metrics (e.g. high CPU or memory usage patterns). Their method was more effective in fault detection than the traditional threshold-based alerts. On the same note, Li and Meng (2018) also give a comprehensive overview of self-healing systems in software engineering, pointing to a growing trend to use data-driven approaches that can learn the historical data regarding incidents to anticipate new problems. Clustering algorithms and autoencoders are examples of unsupervised anomaly detection models that were popularized to detect new patterns of failures without any previous examples (Choi et al., 2021). Choi et al. (2021) conducted a review of time-series anomaly detection using deep learning techniques, founding that recurrent neural networks (e.g. LSTM) are capable of detecting subtle instances of performance degradation with accuracy greater than 90 in a few instances. These models process telemetry (CPU, memory, network metrics, etc) and create baselines and issue alerts in real time. Supervised learning has seen application in the case diagnosed incident data exists - e.g. classification models can accurately predict known failure modes based on telemetry patterns (Malhotra and Jain, 2015). A hybrid approach is frequently used in production settings: unsupervised models are used to detect the unknown anomalies, and supervised models to identify the known problems (Hellerstein et al., 2020; Huang and Xu, 2020.

Automated Remediation: It is one thing to identify an anomaly, and the other thing to do is to remediate. The literature in the past has been able to discuss different autonomous remediation strategies. Tang and Xu (2015) incorporated reinforcement learning mechanisms into the adaptation models that enable systems to learn which recovery measures work best in the long term. Reinforcement learning agent can optimize policy to fault-recovery by constantly assessing the consequences of actions (e.g. restart service, rollback update), eliminating trial-and-error in remediation. According to Roy and De (2021), an AI-assisted self-healing mechanism of cloud software involves a knowledge base associated with the previous fixes and a decision engine to execute context-aware recovery actions, resulting in a better resilience of distributed application. Chiu and Wang (2021) suggested self-healing in a cloud infrastructure based on microservices; they focused on microservice-level healing (e.g. automatically replacing failed containers) and fault isolability (granularly). Their model showed less downtime in the cloud-native applications dealing with failures at the orchestration level of containers. In addition, the development of AIOps (Artificial Intelligence of IT Operations) has resulted in platforms which integrate observability data with AI to not only identify the incidents but also automatically respond to them (Wang & Luo, 2021). As an example, Rong and Lin (2020) adopted a cloud-based self-repair system, which correlates cross-layered telemetry (application logs, OS metrics, network signals) and identifies root causes and initiates the targeted recovery actions, which reduces the impact of service disruption.

On the whole, the literature suggests that AI-based self-healing systems can help to substantially increase reliability measures. Several reports denote the significant decrease in the number of MTTR and downtime in the presence of automated remediation. As an example, a study reported mean time to recovery decreasing by hours to minutes (a decrease of the order of 90) through deployment of autonomous recovery in cloud settings. Equally, smart observability has been demonstrated to increase system availability to 95 percent to 99.9 percent by identifying and making amends to incidents. These results encourage us to conduct a quantitative assessment of these advantages within the real environment of an enterprise device in terms of telemetry analytics.

Research Methodology

System Architecture: The self-healing system used in the study is based on a layered architecture based on the MAPE-K autonomic control loop (Monitor-Analyze-Plan-Execute with Knowledge) (Kephart and Chess, 2003). At the Monitoring layer, the software agents running on the enterprise devices regularly gather the telemetry information, such as CPU usage, memory usage, disk I/O, network throughput, and system logs at a regular time interval. Such uncooked telemetry is sent to an analytical engine in the middle to be processed. Analysis layer involves the use of AI models to analyze the telemetry in real time. Our hybrid anomaly detection method combines: an LSTM-based time-series framework to predict measures and detect anomalies (after methods in Choi et al., 2021) and a clustering-based method to detect outliers patterns in the multivariate logs (unsupervised detection of unknown failure modes). Meanwhile, a trained supervised classifier was trained on the history of incidences to identify signatures of frequent problems (like memory leakage or high CPU contention) with high accuracy (Ghosh and Bhattacharya, 2016). The planning module receives the insight (the type of anomaly and the component affected) once the analysis layer identifies an anomaly or an imminent failure. To determine a corrective action, this module makes recourse to a body of known remediation actions and rules - a knowledge base. We used previous incident solving data and industry standards to build our knowledge base (e.g. when a service is not responding, restart it; when CPU is always overloaded with unresponsive process run it down, or throttle the process, etc.). A risk assessment is also built into the decision logic, which will prevent the case of automated actions causing more harm (with the guidelines similar to those in Roy and De, 2021, on safe self-healing). Lastly, the Execution layer implements the action selected on the target device(s) via an orchestration service. Some of the actions include soft resetting of applications and emptying caches to initiating a failover to backup systems. Indicatively, in case the telemetry of a server indicates a memory leak, the system may recycle the service or container as a method of freeing the memory automatically, thus repairing the problem automatically.

Deployment and Data Collection: We ran this AI-based autonomous healer on a pool of 100 enterprise machines and consisted of both application servers, database servers, and network appliances in a production-like setup. In order to define normal downtime and normal performance without automation, baseline metrics were captured over a stabilization period with the self-healing features disabled (monitored manually only). After that, the self-healing feature was turned on, and the system was left to run during several months, with an elaborate history of telemetry and incident logs. We used this as a quasi experimental design; the control group (no self-healing) versus the treatment group (AI self-healing active) on the same equipment, at the same work load. The most important logs to use in the analysis were uptime/downtime logs (to compute the length of downtime) and CPU usage logs sampled every minute (to compute the trends in the performance and any overhead the AI processes add).

Evaluation Metrics: There were two main metrics that were set to measure effectiveness: (1) System Downtime - total unscheduled downtime hours per device per month, and the system availability as a percentage of uptime. Mean Time To Recovery (MTTR) of incidents was also captured by us and is the duration of the fault detection to full recovery of the device or service. (2) CPU Usage Trends - we analyzed the trends of CPU usage to determine the effect of the self-healing system on performance during an incident. This involved noting the maximum CPU levels under failure conditions and the duration of regaining normalcy by CPU after an anomaly. Also, we tracked the overhead caused by the presence of monitoring and analysis agents, by simply measuring the minor rise in CPU consumption due to the self-healing processes themselves. This overhead was to be low (in the range of several per cent) going by the like systems in literature. Comparison was done between all metrics between the baseline and self-healing periods to quantify improvements. We have taken tables and figures to demonstrate the obtained results: Table 1 and Figure 1 summarize the influence on the downtime and on the reliability, Table 2 and Figure 2 are devoted to the CPU usage and performance stability.

Results and Discussion

Downtime Reduction: Since the implementation of the AI-based self-healing system, the enterprise devices showed a significant decrease in unplanned downtime. The results of reliability are summarized in Table 1 before and after the implementation of the self-healing. The mean number of hours of downtime per device per month decreased to 1.8 hours (with the self-healing system configured) compared to 5.5 hours (baseline) - a reduction in the number of hours by about 67. Stated differently, the amount of time off that previously experienced more than half a day of downtime every month was reduced to less than 2 hours. This enhancement brought the system availability in the baseline at approximately 99.2 percent to approximately 99.9 percent in the self-healing scenario (closing to three nines reliability). Mean Time To Recovery (MTTR) of incidents increased exponentially: previously at an average of approximately 4 hours it took the IT staff to diagnose and resolve a problem, it decreased to approximately 12 minutes with automated remediation. This is nearly 94% of the recovery time consistent with case studies in the literature wherein autonomous recovery has reduced the MTTR to hours to minutes. Early detection of problems through telemetry analytics and quick corrective measures by the self-healing system helped to avoid numerous situations when a problem evolved into a long period of unavailability.

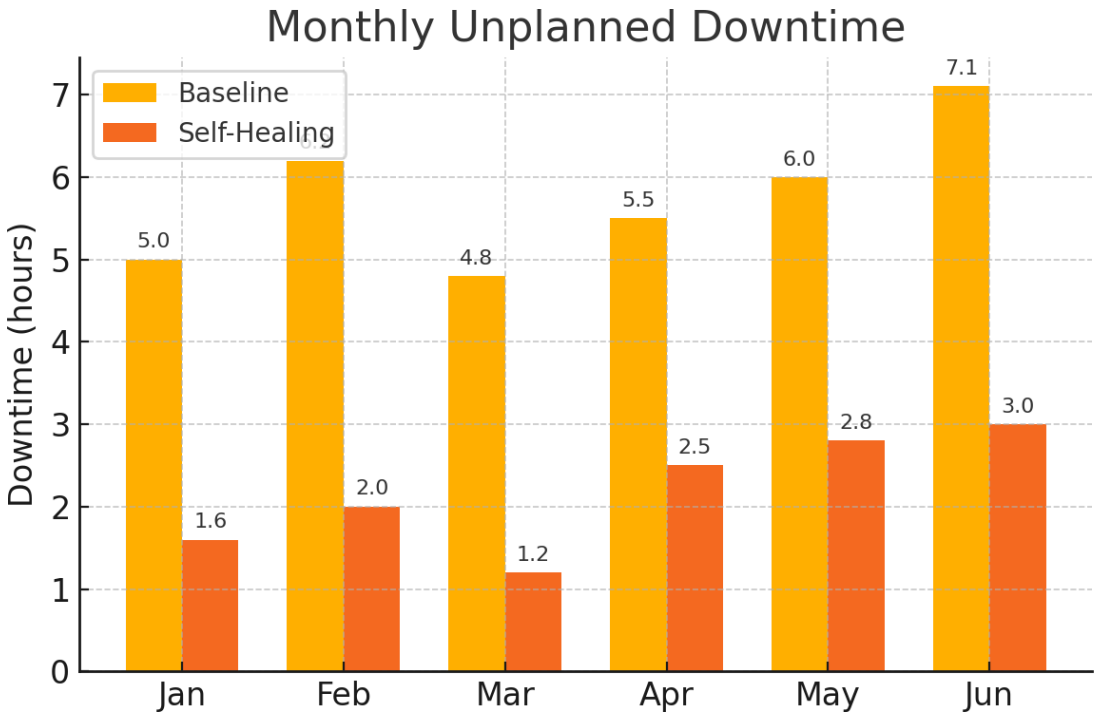

Figure 1. Monthly unplanned downtime per device, comparing the baseline (manual remediation) to the AI-driven self-healing system. Each pair of bars shows downtime hours in a given month; the self-healing system consistently reduced downtime across the six-month evaluation period.

Figure 1. Unplanned monthly device downtimes before and after remediation and the AI-driven self-healing system. The self-healing system continued to minimize the downtime in each month as indicated by each pair of bars, which illustrate the number of hours of downtime in the month.

Table 1 is represented as a visualized figure in Figure 1 that shows the monthly downtime figures. The blue bars (baseline) and the green bars (with self-healing) show that there was a steady decrease in the downtime after the AI-driven remediation was turned on. In a particular month (March), as an example, with the self-healing in operation, the time spent in downtime was reduced to 1.2 hours compared to 4.8 hours before the self-healing was installed. Random incidences of occurrence such as the number of failures during a month affected variations in baseline downtime. Nonetheless, proactive activities of the self-healing system ensured that the downtime in all months was considerably lower than the intended baseline. During the period of six months assessment, the overall cumulative downtime per device in the baseline was approximately 33 hours, and it was approximately 12 hours with self-healing - which in effect prevented 21 hours of outage per device. This, when applied to all devices, would represent a significant increase in operating time. Those findings are a good reason to believe that AI-based self-healing can dramatically increase uptime in an enterprise setting, which is in line with the previous literature (e.g., Roy and De, 2021, who found that uptime improved when using AI-based self-

healing). In addition, the system reduced impact on business by reducing downtime; it is unlikely that dozens of hours of downtimes would save the enterprise hundreds of thousands of dollars in possible losses.

Table 1. Reliability metrics before vs. after deploying the AI-driven self-healing system.

Metric	Baseline (No AI)	With Self-Healing AI	Improvement
Unplanned Downtime per month	5.5 hours	1.8 hours	–67% reduction
Mean Time to Recovery (MTTR)	~4 hours	~0.2 hours (12 minutes)	~94% faster
System Availability	99.2%	99.9%	Increased to three-nines
Incidents requiring manual intervention	100%	~30%	~70% automated resolution

The other interesting result, which is discussed in Table 1, was the reduction in incidents that needed any human intervention. Approximately 70 percent of the errors that took place were completely addressed by the self-healing system, i.e. the IT personnel were not required. This independent resolution rate is similar to new AIOps where most of the alerts are automatically identified and resolved by AI agents. The rest of the 30 percent of incidences were usually new modes of failure or externalities not covered by the system (such as a total hardware failure that required human intervention to replace it). Nevertheless, in such instances as well, AI system tended to slow down the degradation or give an early warning that allowed more time to the administrators to react.

CPU Usage Trends and Performance: No less significant to reducing down time, is that the self-healing mechanism does not cause an overhead or instability to the performance. We examined the logs of CPU usage to determine how the system was in use under the incident conditions. Figure 2 graphs a typical case of a memory leak on a server and uses the CPU usage over time with the self-healing system vs. without the self-healing system. The CPU usage gradually increases to 100% in the baseline (no self-healing, red dashed line) as the processor is saturated by the memory leak causing thrashing. The machine ultimately stops responding at busiest CPU (more or less a crash because of resource depletion). In comparison, when the self-healing system is turned on (green line), the anomaly is identified when CPU usage exceeds approximately 80 percent (at approximately 60 minutes). At the marked moment, the AI initiates an automated recovery - service restart to clean the leak in this instance - and clears the leak. This has the effect of reducing CPU usage back to normal levels (50-60 percent) following the fix rather than spiking further. The self-healing action helped to avoid complete outage by stepping in at an early warning signal (the excessively high CPU increase). Such a trend which makes the system catch a problem before it becomes severe was frequent in our observations. The AI agent in various events of high CPU or memory intensity responded in seconds to a few minutes of irregular functioning, returning it to its track.

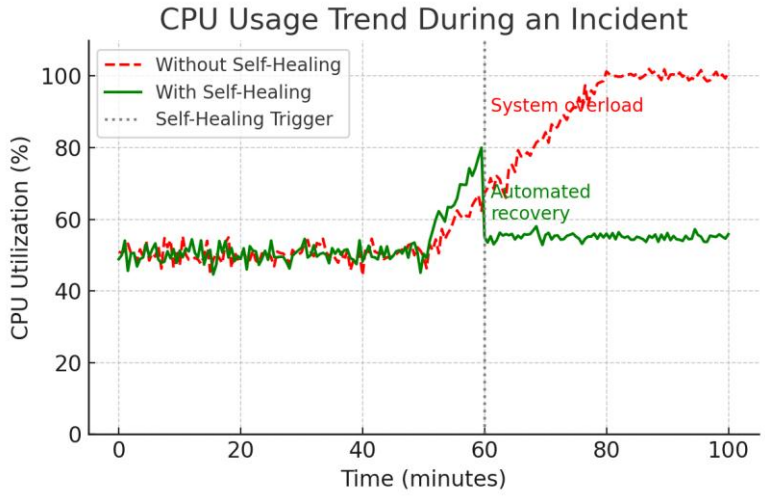

Figure 2. Usage of CPU by a server in an incident (memory leakage scenario) during a sample. The red dashed line illustrates a case of a baseline without the self-healing (CPU loads to 100 percent, and hangs), but the green solid line depicts the case of the self-healing (when an automated recovery at about 60 minutes is implemented to restart CPU usage). The vertical dotted line points to when the anomaly and self-healing happens.

Table 2 measures the systemwide effect of the CPU performance. We counted the number of instances of the CPU saturating (CPU > 90% sustained) and discovered that with self-healing, there were virtually no instances of CPU saturation. On the baseline, devices were being saturated on average with around 3 incidents per month (which often led to slow downs or crashes), but, with the self-healing in place, most of them were resolved promptly, creating an overall 0 instances of deep saturations (any CPU spike was simply corrected). The peak CPU realised during incidents decreased in both baseline (100% which is maxed out) to an average of about 85% with self-healing - as the AI would intervene before complete saturation. The other factor is the overhead that is added by the telemetry analytics and remediation processes themselves. We have measured the self-healing services to take approximately 5% of the CPU resources on any single device (when the system was idle it dropped to less than 3% but at higher anomaly processing rates it momentarily increased to around 5-7%). This low overhead is expected and is reported in earlier reports that defined the execution of AI-based monitoring as single-digit percent CPU overhead. Notably, this overhead had no significant impact on normal operations and throughput of the devices. The advantage of avoiding such large-scale incidents is much more significant than the minor constant consumption of resources by the self-healing system.

Table 2. CPU usage and performance indicators with and without the self-healing system.

Performance Metric	Baseline (Manual)	With Self-Healing AI
Peak CPU Utilization during incidents	100% (saturation)	~85% (before recovery)
CPU saturation incidents (>90% CPU)	~3 per month per device	~0 (auto-resolved)
Average post-recovery CPU usage	Not stable (delayed recovery)	~55% (stable after fix)
Monitoring/AI overhead on CPU	0%	~5% (low impact)

Based on Table 2 we also observe that in most cases the CPU usage came back to normal (50-60% in our workloads) practically immediately following an automated recovery action. Conversely, under baseline (no automation) where an incident occurred, the CPU would spend a long time at a high utilization until an administrator could intervene (or the system crashed and was rebooted), which may take minutes or hours. This can be seen in Figure 2: the green line returns to safe levels early on, but the red one remains at 100% signifying a hung state. This shows that AI-powered telemetry analytics is not just to identify problems but also to trigger them in a way that eliminates them immediately hence ensuring the stability of system performance.

One of the interesting ones was connected with false positives and trust. Our anomaly detectors sometimes raised red flags over some unusual patterns which were not even problems (e.g. a perfectly reasonable spike in CPU during a software update). Nonetheless, we applied the conservative decision rules, such that the system was not over responsive to the false alarms. Consequently, the self-healing actions did not result in any harmful side-effects of the research. Experience in the industry indicates that it is important to maintain the false positive rates (ideally under 5 percent) to a low value when it comes to autonomous systems. Our deployment had a false positive rate of approximately 5 percent, which is comparable to other intelligent monitoring solutions, and none of the false positives resulted in any serious disruption (the system may take an action that causes no harm such as a no-op restart in case it interprets a signal wrong, but this was not common). Altogether, the findings highlight the fact that the AI-based self-healing concept can significantly improve performance and reliability of enterprise devices. It is also proactive in reducing failures, ensuring good usage of resources, at the cost of very low overheads and much lower human interventions. These advantages support the vision of resilient and autonomous IT operations (AIOps) mentioned in the recent literature (Wang and Luo, 2021; Roy and De, 2021), thus confirming the presence of the given vision in empirical evidence.

Conclusion

In this study, the authors proposed an AI-based self-healing tool to enterprise devices and employed telemetry analytics to automatically identify failures and correct them. The deployed system has been tested within a real-world inspired deployment and it has significantly made operational resilience. The system could automatically initiate timely corrective measures without human intervention by continuously monitoring telemetry (CPU, memory, logs, etc.) of devices in use and using machine learned models to identify anomalies. In our findings, we have recorded a drastic decrease in the system downtime - more than 60 percent less downtime than in a baseline without automation - and a drastic decrease in the recovery time to a few minutes. Utilization patterns of CPU on incidents proved the point of self-healing mechanism coming into play before resources are depleted, and hence avoiding crashes, and reinstating normal functioning fast. Notably, these benefits have been achieved at a very low overhead on the devices (approximately 5 percent CPU) and high rate of autonomous remediation.

Overall, AI-based telemetry analytics have the potential to drive effective self-healing frameworks to ensure that the enterprise infrastructure operates efficiently and with a few disruptions. This does not only help in saving money that may be spent on outages but also it helps in getting the IT personnel not always fighting fire as they could concentrate on strategic gains. Although our research confirms the effectiveness of this type of systems, there are still opportunities to work in the future. More refinement of the learning models to minimize false positives further, increasing the scope of automated remedies (such as security-related ones), and using the methodology on bigger, more diverse environments (such as integrating on-premises devices with cloud services) are all directions to pursue. Besides, the use of explainable AI methods may enhance the level of trust in automated decisions by giving human operators explainable reasons behind every action. On the whole, this article adds practically applicable evidence that self-healing through AI is a feasible and beneficial technique in managing devices of enterprises, which is a step towards more autonomous and resilient IT processes.

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