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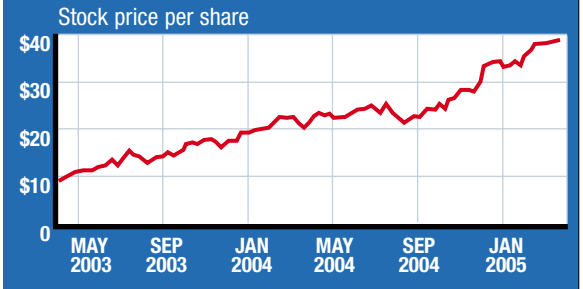
THIS eWEEK

FOR A COMPANY THAT SELLS CRM SOFTWARE, **Siebel Systems** had not been, it seems, treating its customers as well as it might have. For years, the company's top priority was growth, which meant getting customers to buy products—not necessarily listening to their needs. But that approach had stopped working for the San Mateo, Calif., company, leading to the replacement of company founder Tom Siebel nearly a year ago by IBM veteran **Michael Lawrie**.

In an exclusive eWEEK Interview, Lawrie told Senior Writer Dennis Callaghan how he has been changing the software vendor's culture to focus on customer needs above all else in an initiative called "Siebel Chapter 2." Customers such as **CarsDirect.com** and **Volvo IT North America** told Callaghan they appreciate the change.

Performance deserving an encore

NCR's stock climbed dramatically during Mark Hurd's tenure



Source: Yahoo

A week ago, **Mark Hurd** was perhaps the best-kept secret in Dayton, Ohio. But with his appointment to the helm of **Hewlett-Packard**, he can say goodbye to anonymity. Given the stellar performance of **NCR's** stock (see chart) since he became CEO of that company two years ago, it's surprising he has not become famous before now. HP Chairman Patricia Dunn would certainly be pleased if Hurd could make HP's stock price move in the same direction, something that Carly Fiorina was unable to do. As Senior Editor Jeffrey Burt reports, Hurd is realistic. "When I look at HP, I see a company that is fundamentally sound," Hurd said, adding, "but it's also clear the company is not performing to its potential."

In Labs, West Coast Technical Director Cameron Sturdevant reviews **AlterPoint's DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5**, which enables IT staffs to configure thousands of widely scattered network devices. The software suite automates the configuration, deployment and backup of switches, routers, firewalls, VPNs and wireless access points from a wide variety of vendors.

Also in Labs, Technical Analyst Michael Caton reviews **Exact Software's e-Synergy**, a Web-based business management suite for midsize companies that Caton found easy to use and customize. e-Synergy includes modules for CRM, human resources, logistics, budgeting and content management.

Till next eWEEK, send your comments to me at stan_gibson@ziffdavis.com.

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▼**Monday**, Ryan Naraine travels to InfoSec World in Orlando, Fla., to see what the new trends and products are in the realm of info security. Cyber-security, terrorism, Web services attacks, spam and VPN risks are just a few of the hot topics that will be discussed at the event.

Thursday, don't miss political columnist Chris Nolan's weekly musing on politics and technology in the Government Industry Center.

▼**Each day** check out Spencer F. Katt's Web log, updated daily, at blog.ziffdavis.com/katt, to see what is going on in his world.

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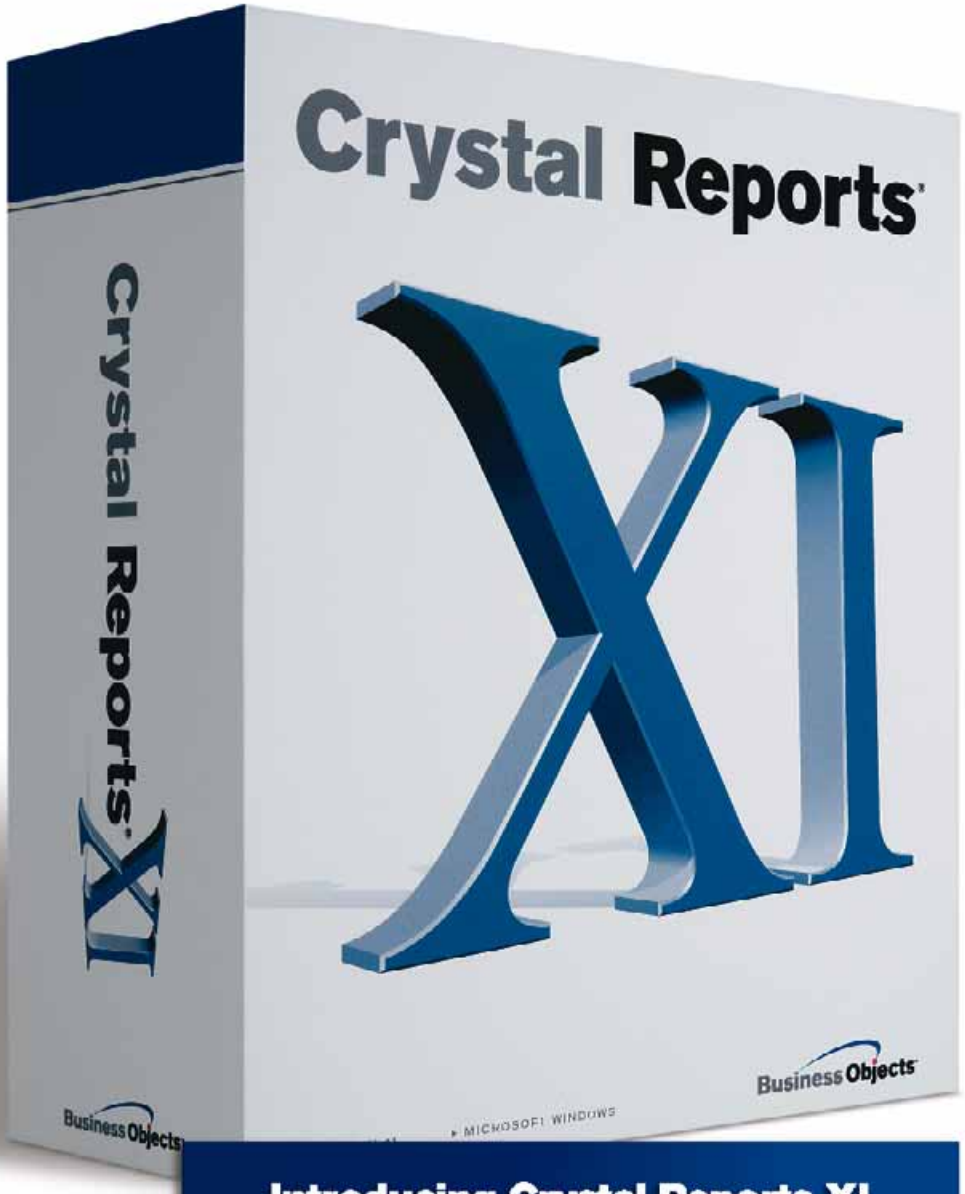

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Cover photo: Robert Adler

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NEWS & ANALYSIS

Storage virtualization tools refined

By Brian Fonseca

IBM, NETWORK APPLIANCE Inc. and Hitachi Data Systems Corp. are pushing storage virtualization to help administrators remedy shrinking capacity and poor utilization rates without increasing the number of storage arrays in their IT environment.

Improving the reach of its SFS (SAN File System) offering, IBM is revamping the storage virtualization product to automatically move data across various storage pools to and from tape, according to set policies. The redesigned SFS will be available by early next year, said Jens Tiedemann, general manager for storage software at IBM, in Armonk, N.Y.

Adding tape to the mix of SFS will improve ILM (information lifecycle management) by increasing speed and scalability and easing compliance, archiving, and backup and recovery efforts, analysts say.

According to sources, IBM plans to pit its SFS tape functionality against storage rival EMC Corp.'s DiskXtender. EMC will introduce an updated version of DiskXtender next quarter, while EMC Storage Router storage virtualization

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 10]

Sun downsizes N1 plan

COMPANY PLANS TO DEBUT APP ON ITS OWN HARDWARE FIRST

By Peter Galli

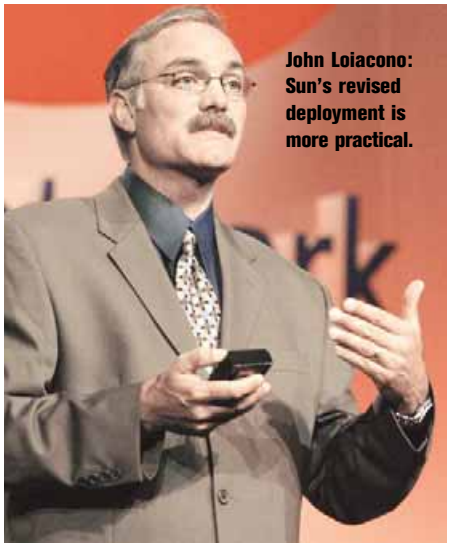
SUN MICROSYSTEMS INC. has again scaled back its once-grand plans for its N1 Grid utility computing initiative, while at the same time doing an about-face on its promise to deliver N1 Grid and associated services on multiple hardware platforms simultaneously.

The Santa Clara, Calif., company will now release N1 Grid first on its own hardware and then roll it out to other platforms over time.

John Loiacono, Sun's executive vice president for software, confirmed Sun has changed its N1 Grid implementation plan dramatically, saying those changes will become visible in the next few months when Sun releases a refreshed version that focuses on a more practical approach to dealing with how multiplatform services are provisioned.

"We will focus first on the Sun platform from a hardware perspective," Loiacono said. "Our initial hope was that N1 would solve all sorts of problems in a multiplatform world, but we are now pulling back to something that is far more practical than that. The advent of utility computing and what we are doing in the grid space come right into play with this new vision."

Sun's N1 Grid competes with IBM's on-demand technology and Hewlett-Packard Co.'s Adaptive Enterprise, as well as with technology from Veritas Software Corp., Microsoft Corp. and Computer Associates International Inc.



John Loiacono: Sun's revised deployment is more practical.

Under the utility computing model, hardware adjusts automatically to allow computing tasks to be accomplished within a set time, requiring a computing infrastructure that is flexible and where hardware can be quickly reconfigured to meet changing business needs.

James Dobson, a systems architect at Dartmouth College, of Hanover, N.H., which has a large grid computing project, is not surprised by Sun's move. "I had some doubts about any vendors doing true heterogeneous systems management. N1 Grid as a distributed computing platform is a great idea. Systems management, however, is very different."

Jonathan Eunice, an analyst at Illuminata Inc., in Nashua, N.H., said the grand vision of N1 Grid that Sun once espoused has essentially evaporated. "There seemed to be a lot of tumult at Sun as to what N1 is and should be," Eunice said. "This latest downsizing is a major shift by Sun toward just managing their gear, and it is a much smaller vision for N1. But that is a far more realistic view."

Sun and others in the industry have taken on a lot with their sweeping vision of solving the complexities

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SugarCRM adds collaboration

By Dennis Callaghan

Open-source customer relationship management software developer SugarCRM Inc. is adding several new components to extend the capabilities of its sales, marketing and customer service applications.

The company plans to announce the new release, Sugar Professional 3.0, later this month at the MySQL Users Conference in Santa Clara, Calif. SugarCRM's components can be downloaded for free, although the company sells an enhanced version of the Linux components as Sugar Professional, as do a number of software resellers and systems integrators.

Sugar Professional 3.0 enables team calendaring.

In Sugar Professional 3.0, part of the vendor's Sugar Suite offering, the Cupertino, Calif., company is adding a new module called Sugar Collaborate that will bring a number of project-driven capabilities to SugarCRM's existing applications, which include Sugar Marketing and Sugar Support.

Document management capabilities will be added throughout the suite, including the ability to manage sales documentation, marketing collateral and customer service incident reports.

"We have a help desk, so we'll be able to utilize the document management piece to track [customer support] issues," said Charles Hausmann, chief technology officer of Internet vaulting managed service provider VaultLogix Inc., in Ipswich, Mass., which has six users using Sugar Professional, mostly in sales and service.

Support for lightweight calendaring, project management, tasks and activities reminders, and employee directory access will also be added in this version. The Sugar Sales module will get new sales forecasting capabilities, including support for pending deals and the auto-calculation of revenue based on sales opportunities.

Sugar Professional 3.0 will be available in beta April 18. The upgrade is free to current license customers on a maintenance subscription and will be extended to SugarCRM's on-demand and Sugar Cube appliance delivery models.

SUN FROM PAGE 9

around data automation, policies and autonomic computing, Eunice said.

The basic concept and philosophy behind Sun's N1 Grid vision is that the network is the resource that will make computing flexible and easily connected. Sun planned to add the management and coordination software so that everything could be coordinated closely around the network, Eunice said.

"Trying to solve this for Windows, Linux, Cisco [Systems Inc.] routers, as well as for IBM and Dell and other servers, is just not a very attractive prospect for a company like Sun that needs to sell its own servers," Eunice said.

Loiacono believes the whole industry is to blame for the high expectations that were set.

"Yes, I promised something other than what we will initially deliver. Was it overhyped? Yes. Was I one of the overhypers? Probably, but so was everyone else," he said. The reality that can now be delivered on is real code that solves real problems, Loiacono said.

"You will see a greater push out of Sun and more talk about something we refer to internally as CNS, or the Customer Network Systems group, which is becoming a big motivator for how we do things at Sun," Loiacono said. "CNS essentially will see every component technology at Sun, from the server to the operating system to a Java virtual machine running on a handset, able to connect back to Sun.

"I want to be able to feed information to it and get information back from it, in the sense that I am looking for enough telemetry to service, provision and patch the product if the customer wants me to or allows me to. Customers will obviously be able to opt out," Loiacono said.

VIRTUAL STORAGE FROM PAGE 9

technology will debut this quarter, said EMC officials in Hopkinton, Mass.

Customer Brian Perlstein, IT technical architect for Oakwood Healthcare System, in Dearborn, Mich., said data-volume growth can't be managed solely by adding new storage boxes.

"We were running out of floor space, and we had systems that needed more disks," said Perlstein, who runs IBM's SVC (SAN Volume Controller) virtualization product.

Perlstein used SVC to consolidate and centralize the management of 16TB of storage featuring a document imaging system and several Microsoft Corp. SQL Server databases on IBM Enterprise Storage Server F20, DS4000 and DS4300 boxes. He said disk drive utilization increased some 80 percent.

For its part, NetApp last week announced the availability of the V-Series, its rebranded gFiler product, revamped to leverage NetApp's Data OnTap 7G virtualization software. The enhancement enables the V-Series to support tiered storage and third-party storage products from IBM, Hewlett-Packard Co. and Sun Microsystems Inc., said Jeff Hornung, vice president of enterprise file services and storage networking for NetApp, in Sunnyvale, Calif.

HDS, a wholly owned subsidiary of Hitachi Ltd., is leveraging the broad demand for NAS (network-attached storage) to drive its storage virtualization-based TagmaStore Universal Storage Platform functionality deep into customer environments.

This week, HDS, in Santa Clara, Calif., will introduce the Hitachi NAS Blade, which supports as much as 512TB per NAS cluster and 2 petabytes of NAS storage per TagmaStore deployment.

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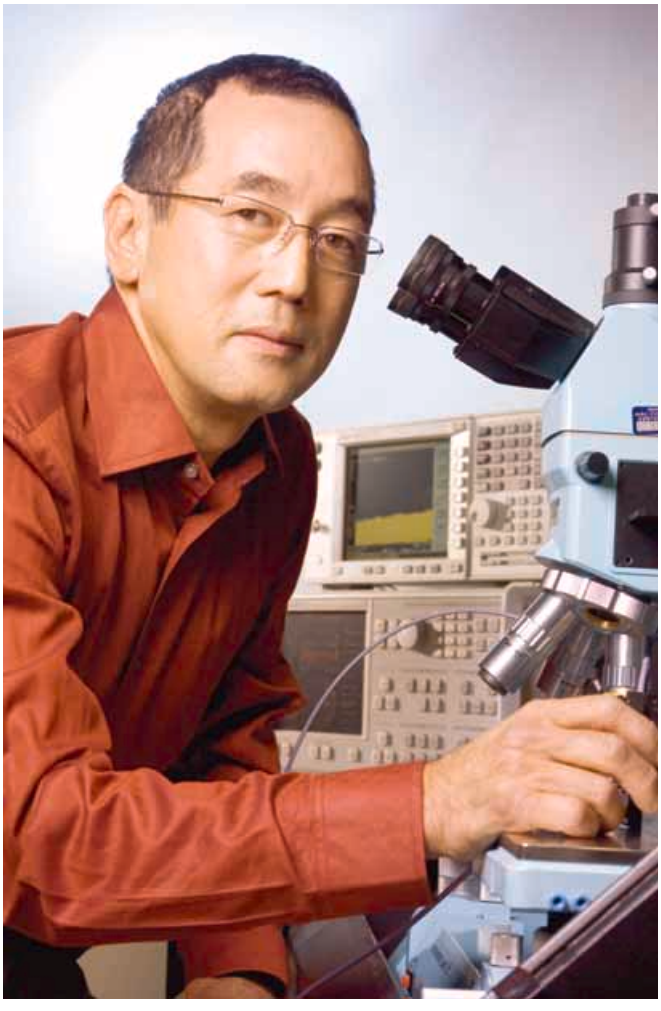

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LATE NEWS

Microsoft releases SP1 for Server 2003

MICROSOFT LAST WEEK RELEASED THE CODE for its Windows Server 2003 Service Pack 1 as a free download, some two years after Server 2003 was first released. The code includes security enhancements and some reliability and performance improvements. Also released was code for the new 64-bit versions of Windows: Windows Server 2003 Standard x64 Edition, Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Enterprise x64 Edition, Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Datacenter x64 Edition and Windows XP Professional x64 Edition. Microsoft is planning for general availability of the x64 editions of Windows later this month.

Net attacks unabated

THE AMOUNT OF MALWARE PLAGUING THE Internet shows no signs of tapering off, according to researchers. Trend Micro documented nearly 7,600 worms and viruses in the first quarter, a 300 percent increase over the same period last year.

The company said three of the six serious outbreaks in the quarter were from worms that spread via instant messaging networks. Also making a mark in the early part of this year were viruses affecting mobile devices, such as Velasco, Locknut and Drever.

Transmeta regroups

UNABLE TO COMPETE IN MOBILE COMPUTING, Transmeta is discontinuing its Crusoe and 130-nanometer Efficeon chips and offering only 90-nm Efficeons to select customers as part of a broader restructuring, officials said last week.

The reorganization resulted in the layoffs of 67 employees, bringing the work force down to 208. President and CEO Matthew Perry resigned and was replaced by Arthur Swift, senior vice president of product marketing. Transmeta will begin aggressively marketing the licensing of its intellectual property, officials said. e

IBM adopts open development

COMMUNITY SOURCE CODE IN BROAD USE INTERNALLY

By Darryl K. Taft

FOLLOWING ON THE SUCCESS OF ITS Eclipse open-source development platform, IBM has quietly been using a form of open-source development internally to create technology the company will sell commercially.

IBM calls its model Community Source, which it defines as a collaborative, internal, open-source-style environment for developing and testing new technology.

Danny Sabbah, vice president of strategy and technology for the IBM Software Group, in Armonk, N.Y., said IBM is using its Community Source model across 100 projects and 2,000 developers in the company. These projects span the IBM Software Group, Systems Group, Research and Global Services, he said.

Sabbah: "[Community Source is] an arrow in our quiver."

Already, more than 30 of the Community Source projects have produced code that has found its way into IBM products, such as WebSphere Application Server, WebSphere Business Integration Server, IBM Lotus Workplace, IBM Rational Application Developer, Rational Web Developer and some Tivoli offerings. And using this approach has cut development time some 30 percent while improving quality, Sabbah added.

Sabbah said it's a new way for IBM to build software products, and it is here to stay. "It's an arrow in our quiver," Sabbah said of the Community Source model.

The process evolved out of IBM's work with open-source communities.

"We got to know more than just that community; we got to understand the process that they use and how various code bases [evolve]," Sabbah said.

At the same time, IBM has been shifting its own development, moving to more granular views of delivering capabilities. As a result, IBM has had to take capabilities being developed by each of its individual brands and componentize them "so that they not only had an external persona as a product, but also an internal persona as a capability," Sabbah said.

The type of reuse IBM was doing was not cutting it for such a widespread organization, he said. "We said, 'We're not trying to tackle the entire world, we're just trying to solve a problem for IBM, and maybe the same process could actually work internally,'" Sabbah said. "It took off and succeeded beyond anybody's wildest dreams."

"I personally believe there are many practices and principles used by the better open-source communities that can be brought to internal development," said Brian Behlendorf, an open-source pioneer and founder and chief technology officer of CollabNet Inc., in Brisbane, Calif. "Transparency doesn't just mean access to code; it means access to the development plans, requirements and defects, and the team members themselves."

Among the components being used and shared among the projects are a Java Content Repository based on JSR (Java Specification Request) 170, a business process choreography engine and some core tooling components out of IBM's Rational division.

"One of the big benefits and drivers for open source they see is aligned interests," said Michael Goulde, an analyst with Forrester Research Inc., in Cambridge, Mass. "By that I mean the ability to coordinate through collaboration and sharing across multiple entities, either companies or development groups, where those groups have interests in common."

To date, IBM has kept its Community Source project close to the vest. "We were running experiments around it, and we had not made a big deal out of it before," Sabbah said. e

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DB2 WON'T ABANDON YOU.

Perhaps you've heard: Oracle desupported Oracle Database 8i last year. Meaning potential headaches, higher cost or a complete migration to current versions of Oracle. Fortunately, IBM offers ongoing, around-the-clock service and support for DB2.

But that's not all. A Solitaire study has found that, on average, Oracle Database requires 25% more time to manage than DB2.[1] That's big.

And an ITG study showed overall costs for Oracle Database up to four times higher than DB2.[2] The Transaction Processing Performance Council results show that DB2 and eServer™ p5-595 are more than twice as scalable as Oracle Real Application Clusters, making them the overwhelming performance and scalability leader for TPC-C.[3] That's big, too.

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HP FINDS ITS MAN

BOB PONZONI

SEEKING 'SUSTAINED LEADERSHIP AND SUCCESS,' COMPANY TAPS NCR'S HURD TO REPLACE FIORINA

By Jeffrey Burt

MARK HURD IS NO CARly Fiorina, and that is exactly what the Hewlett-Packard Co. board of directors was looking for in its new CEO.

Fiorina arrived at HP six years ago as a rising industry star, a flashy and charismatic personality charged with injecting new energy into a company that seemed out of step with the heady times of the Internet bubble.

By contrast, Hurd, the 48-year-old president and CEO of NCR Corp., who was named last week to replace Fiorina, comes to HP with the task of moving the world's second-largest computer maker in the right direction.

"We wanted someone who could return this great company to sustained leadership and success," HP Chairman Patricia Dunn told reporters and analysts last week.

Dunn said they found that person in Hurd, a 25-year veteran of NCR, a Dayton, Ohio, company known for making ATMs, point-of-sale devices and data warehousing appliances.

Hurd helped steer NCR through troubled financial times after it was spun off by AT&T Corp. HP's board is hoping he can do the same in Palo Alto, Calif., for a company still trying to mesh after its $19 billion purchase of Compaq Computer Corp. in 2002 and a series of reorganizations under the prior regime.

Hurd's appointment surprised many who had expected HP to dip into the ranks of major competitors such as IBM. NCR, with $5.9 billion in revenue last year and 28,500 employees, is a fraction of the size of HP, an $80 billion company with 150,000 workers.

However, like HP, NCR is an old-world tech company with multiple product lines, which at times has struggled to adapt in a fast-changing industry. After the spinoff from AT&T in 1997, Hurd—as chief operating officer and, later, president and CEO—refocused NCR as a maker of self-service retail appliances while internally cutting costs and re-energizing marketing efforts. He also resisted pressure to spin off NCR's lucrative Teradata data warehousing business.

At HP, Hurd takes over a company with a broad product portfolio that touches everything from large enterprises to the smallest businesses, as well as the consumer market. HP's enterprise hardware business, in particular, has seen its sales fluctuate wildly since the Compaq merger. At the same time, Hurd will have to deal with the drain of executive talent from HP during Fiorina's tenure.

However, he got a boost from

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Vyomesh Joshi, executive vice president of the Imaging and Personal Systems Group, who was considered the top internal candidate for the job. Joshi, in charge of not only HP's $24.2 billion printing business but also the PC segment, told reporters after Hurd's appointment that he planned to stay with HP, giving Hurd a key executive to rely on.

Industry observers call Hurd's appointment a bold move but one that could pay off for HP only if Hurd can scale his operational know-how to the industry behemoth.

"He's demonstrated the ability to turn around troubled business units and companies and to make the tough decisions to cut costs," said Frank Gillette, an analyst with Forrester Research Inc., in Cambridge, Mass. Gillette said Hurd's easygoing manner "will go over well at HP. That was something that was missing in the previous regime."

Umesh Ramakrishnan, vice chairman of the executive search company Christian & Timbers Inc., said that while Hurd may be a relative unknown, he's been in demand for several years by companies looking for new CEOs. Christian & Timbers, which placed Fiorina with HP six years ago, has approached Hurd several times over the past few years about his interest in other CEO jobs, and each time he turned them down, preferring to stay with NCR.

"He's definitely been under consideration for a long time," said Ramakrishnan in Cleveland.

For his part, Hurd, in conference calls with reporters and analysts, said he will spend the next few months meeting with employees, customers and partners to learn as much as possible about HP before making any major decisions about the company's direction. He also deflected questions about ongoing calls by financial analysts to spin off certain business segments. However, he did say that HP's broad product portfolio was one of its strengths and that he interpreted the idea of breaking up the company as a "surrogate" for improving performance.

"When I look at HP, I see a company that is fundamentally sound," Hurd said. "But it's also clear the company is not performing to its potential. Now, I'm not here to pass judgment on the past few years. In fact, I'm not concerned at all about the past. The initial focus will be on improving operations, creating demand for our technology and driving profitable growth."

Customers are hoping that Hurd's appointment will bring stability to a company that's had more than its share of drama over the past few years. For David Nardi, senior systems administrator at The Yankee Candle Company Inc., in South Deerfield, Mass., that means stemming the flow of job cuts that has resulted in the wrong people working on the wrong products.

"Right now, you get nonenterprise people working on enterprise systems," Nardi said. "You might be running [Unix] systems and get Compaq guys working on them who only really know [Intel Corp.-based] ProLiants. ... Maybe he can get the company going in the right direction."

Bob Combs isn't so sure. A program manager for a large software company and a longtime HP user, Combs said he had hoped for an exec-

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Commentary: Eric Lundquist

To survive, Hurd must stay ahead of the pack

THE MOST COMMON REACTION upon hearing that Mark Hurd has been named HP's new CEO is a shoulder shrug followed by "Who?"

In selecting Hurd, HP's board has gone for substance over flash, suit and tie over hip, and someone more at home talking about databases and enterprise infrastructure than about the grand convergence of all things digital.

A short seven weeks after the abrupt ouster of Carly Fiorina, HP's board decided that a 25-year veteran of a company that began in 1884 building mechanical cash registers is the right person to oversee the sprawling, $80 billion Palo Alto, Calif., technology giant.

In making the move from NCR to HP, Hurd is moving up from a company with a strong track record during his CEO tenure but one that is, at $5.9 billion in 2004 revenues, smaller than any of the divisions of the company he will now be heading.

Initially at least, Hurd, 48, will have to rely mightily on HP executives overlooked in the selection process who run operations larger than that run by their new boss. HP's highly profitable Imaging and Printing Group under Vyomesh Joshi was already a $24 billion business even before the recent fold-in of the company's PC business.

The HP board's decision to go with a conservative choice fits well with the current technology climate. As the U.S. Supreme Court weighs issues around file sharing, and consumer electronics companies fall over themselves to cut game and MP3 player prices, investors have been looking toward conservative technology vendors with strength in customer technology infrastructure integration.

IBM's acquisition of Ascential, Oracle's purchase of Retek (outbidding SAP in the process) and the recent $11.3 billion leveraged buyout of SunGard are only the most recent examples of technology vendors being highly valued for their skills in the profitable, if somewhat boring, business of tying internal systems together.

NCR—in particular, its Teradata division—is deeply involved in those customer integration projects. HP has never quite been able to articulate its Adaptive Enterprise concept, while NCR brings a plain-spoken, Midwestern touch to this acronym-laden industry.

You want to become an adaptive company, go to HP. You want to make your cash registers talk to your inventory, go to NCR. You want to talk about micro-payments, go to HP. You want to stick an ATM over by the magazine rack, go to NCR.

Hurd has a big task ahead of him. Customers dislike uncertainty, and competitors love uncertainty in their competition. Dell, IBM Global Services and EMC are ready to capitalize on any missteps at HP.

It will be up to Hurd to move fast without making any mistakes in an industry that is changing under his feet. *e*

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HURD FROM PAGE 15

utive with experience in the same part of the industry where HP plays, and he was skeptical of Hurd's performance at NCR.

"He did a lot to boost NCR's bottom line, but I didn't really see how he really helped the customer, and that's what I think HP will have to do," Combs said.

However, Combs said he knows little about Hurd beyond what he's read.

"I don't want to unfairly judge him," Combs said. "He could be the right guy. I don't know. ... There's nothing there to get me overjoyed at the announcement, but it didn't make me cry, either. I just don't know. He's an unknown." e

Joshi impact still key

IF MARK HURD IS TO SUCCEED AT THE HELM OF HEWLETT-Packard Co., he'll need to get a handle on the thorny issues still surrounding the company's recently combined printing and PC groups, and for that, observers say, he'll need the help of the insider who knows them best.

Vyomesh Joshi, the rising HP star many saw as a strong internal candidate for the CEO post, will play a vital role in helping Hurd execute on a plan while building on his own successes as head of the Imaging and Personal Systems Group at HP.

The HP board's selection of an outsider was seen by many as a slight to Joshi, but it was critical for the company's success to keep Joshi at the helm of the key group, say sources. Joshi said last week that he has no plans to leave the company in the wake of Hurd's appointment, according to HP officials in Palo Alto, Calif.

"It's a little bit of a slap in the face for someone who was in control of the majority of HP's business and did that so successfully," said Chris Barnes, an analyst with Gap Intelligence Inc., in San Diego. "But Joshi is clearly having success and funding growth in other areas. Why kill off that goose?"

Analysts say Joshi's work with Hurd is vital to HP.

Joshi took over IPSG earlier this year, with responsibility for printers, supplies, projectors, digital cameras, desktop and notebook PCs, handhelds, personal storage appliances, and workstations. He won respect internally and in the industry for his success running the former Imaging and Printing Group, which generated $24 billion in revenue last year and accounted for nearly 75 percent of HP's profit.

While Hurd brings a successful track record leading NCR Corp.—a global company with diverse business lines—some insiders question whether it will be a matter of what Hurd can do for Joshi or what Joshi can do for Hurd. With HP's printing business facing more competition than ever, Joshi will be a critical force for HP—and for Hurd—say analysts.

"Maybe Hurd can bring more out-of-the-box thinking around solutions and how to bridge IPSG with other parts of HP," said Angele Boyd, an analyst with IDC, in Framingham, Mass.

—Shelley Solheim

Analysts: New HP chief must regroup quickly

By Paula Musich

ALTHOUGH HEWLETT-PACKard Co.'s newly minted CEO said he plans no major changes any time soon, industry observers say Mark Hurd has little time to waste in reshaping parts of the struggling company.

"There is a short list of things he has to address immediately: what happens to the enterprise server business, the enterprise services business and the OpenView business. I frankly don't think he has more than 30 to 45 days to declare what he's going to do and begin to do it," said Michael Dortch, an analyst at Robert Frances Group Inc., in Westport, Conn.

HP Services' Livermore was a candidate for CEO.

One bright spot for HP lately has been the services operation, which has won high-profile outsourcing deals competing against rival IBM Global Services.

"We've been very happy with the support we've gotten from the services organization and the relationship we have. We don't anticipate there to be any changes associated with Mark Hurd's appointment," said spokesperson Rob Shimp, of The Procter & Gamble Co.'s Global Business Services unit, in Cincinnati, which signed a 10-year, $3 billion IT outsourcing deal with HP in 2003.

But as Hurd looks to improve profitability across HP's disparate businesses, there are possible changes to IT outsourcing services that could help improve the near-term bottom line, said Andy Efstathiou, an analyst who follows enterprise computing at Yankee Group Research Inc., in Boston.

"Large deals have a propensity to have negative margins in the early years, and they have much larger margins in later years. Where he's struggling with margin now, I would anticipate he will re-evaluate how rapidly they want to go after big deals," said Efstathiou.

HP Services, led by Executive Vice President of Technology Solutions Ann Livermore, a 22-year HP veteran, could experience an executive shake-up if Livermore decides to leave in the wake of Hurd's appointment. She had been considered an internal candidate for the CEO position.

"I know Ann is a longtime HP veteran who will stick with the company if she likes what new management will bring," said Eric Rocco, an analyst at Gartner Inc., in Lowell, Mass.

On the software front, Hurd will be challenged to improve the effectiveness of OpenView marketing, analysts say.

Although the software languished for years under different product groups, it has seen more investment in recent years and is now viewed as an asset, the analysts say. e

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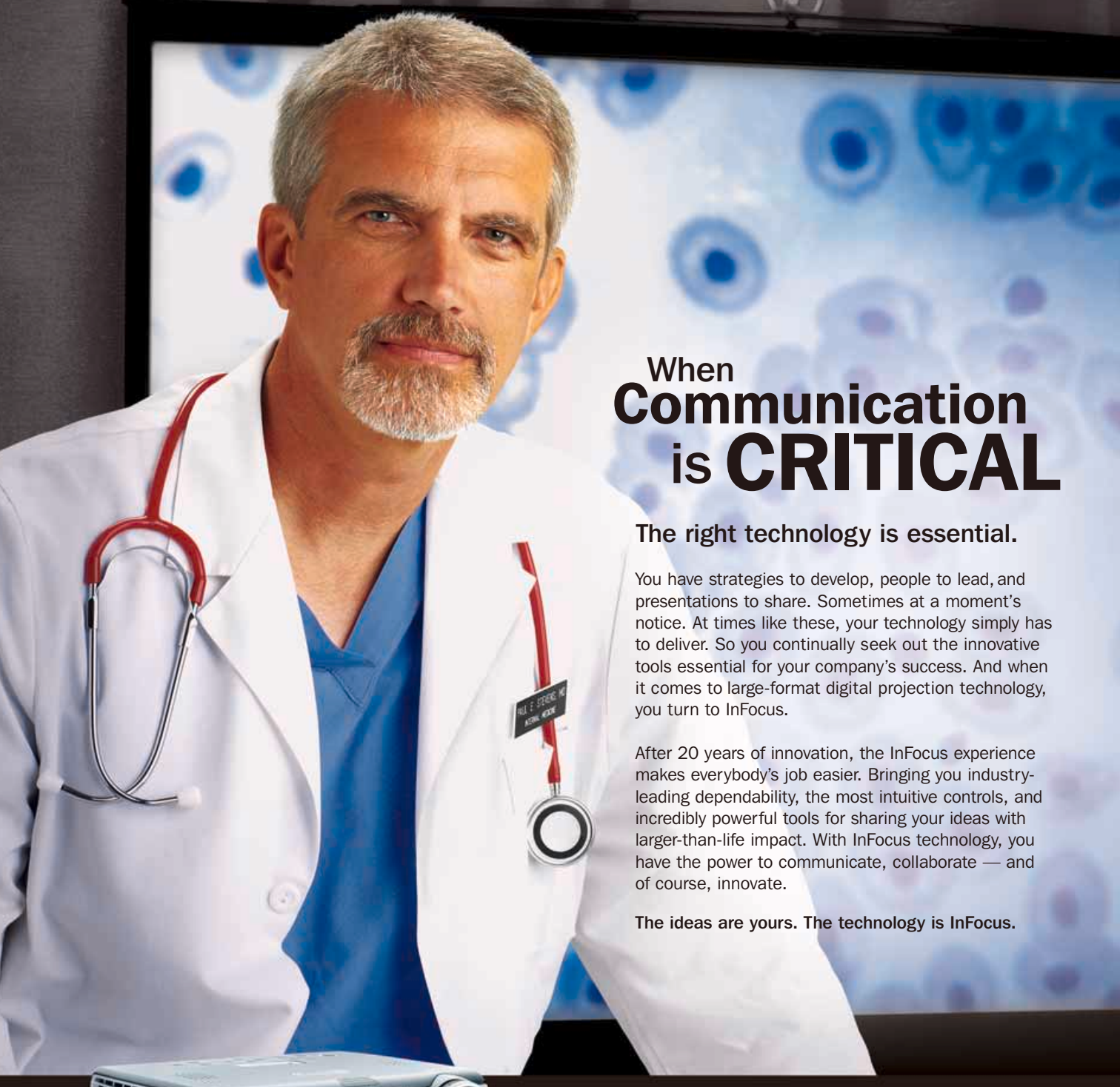

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eWEEK INTERVIEW

Lawrie rewrites the Siebel book

CEO MAKES SMALLER BUSINESSES A PRIORITY, INSTITUTES CULTURAL CHANGES TO ADDRESS CUSTOMER, PARTNER AND LEADERSHIP NEEDS

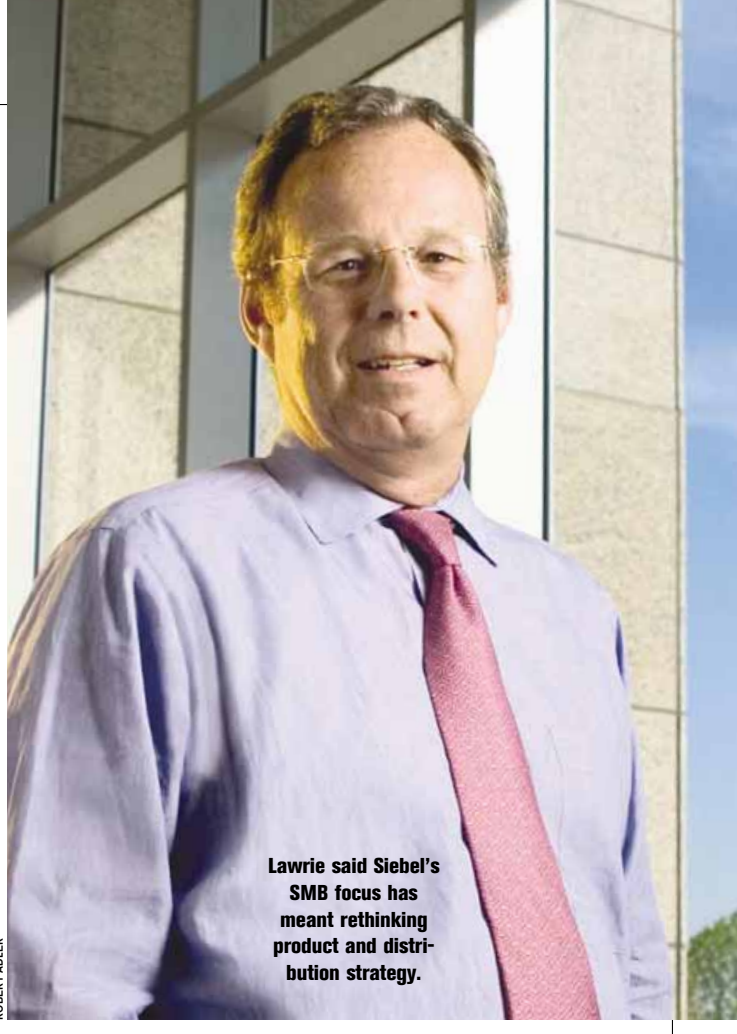
IT'S BEEN NEARLY A YEAR SINCE LONGTIME IBM EXECUTIVE Michael Lawrie replaced founder Tom Siebel as CEO at Siebel Systems Inc. In that time, Lawrie has increased Siebel's focus on small and midsize businesses, made customer success a bigger priority, and sought to change the top-down culture at the company. So far, so good: Siebel reversed a 13-quarter trend of falling revenues in the fourth quarter of last year. Recently, Lawrie sat down with eWEEK Senior Writer Dennis Callaghan at the company's San Mateo, Calif., headquarters to discuss his authorship of "Siebel Chapter 2."

You've made the SMB space a priority for Siebel. Is that something you learned at IBM, or is that just the market reality for all companies right now?

I was responsible for SMB at IBM, so, yes, I have a long history in that marketplace. But, fundamentally, it is a marketplace that has enormous potential, it's highly fragmented and many of Siebel's offerings fit the needs of the customers in that marketplace.

But we had to rethink our distribution strategy; we had to rethink the products that we built so that the products were applicable to the requirements of that marketplace; we had to put an organization together to go focus on that, a financial model appropriate to the small- and medium-business marketplace. So, yes, all those things I was very familiar with and certainly have used some of that knowledge to help us begin to build the organization and products necessary for Siebel to compete successfully in the marketplace.

What was the biggest cultural difference you found coming to Siebel from IBM?



ROBERT ADLER

Lawrie said Siebel's SMB focus has meant rethinking product and distribution strategy.

In some respects, the culture was similar. Siebel has a very strong sales culture; IBM has a very strong sales culture. IBM is very professional; Siebel is very professional. IBM is very disciplined, a very process-driven company. In many ways, Siebel is very process-oriented and -driven.

Where the culture was different was that Siebel had really never gone through any kind of a downturn. They didn't have the experience of what that's like—how to deal with that, what are the managerial and leadership moves and changes that you need to make. So it was a culture that had only been used to being on a very rapid growth curve.

The culture associated with growth is different than the culture that needs to be associated with how you transform your business.

When you need to transform your business, you need to listen very carefully to your customers. You need to take that customer input and drive that into your future development, future products. You need to think about your partners, how your partner community—we've already talked about it—needs to be reoriented. You need to hold a mirror to your face and say, "Gee, what am I doing that's no longer relevant to the marketplace that I am competing in? What's no longer relevant that I'm doing in terms of what my customers now expect of me?"

In IBM, that is a normal way of thinking and approach-

"The culture associated with growth is different than the culture that needs to be associated with how you transform your business.

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ing the business. Siebel had no experience in their culture of doing that.

The other big thing was Siebel was highly, highly centralized in that decisions were made by just a few people. Now IBM is also reasonably centralized, but much of the decision making and much of the innovation comes at the point of contact with customers and point of contact with the markets at IBM, and [at Siebel] not as much of that innovation came in the organization and came up through the organization. So it was a very top-down organization and culture as opposed to a bidirectional culture.

What is it now?

We are beginning to build more of that culture. That culture is not something that you turn a light switch on and off at night. That's measured in years. It's affected by people that you bring in to your senior leadership teams. Half our senior leadership team is new over the last six or eight months. It's brought about by how decisions are made and how people are expected to behave. It's about core values.

We completely redid our core values in what we call Siebel Chapter 2. So our core values are geared toward [the idea that] our success is our customers' success. Things like our commitment to our employees, to develop them and train them. So the culture becomes one of Siebel as an area, a company, an institution you can work for when you want to build and grow your skills and grow as a businessperson, as opposed to just a place that you want to go to sell software to make a couple bucks.

It's all about how we treat our customers—teamwork—so building a culture where we share ideas, a culture that we feed on each other's

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 20]

Customers welcome Siebel changes

MICHAEL LAWRIE'S ATTEMPTS TO MAKE over Siebel Systems Inc. are winning praise from inside and outside Siebel. But much remains to be done as the company repositions itself in the small- and midsize-business market while remaining an enterprise software powerhouse committed to customers' success.

Richard Napier, director of business development for InFact Group, a systems integrator and consulting company that is a Siebel partner and a customer of the Siebel CRM OnDemand service, has seen a noticeable change in dealing with Siebel since Lawrie took over last May.

"In our dealings with Siebel on all levels, I have noticed a real effort to communicate, share, learn and understand our issues and challenges," said Napier, with offices in Plano, Texas, and Lausanne, Switzerland. "The SMB advisory committee in which we operate is a real smart and effective change tool that just would not have happened in the past."

Cleveland: Siebel's initial survival hinged on growth.

Getting more revenue from SMBs has been a major objective for Siebel under Lawrie. Bruce Cleveland, senior vice president and general manager of SMB and OnDemand, is tasked with building an SMB plan that features a dedicated SMB sales force and a new partnership model that Siebel will use to attack the SMB market.

"I don't know whether that would have been an area [founder and former CEO] Tom [Siebel] would have invested in," said Cleveland. "He clearly approved it, but fundamentally it required a CEO who realizes [SMBs'] importance."

Cleveland was among the first executives hired by Siebel in 1996, when he joined the company as vice president of marketing. He left Siebel in 2002 to sail around the world but returned as one of Lawrie's first hires last year.

Cleveland makes no apologies for the growth-at-all-costs ethos of Siebel before Lawrie. "The whole engine of the company was built around growth," Cleveland said. "To be relevant, we had to get to a size that was large enough that would allow us to compete against Oracle [Corp.] and SAP [AG] and survive. If we hadn't done that, we wouldn't be having this conversation today; we would be [like smaller CRM software developers] Pivotal [Corp.] or Onyx [Software Corp.]."

Things started to slip for Siebel early in 2001, however, and the company saw its revenues fall on a year-over-year basis for 13 consecutive quarters until finally reversing that trend under Lawrie in the fourth quarter of last year.

Lawrie has pushed for Siebel to invest in helping its customers get more out of Siebel software implementations, rather than just trying to sell customers more software.

Debra Domeyer, chief technology officer at CarsDirect.com, a Siebel-licensed software customer for nearly four years, has noticed the change.

"From my perspective, probably the biggest change is I see more focus on customer solutions, not just on products and modules," said Domeyer in Los Angeles. She said that in the past year her sales and support contacts at Siebel have been getting her in touch with other companies in the automotive vertical market—partners and even competitors—to share experiences and swap tips on using the software for their industry needs.

"They're better in touch with us," Domeyer said. "You can talk to them more about solutions and ideas versus the number of seats you have and modules. You don't like a heavy sales deal."

Conrad Surratt, manager of the Siebel Solution Center at Volvo IT North America Inc., has noticed an improvement in Siebel support over the past year, although he said more improvement is still needed.

"A year or so ago, we complained fairly loudly, as we had some issues that were not being addressed in a good way," said Surratt in Greensboro, N.C. "It took quite a lot of escalation, but the issues were finally resolved. However, lately the response has been quick, and the answers are better."

Surratt said Volvo has a tech support staff with a lot of Siebel experience, so support issues tend to be complex. Siebel is just starting to deliver the kind of support his staff needs.

—Dennis Callaghan

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LAWRIE FROM PAGE 19

strengths, as opposed to a culture that doesn't work in a cross-functional, across-team kind of way.

Tom Siebel's still the chairman. How much do you consult with him, or has he pretty much stepped back and let you run the show?
I consult with Tom. Tom's got a wealth of knowledge, and I leverage that and tap into that knowledge frequently. Tom doesn't run the business anymore; I run the business. But when you have someone of that knowledge around, you want to try to tap into that knowledge as much as possible. Some of that input I get from Tom I use—it's very valuable—and other [input] I don't use.

How important is the hosted application services business—such as Siebel CRM OnDemand—to Siebel's future? Is it the future of software?
I think it's important to Siebel's future for sure. Do I think it's going to take over the software industry? No, I don't. ... It's important to Siebel because it's important to our customers. Our customers want multiple ways of acquiring and deploying technology. They don't want just on demand. So my experience has been that our particularly large customers want a combination of things.

So in certain departments or certain geographies or certain functional areas, the on-demand model fits very well. Others, they want a traditional packaged application. And still others, they may want a highly customized application. So we think that the benefit of Siebel is that we can provide that capability in whatever format the customer wants for their business.

The most important thing is listening to what your customers want. And I'm listening, and what they're saying is, "I want a spectrum or wide variety of ways that I can acquire and deploy and maintain these applications." I just think it's good business to be able to provide all three of those.

How big one is relative to the other two years from now, I don't know. I don't want to be flippant and say I don't care, but my view is the customer will decide that. Our job at Siebel is to ensure that we can deliver that capability the way they want it. So I am not a big evangelist saying, "You know, the rotation of the Earth is going to change here, and the sun's going to come up in the west"—I'm not into that. What I'm into is, here are the requirements the customers have and Siebel as a company, their responsibility is to develop capabilities to help customers with those needs and solve those problems.

> **We are beginning to build more of that [new] culture. ... It's brought about by how decisions are made and how people are expected to behave.**

What is the current status of the next-generation platform development efforts?
We have been working on this for over two years. Tom and I did sort of the initial investment around J2EE [Java 2 Platform, Enterprise Edition]. We've been working with Microsoft [Corp.] for almost as long a period of time. This is a fairly involved project to basically build out a services-oriented-architected set of products. The development effort there is proceeding; we're investing more people in that. So I'd say things are moving along.

What about availability?
We haven't even gotten to availability. The only thing I can tell you is that as we begin to bring this capability to the market over the next several years—I underscore the words "several years"—this will not be one thing. It will be some big things. It's a capability we will develop over time—[it] will be compatible with our existing product lines, one; and, two, we're going to continue to invest in the product lines that we have out there, our 7x product line.

I think there's only a couple of companies that are making this-size investment—SAP [AG]'s making a big investment here, as you know, and Siebel's making a big investment. PeopleSoft [Inc.] had started there; remember they did the big announcement with IBM last fall? Basically, that's what Siebel did two years ago with IBM. So we have been working on this for several years.

Do you think what you're doing is similar to what Microsoft is doing with "Project Green"?
I wouldn't want to comment on that; I don't know enough about it. The only thing I can say about Microsoft is that they are very much a key partner of ours in terms of the infrastructure that we are building our services-oriented architecture on top of.

Now that Oracle Corp. has succeeded in buying PeopleSoft, will that merged company be more of a threat to Siebel, or do you think it will actually be less of a threat since it is preoccupied with the post-merger process?
I don't know. Oracle's a very formidable company for sure. Historically, their strength has not been applications. But, yes, I would consider them to be a powerful player in the industry. Just as I view SAP as a very powerful member of the industry. I consider Microsoft also, even though we don't run into them too much in the enterprise space, obviously. So, yeah, I think all of those guys are formidable competitors and, in some cases, partners of ours going forward.

Do any of those companies stand out above the others as competitors? I know SAP claims to be No. 1 in CRM [customer relationship management] revenues.
When I look at it, I just look at the number of active seats. By any measure, Siebel has got a very substantial position. What have we got, like 3 million active users now? SAP's got like 150,000 or something like that? So I don't get too excited about claims. I get more focused on what's the reality. And the reality is, What are people using to run their business? But having said that, SAP is certainly a big competitor of ours. They have a very strong position, particularly in manufacturing, distribution and high-tech industries, anyplace where you have a very strong supply chain and manufacturing orientation.

As they try to extend that predominant market position, they try to extend that to where we see the growth area, which is in these customer-facing systems. So, certainly, I view them as a competitor. The difference is I don't subscribe to this end-to-end suite. e

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the buzz

PRINTERS

Xerox ships color, solid-ink MFP

XEROX IS SHIPPING ITS FIRST COLOR multifunction printer, or MFP, based on the company's solid-ink technologies.

Xerox's solid-ink printers use large blocks of ink that sit side by side inside the printer, instead of the more common toner cartridges. The solid-ink technology uses fewer consumables, is cleaner and generates less environmental waste than toner-based printers, said Xerox officials. The WorkCentre C2424, based on Xerox's solid-ink Phaser 8400 printer, uses a new ink formula that eliminates problems with earlier solid-ink printers that caused paper jams.

The device prints in color and monochrome at 24 ppm (pages per minute) and can scan and copy. The WorkCentre C2424 is geared to workgroups of about 15 to 30 people. Pricing ranges from $2,999 to $4,399, depending on configuration. *—Shelley Solheim*

The Xerox WorkCentre C2424 employs improved technology.

NOTEBOOKS

Dell introduces ultralight Latitude

DELL LAST WEEK INTRODUCED ITS smallest, lightest notebook computer.

Designed for business travelers, the Latitude X1 weighs only 2.52 pounds, although its weight will fluctuate slightly depending on configuration.

The Intel Centrino-based notebook was designed with the rigors of the road in mind, said Dell officials. The back of the screen is reinforced to counter the pressure of other items a user is likely to stuff into a laptop bag, and the keyboard is sealed to protect against spills. The 12.1-inch display is shorter than traditional notebook screens so that it can fit comfortably on an airplane tray table even when the seat back is fully reclined. When configured with an optional six-cell, 0.3-pound battery, the notebook can run up to 6 hours without recharging, officials said. The X1 comes with an unusually small power adapter. Pricing starts at $1,699. *—Carmen Nobel*

SECURITY

Permeo unveils clientless SSL VPN

PERMEO TECHNOLOGIES LAST WEEK introduced its Base5 solution, a hybrid security offering that combines the capabilities of a clientless SSL VPN with advanced endpoint security controls.

Base5 connects users to corporate networks via the session layer and enables them to use any application available on the network, not just Web-enabled applications. Users download an applet to their machines when they connect, but the software is removed at the end of each session.

A unified management console handles the definition and enforcement of security policies. At connection time, Base5 inspects the user's machine for anti-virus software, personal firewalls and patches. PCs that aren't correctly configured can be denied access to the network, and the system can continually monitor the configuration throughout each session.

Base5 cleans the browser cache after each session. The system is available now; pricing starts at $50 per seat. *—Dennis Fisher*

SERVERS

Gateway unveils 64-bit Xeon-based server

GATEWAY THIS WEEK IS ROLLING OUT a two-way rack-optimized server powered by Intel's 64-bit optimized Xeon processor.

The 1U (1.75-inch) Gateway 9415 includes three hot-swap bay drives, RAID 5 capabilities and dual redundant power supplies. It offers up to 2MB of Level 2 cache and supports PCI Express I/O technology.

Gateway officials are targeting the server at high-performance and storage-intensive environments, such as departmental databases, Web or application servers, and ERP (enterprise resource planning) and CRM (customer relationship management) deployments. *—Jeffrey Burt*

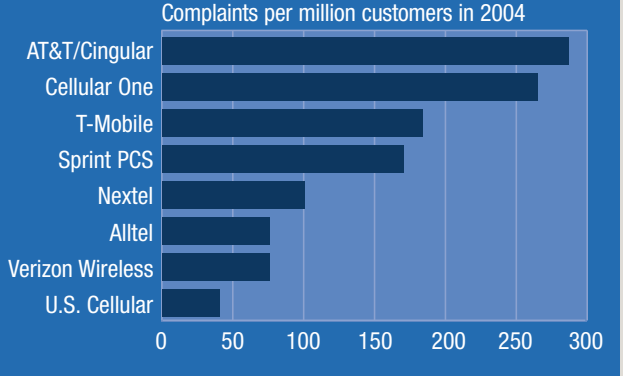
QUOTE OF THE WEEK

When I look at HP, I see a company that is fundamentally sound. But it's also clear the company is not performing to its potential.

Mark Hurd, new HP CEO, remarking on the current state of the company

BY THE NUMBERS

No Cingular sensation



Source: Consumer Reports analysis of FCC data

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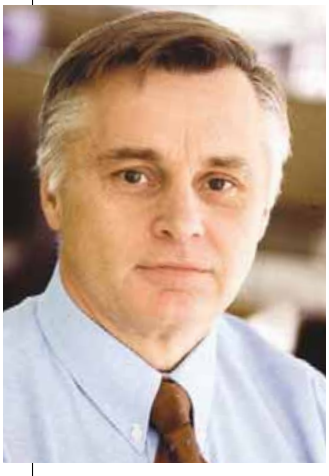
Eric Lundquist: Up Front

IT's down to the nitty-gritty

THE MUNDANE BUSINESS OF TECHNOLOGY IS NOW THE DRAW



QWIP, QYX AND VYDEC. REMEMBER THEM? OF course you don't, but at one time those companies were key in Exxon's plans to become a major player in office automation systems. By 1985—and after about $2 billion in lost investments—Exxon figured out that people don't necessarily want to buy information processing where they buy gasoline. Sometimes diversification is just a dumb idea.

But sometimes diversification turns out to be a good idea, even for an oil company. At about the same time that Exxon was trying to persuade you to put a tiger in your word processor as well as in your gas tank, another oil company embarked on a diversification strategy. **Sun Oil** (now Sunoco) expanded into a bunch of businesses, including computer services. Last week, the descendant of that computer services business, **SunGard Data Systems**, was acquired by a group of private equity companies for $11.3 billion in a leveraged buyout. The price is a big one to attach to a company that runs crucial transaction and recovery IT operations for many large companies but is almost invisible to the consumer and media communities.

The SunGard acquisition is only the latest in what I'd say is a wild celebration of the workaday world of IT. SunGard, **Ascential** (which was bought by IBM) and **Retek** (the object of a much-fought-over buyout bid by **Oracle**) are all companies that run, develop or build technology infrastructure operations for midsize and large companies.

In an economy where high-profile businesses on the market lack buyers (do you want to buy a major league baseball team, or how about an entire hockey league?), the companies doing the nitty-gritty work of systems integration, data security and backup are suddenly the most popular partners at the dance.

If you want more evidence of the celebration of the solid over the cerebral, of the blue suit, white shirt and tie over the executive as superstar, you don't have to look any further than **Hewlett-Packard**. After dispensing with **Carly Fiorina** and her entourage, private jet and carefully staged appearances, HP went to Dayton, Ohio, for its next CEO; it selected **Mark Hurd**, a 25-year veteran of **NCR**, the company that began in 1884 making mechanical cash registers.

> If you want evidence of the celebration of the solid over the cerebral, look no further than HP, post-Fiorina.

Why the sudden interest in the mundane business of making technology systems actually do something of value? The improving economy means that the tech investment pace is picking up. Rather than simply snipping away at the budget, CIOs are spending money and paying attention to systems that deliver value. As a result, tech vendors and executives who understand the value equation are rising in importance. In return for their tech dollars, CIOs want systems integration, data security and backup. And the technology companies that are often the best at those tasks are the ones that have often operated outside the media and consumer spotlights.

I don't see the consolidation of these companies stopping any time soon; neither do a few knowledgeable execs I spoke with. "There are multiple factors all leading to a continued industry consolidation," said **Howard Elias**, executive vice president of corporate marketing for **EMC**. Elias—who has made stops at Compaq, HP and Digital Equipment during his career—said the difficulty of building integrated systems and the desire of customers to develop their businesses rather than their IT infrastructures lead customers to look for vendors with the scale and scope to fulfill their tech needs.

"I agree that we'll eventually get a half-dozen mega-players," said **John Jordan**, an independent consultant. However, Jordan said that any comparison with the auto industry (which, as we know, has boiled down domestically to three major automobile manufacturers) should also take into account the rise of international competitors.

If the SunGard buyout represents the last laugh of big oil's romance with technology, the spate of buyouts for back-end technology companies may be only the beginning of an international competition for the wallets of corporate technology customers. e

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Oracle draws line in the sand

OBLIX DEAL SIGNALS ID MANAGEMENT GOALS

By Brian Fonseca

With last week's purchase of Oblix Inc., Oracle Corp. made clear that it is not planning to cede the lucrative and growing enterprise identity management market to rivals Sun Microsystems Inc. and IBM.

Last week's surprising acquisition will allow Oracle to expand its nascent ID management reach by weaving together Oracle, PeopleSoft Inc. and J.D. Edwards & Co. applications.

Oblix, of Cupertino, Calif., was a pioneer in the development of identity-based security software, mainly for Web access control through single sign-on, user provisioning and user authentication. The company's technology will be offered as part of Oracle Application Server 10g, bolstering the platform's Oracle Identity Management component to work outside Oracle deployments, said Thomas Kurian, senior vice president of Oracle Server Technologies for the Redwood Shores, Calif., company.

The Oblix purchase is just the latest pickup in a massive shopping spree by Oracle this year. Since January, the database giant bought PeopleSoft for $10.3 billion, ending a bitter pursuit, and last month it outbid rival SAP to acquire Retek Inc., for about $650 million.

Oracle's absorption of Oblix all but marks the end of the once-red-hot identity management landscape, which, just a few years ago, was crowded with small startups. Nearly all those original companies—including Access360 Inc., Netegrity Inc. and Waveset Technologies Inc.—have since been acquired and digested by large-scale system and hardware vendors.

Oblix customers said Oracle's backing should help Oblix become more enterprise-capable, while Oracle can take advantage of Oblix's proven identity management expertise.

"Oracle's acquisition of Oblix will help our company to expand our use of identity management tools for portal and e-commerce," said Jim McDonald, manager of IT for Ingersoll-Rand Company Ltd., based in Montvale, N.J., who runs an Oracle database, Oracle E-Business Suite applications and Oracle iStore. "I think Oracle made the right decision by recognizing that it was right to buy Oblix rather than try to match what they've done."

McDonald said Oracle must maintain Oblix's ability to integrate Microsoft Corp., Sun Microsystems Inc. and BEA Systems Inc. technology as well as various Web engines for Web servers. "That's a vital need for people who bought Oblix in the first place," he said.

Oblix's COREsv Web services management software product line will allow Oracle customers to bridge the world of security and services by tracking usage and policies attached to different service-oriented applications, by monitoring them for compliance, for example, said Kurian.

Oracle said it will support Oblix's existing product set and will provide new functionality as part of updates and support features without new licenses being required. Kurian said new ID management products will eventually emerge and could involve federation or HR systems.

Large vendors feast on identity management

- **March 2005** Oracle buys Oblix; BMC Software Inc. buys OpenNetwork Technologies
- **October 2004** Computer Associates International Inc. buys Netegrity
- **November 2003** Sun Microsystems buys Waveset Technologies
- **September 2002** IBM buys Access360

Tools tackle process integration

By Renee Boucher Ferguson

Business-to-business integration software developer Sterling Commerce and business process management software provider MetaStorm Inc. are adding more functionality for process integration—a key area as companies look to collaborate electronically.

Sterling Commerce, a subsidiary of SBC Communications Inc., announced this week its Gentran Integration Suite 4.0, which enables users to map and integrate business processes with partners and suppliers. Similarly, last week MetaStorm, based in Columbia, Md., announced its Universal Process Orchestrator, which helps companies to take their SOA (service-oriented architecture) and tie that into their business processes.

MetaStorm's Universal Process Orchestrator is a tool kit that lets users transform .Net-, Java- and BPEL (Business Process Execution Language)-based Web service components into business processes. Orchestrator, through a set of APIs and process activators, points to a specific technology—.Net or Java, for example—and converts that section of code into a format that is readable and understandable by MetaStorm's software.

Separately, Sterling's GIS 4.0 is the first product announcement validating the company's MESA (Multi-Enterprise Services Architecture) initiative, which was announced in November. MESA enables process collaboration between trading partners, according to Sam Starr, CEO of Sterling, in Dublin, Ohio.

"GIS 4.0 really does deliver on our multienterprise collaboration strategy by incorporating integration, business intelligence and BPM (business process management) and delivering those in the context of the B2B [business-to-business] world," said Starr. "The key is our focus on community.

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Blue Titan augments SOA line

BEEFS UP NETWORK DIRECTOR SUPPORT

By Darryl K. Taft

BLUE TITAN SOFTWARE INC. last week released two upgraded products, Network Director RM 3.5 and Network Director 3.5, designed to extend the reach of the company's line of SOA-enabling tools.

Network Director RM 3.5 supports the WS-ReliableMessaging specification and other features, including JMS (Java Message Service) bridging. JMS bridging lets users incorporate any proprietary messaging backbones they may be using into the overall service-oriented architecture.

In addition, the product features support for TIBCO Software Inc.'s Enterprise Message Service, IBM's WebSphere MQ, BEA Systems Inc.'s WebLogic JMS queues and others, according to the company.

"We realize we aren't the only game in town when it comes to messaging backbones," said Sam Boonin, a vice president at Blue Titan, based in San Francisco. "There will be a great deal of heterogeneity. Enabling reliable messaging over HTTP is an absolute requirement."

Boonin said one early customer is using the Blue Titan technology to extend its reliable messaging backbone to Web services-based applications being developed on early versions of Microsoft Corp.'s "Indigo" communications subsystem.

Network Director 3.5, Blue Titan's other update, lets users create enterprise services networks for sharing and controlling SOA applications.

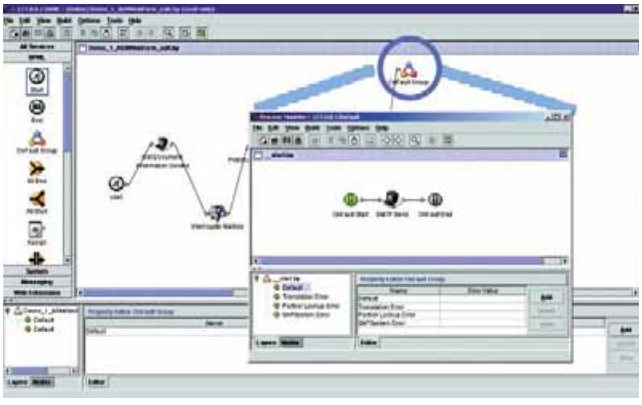
The solution features service mediation; standards-based registry access, with support for WS-MetadataExchange, XPath and RSS; and protocol transformations, Boonin said.

"Blue Titan is tackling a few of the knottier problems of making SOAs work and is expanding well past their original roots in Web services management to solve issues around how to make distributed services work in a reliable, managed and platform-independent way," said Ronald Schmelzer, an analyst with ZapThink LLC, based in Cambridge, Mass. e

If you look at more sophisticated environments, you really end up having to work across a community—a set of suppliers or corporate customers linking into a business environment."

New BAM (Business Activity Monitoring) and enhanced process management capabilities in GIS 4.0 enable users to take action on events as they occur. New graphical process modeling capabilities make it easier to create business processes.

A community management dashboard provides portlets that automate change management across a partner community and provide a system for document tracking, said Starr. At the same time, a data-compliance engine enables data synchronization, while new federated



GIS enables communication between companies, partners and suppliers.

capabilities let users monitor processes across multiple instances of the GIS software. The federated functionality alerts users when there is a problem with a transaction.

Analysts believe Sterling is moving in the right direction with GIS 4.0. "A lot of companies like Wal-Mart [Stores Inc.] and Intel [Corp.] are really looking to compete by having an integrated supply chain strategy with partners," said Kosin Huang, an analyst with Yankee Group Research Inc., in Boston. "[GIS 4.0] is the best release I've seen [from Sterling] and the best vision from Sterling." e

Alliance to share data on attacks

By Ryan Naraine

STRUGGLING TO COPE WITH a dramatic rise in malicious hacker intrusions, a group of 18 network providers and ISPs last week announced plans to share real-time data on cyber-attacks.

The vendors, which include Cisco Systems Inc., British Telecommunications plc., EarthLink Inc., MCI Inc. and XO Communications Inc., have formed the Fingerprint Sharing Alliance to automate the way information is distributed during an intense hacker attack.

At the hub of the alliance is Arbor Networks Inc.'s Peakflow SP, a network security product capable of detecting, back-tracing and responding to anomalies such as denial-of-service and worm/virus attacks.

Farnam Jahanian, founder and chief scientist at Arbor, based in Lexington, Mass., said members of the alliance can collect data from devices around the network and look for anomalies. If the network deviations are flagged as malicious attacks, Peakflow SP generates a fingerprint that can be shared automatically and securely with select peers.

Recipients of the fingerprint have the option to accept or reject the sharing request when the incoming fingerprint is received. A typical fingerprint includes data on the scope and severity of a hacker attack. e

Ryan Naraine is a senior writer for eweek.com.

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Intel completes 64-bit shift

CHIP SET, XEON MP CHIPS FILL OUT LINEUP

By Jeffrey Burt

With the introduction last week of five new processors, Intel Corp. has at last completed its transition to a full line of 64-bit chips for its servers.

At a press conference last week in San Francisco, Intel unveiled its Xeon MP chips armed with Extended Memory 64 Technology, which enables the chips to run both 32- and 64-bit applications. At the same time, Intel rolled out the E8500 chip set—formerly code-named Twin Castle—which features a faster front-side bus and greater system bandwidth.

The move was the latest by the Santa Clara, Calif., company to improve performance beyond simply revving up the chip frequency. Pat Gelsinger, senior vice president and general manager of Intel's Digital Enterprise Group, said Intel over the next few years will introduce features in its chips and chip sets that will offer greater virtualization, security and manageability features.

Last year, Intel brought the 64-bit capability to its Xeon DP chips for systems with one or two processors. Intel also is addressing the issue of power consumption with its Enhanced Intel SpeedStep and Demand-Based Switching features, which can throttle down the processor speed depending on workload demands.

Several OEMs introduced new systems based on the Xeon MPs. Hewlett-Packard Co., of Palo Alto, Calif., unveiled the ProLiant DL580 G3 and ProLiant ML570 G3, which offer not only the new chip but also enhanced management capabilities, including RAID Level 6 storage, integrated Lights Out Management and RAID memory.

Dell Inc., of Round Rock, Texas, last week rolled out the PowerEdge 6800 and 6850, which also take advantage of the new Xeon MPs.

Like HP, Dell also used the announcement to unveil enhanced management capabilities through its OpenManage 4.3 software, including greater remote management features and integration with Microsoft Corp.'s Systems Management Server.

IBM, of Armonk, N.Y., last month unveiled its new X3 "Hurricane" chip set, which will run with the Xeon chips in the company's xSeries systems, as well as the x366 server, which can scale from four to 32 processors. Egenera Inc., of Marlboro, Mass., also rolled out two blade processor configurations based on the new chips.

Chip Burke, network engineer for MedCost Recovery Systems Inc., said 64-bit computing is attractive, but the test will be in the software support.

"Until there really is widespread software to use such a thing, it would kind of worry me to go in that direction," said Burke, whose Columbus, Ohio, company runs a variety of Dell servers. "In another year or two, that might be much different."

Some of that software is on the way. Microsoft Corp., of Redmond, Wash., next month will unveil its Windows Server 2003 for 64-bit systems, a move industry observers say will help spark 64-bit software growth.

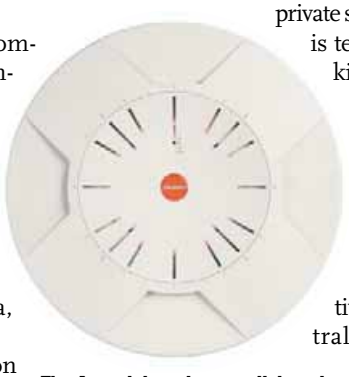
Andy Lees, who is corporate vice president of Microsoft's Servers and Tools Business, said that the next release of the Windows client, which is dubbed Longhorn and due out next year, will be 64-bit. Linux operating systems already support 64-bit computing. e

Xirrus presents its offerings

By Carmen Nobel

Wi-fi hardware startup Xirrus Inc. last week debuted its flagship product, which combines a WLAN switch and as many as 16 integrated access points in a single circular device.

The Wireless LAN Array comprises a controller, which manages spectrum and directs packet flow at the MAC (media access control) level; an antenna system designed to increase both the rate and range of the network; and access point radios that support a combination of 802.11a, b and g.



The Array integrates a switch and access points into one device.

In the top-of-the-line version of the Array, there are 12 802.11a access point radios and four 802.11a/b/g access point radios, one of which can be used as an RF (radio-frequency) monitor. The Array also comes in configurations of four access points and eight access points.

A single 16-access-point Array can cover as much as 100,000 square feet and provides up to 864M bps of bandwidth, according to officials at Xirrus, in Westlake Village, Calif. Beta testers said this is a selling point.

"We tend to have pretty spiky usage," said Paul Rosenbaum, associate headmaster and chief operating officer at Viewpoint School, a private school in Calabasas, Calif., which is testing a 16-radio Array. "All the kids are here at the same time."

In addition to the Arrays, Xirrus is introducing management hardware for large enterprise deployments. The XM-3300 comes in three versions, which manage as many as 10, 50 or 500 Arrays, respectively. The device allows for centralized control of the network beyond basic packet control, with features such as rogue access point detection, firmware upgrades and authentication. Xirrus is also introducing a remote DC power system for the Arrays.

The Xirrus product line is due to reach the market next month. Arrays range in cost from $3,999 to $11,999. Pricing for the management appliance ranges from $4,999 to $24,999. e

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Peribit targets bottleneck

NEW TECHNOLOGY ACCELERATES FLOW OF APPLICATIONS MOVING THROUGH WANs

By Paula Musich

WAN optimization provider Peribit Networks Inc. this week will move up into the Layer 7 acceleration space when it launches its new Application Flow Acceleration technique.

The technology, launched with a new branch office accelerator and software upgrade, addresses inefficiencies in Microsoft Corp. messaging and file services protocols as well as those of Web applications, according to Peribit officials in Santa Clara, Calif.

As more enterprises Web-enable their applications and embark on server consolidation projects, the latency introduced when applications traverse the WAN is creating big headaches for IT staffs, said Joe Skorupa, an analyst at Gartner Inc., in Fremont, Calif.

"Server centralization is a big issue. And we see organizations moving toward the Web browser as the universal application interface," Skorupa said.

The Peribit AppFlow technique goes beyond TCP acceleration to speed applications based on the MAPI (Messaging API), the CIFS (Common Internet File System) used by Microsoft File Services and HTTP.

While Peribit's existing packet flow acceleration technology addresses inefficiencies in TCP/IP, the applications that benefit from that technique are limited to FTP applications and bulk data transfers, as well as backup.

With Web applications, HTTP requests only one object at a time. But because most Web applications incorporate dozens of objects, building a single page over a slow-speed link can take time. AppFlow eliminates much of the WAN round-trip time after a page is initially downloaded.

One early user, working to try to "give back" the performance that Exchange users had when the server was local to them, found "a dramatic performance increase, especially in regard to e-mail attachments," said Martin Cox, a technical services manager at The BOC Group plc., in Wilmington, Mass. For instance, a 1MB file would take more than a minute to open; now it takes about 15 seconds.

The CIFS acceleration "shows great promise," Cox said. "A 21MB file took 7 minutes on initial copy, 12 seconds for subsequent opens."

Peribit's new SM-250 for branch offices implements Peribit's Network Sequence Mirroring technology, which records patterns found in sessions, packets and flows, and stores those on a hard disk. When those patterns are repeated, they are identified and removed from data streams.

Peribit also tuned its product line at the high end to scale caching in the data center. Up to six SM-500 appliances can be clustered as clients on an SR-100 Sequence Reducer, which scales sequence caching to OC-3 connections and adds up to 3 terabytes of disk capacity.

The SM-250, for branch offices, boosts application performance.

The new AppFlow software works across all Peribit products and is due later this month. The SM-250, also due this month, is priced starting at $4,995.

Compuware revs QC tools

By Darryl K. Taft

Compuware Corp. has released QACenter Enterprise Edition and QACenter Performance Edition, updated solutions that enhance the company's suite of testing tools and help customers better manage application quality and performance.

QACenter Enterprise Edition features enhancements to the Compuware TestPartner functional testing solution, the company said. Compuware TestPartner 5.3 includes upgraded support for Microsoft Corp.'s .Net environment. The new version of TestPartner features support for Unicode so that users can test applications developed in any language.

Paul Sweet, a software engineer at Autodesk Inc., in San Rafael, Calif., said Autodesk has been an early adopter using Compuware's TestPartner 5.3 to test its software.

Indeed, Compuware TestPartner 5.3 "has allowed us to test our application in an automated fashion," Sweet said. "This has allowed us to find problems in our code quicker and fix them."

Among the new TestPartner features that stand out, Sweet said, are "the VBA [Visual Basic for Applications] and Object for .Net features that allow us to test our VBA and .Net code. Using this we can also perform tests quicker through our APIs."

Meanwhile, Compuware QACenter Performance Edition features enhancements to the product's load-testing system. Compuware QALoad 5.2 offers improvements to the product's reporting and results analysis, as well as support for Oracle Corp.'s OracleAS and Oracle E-Business Suite, as well as improved support for SAP AG's application environment, said Compuware officials in Detroit.

Last month, Compuware announced the availability of Version 5.0 of Compuware Application Reliability Solution, its quality management offering. CARS 5.0 features Compuware's Quality Governance, which optimizes a quality assurance organization's ability to deliver reliable business applications. The software integrates with Compuware IT Governance by Changepoint.

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Force10 reaches out with S50 switch

COMPANY TARGETS DATA CENTER MARKET

By Paula Musich

FORCE10 NETWORKS INC. later this month will roll out its first fixed-configuration switch, a move that the high-end network switch company believes will help it extend beyond its traditional place in the network core and begin to push into the data center market.

The Force10 S50 switch, which was launched last week, provides 48 Gigabit Ethernet ports operating at line rate and two 10 Gigabit Ethernet ports. Force10 brings to the switch its core-like performance and reliability in interconnecting servers.

The switching fabric in the 1U (1.75 inches) switch supports an aggregate switching capacity of 192G bps. It can process 20 percent more traffic than competitive offerings, said company officials in Milpitas, Calif.

"If you look at pure non-blocking throughput, it is faster," said Zeus Kerravala, an analyst with Yankee Group Research Inc., in Boston. "I don't know of another product that has the same switching capacity [in that form factor]."

The S50 is designed for high-density data center environments that require greater simplicity and reliability. Customers can stack up to eight of the switches in a virtual cluster.

Resiliency features include support for multiple redundant paths through the network, preprovisioning, hot insertion and removal of stacked switches, and support for all three versions of the standard Layer 2 spanning tree protocol.

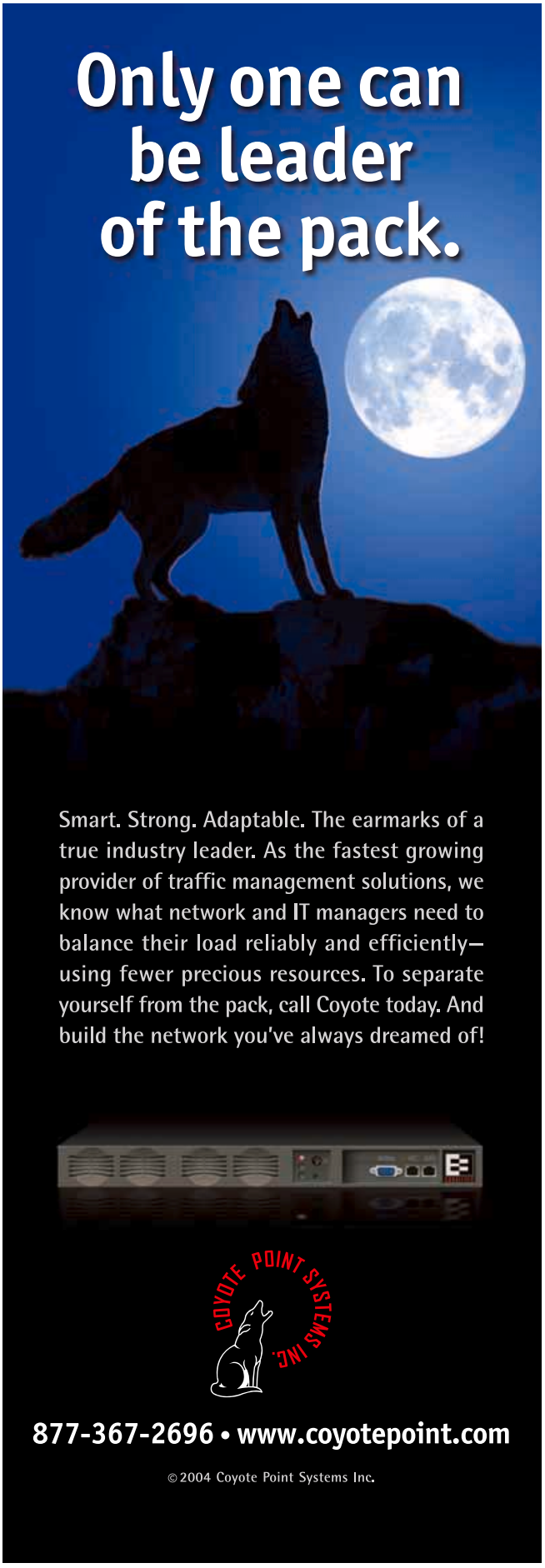
Force10 spent considerable time working on the stability of the S50 and decided to use some of the same features that have worked well in the chassis-based E-Series switches, company officials said.

Force10 hopes to compete with the likes of companies such as Cisco Systems Inc., Hewlett-Packard Co.'s ProCurve networking unit and Foundry Networks Inc. by offering reduced pricing on its latest line.

Pricing for the S50 starts at $8,000 for the base unit and $6,500 for the two-port 10 Gigabit Ethernet interface.

But even with a moderate pricing scheme, some observers are skeptical that the S50 will let Force10 move beyond its high-end niche or installed base of customers.

"Will they make a huge splash with this? I don't think so," said Steven Schuchart, an analyst at Current Analysis Inc., in Sterling, Va. "For customers who've enjoyed their Force-10 equipment but needed something less expensive and with less capacity, this lets those customers continue with Force10 equipment." e



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Stan Gibson: Outsourcing & Services

Outsourcing and SarbOx

LANDMARK LAW SOWS LEGAL, COMPLIANCE MINEFIELD

THE SARBANES-OXLEY ACT HAS BEEN ON THE BOOKS for nearly three years, but the fun is only beginning. As U.S. attorneys begin to prosecute companies—and corporate officers—for noncompliance, we'll learn a lot more about just what this landmark law is made of, including what impact it will have on outsourcing relationships.

If you've inked an outsourcing deal since the law took effect, you've probably seen contract language that delineates the outsourcer's responsibility with regard to ensuring that the client company is in compliance with SarbOx mandates. A client might want the outsourcing provider to take on significant responsibility for the client's compliance, even going so far as to indemnify the client for noncompliance relating to outsourcing. However, such a step is seldom in an outsourcing provider's interest.

"It's an ongoing quagmire," said William Bierce, a partner at Bierce & Kenerson, a New York law firm specializing in outsourcing. "The outsourcer becomes a surrogate insurance company if it indemnifies for [SarbOx] compliance."

Although an outsourcer might be tempted to go to that length to get or keep a customer, doing so might create a material risk for the outsourcer—which should raise a red flag for company officers, board members and stockholders. "It's not prudent for them [service providers] to assume too much liability—it could lead to catastrophic loss," Bierce warned.

While a customer might think it smart to extract that kind of commitment from an outsourcer, it will probably come at a price. "In getting the indemnity, the enterprise customer has to worry about losing some flexibility in its business model," said Bierce. If the client has to change its business model, both parties have to agree on the impact of the change on the covenant that applies to SarbOx, the attorney said.

Further, leaning too much on the outsourcer might create the illusion on the part of the client that its executives and staff don't have to be concerned with compliance, Bierce said. This is an unhealthy perception because it's corporate officers who must sign the compliance statements.

> '[SarbOx] forces the partner and the customer to have an ongoing dialogue about the business.'

Another expert, Robert Newmann, managing director and general counsel at Burwood Group, a Chicago-based technology consulting company specializing in compliance and risk matters and network design, stressed the importance of contract language. "The contract has to be very firm around requirements for access to information and retention for information. If they're not capable of complying, they can't be an outsourcer," said Newmann. There has always been liability associated with outsourcing because key functions are being performed by another party, he said, but with SarbOx the stakes have been raised significantly. "The liability for the consulting firm is huge," he said.

In one of the highest-profile outsourcing contracts, Procter & Gamble's deal with Hewlett-Packard for IT infrastructure, HP's role in enabling SarbOx compliance was written into the contract, P&G IT staff told me in a conversation last year.

In crafting deals, Bierce said it's important to emphasize that the enterprise client remains in control of the business processes, even though an outsourcer is performing the work. But that doesn't mean the service provider can never be on the hook. "A service provider could be liable for noncompliance should it breach the process so as to expose the enterprise to a claim of securities fraud," Bierce said. But, he cautioned, to the extent that SarbOx indemnification is included in contracts, it should come with a cap on SarbOx liability.

Each contract will be different; there are no easy answers. "It's a complicating factor that requires a great deal of attention," said Bierce, adding, "[SarbOx] forces the partner and the customer to have an ongoing dialogue about the business."

Out and about

CSC INKED AN IT INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES pact with French carmaker Renault worth $236 million. The deal includes network, midrange and mainframe support to Renault sites in France and Spain. In a statement **CSC** CEO Van Honeycutt credited his company's presence in those countries as a critical factor in securing the deal. e

Executive Editor Stan Gibson can be reached at stan_gibson@ziffdavis.com.

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Editorial

Search for tomorrow

When IAC bought Ask Jeeves for $1.85 billion last month, experts were not saying that IAC overpaid—quite the contrary. That gives you some idea of the way industry watchers view the potential and importance of search technology.

The momentum for search has been building for some time. Google, having reached $1 billion in annual sales, launched an IPO that blossomed impressively last summer and has been seeking to entice developers to create applications that call on Google search. Not to be left behind, Yahoo has been seeking to contest Google's ascendancy with developers by launching a comprehensive developers program for its search technology. Microsoft, once again not the first mover, has been warming up on the sidelines as it looks for opportunities.

The proliferation of data across the Internet as well as the desktop has made the ability to access it essential. Search, in short, has become the killer app.

As far as IT professionals are concerned, there is much good going on in the search industry and only a few clouds on the horizon. Without question, the competition between Google and Yahoo is creating more opportunities for enterprise IT to incorporate search technologies into enterprise apps.

> There is much good in the search industry and only a few clouds on the horizon.

The support of Web services by the search engines promises to open up yet another horizon as well—the ability to invoke search seamlessly and often without the user being aware of it. And anyone who has tried Google's desktop search function has discovered a utility without which it is almost impossible to imagine functioning.

What are the causes for worry? The lure of commercialization could skew honest search. Without impartiality, search is little more than advertising. Impartiality also could be attacked by those who would game the search engines to produce results favorable to them. Spammers also could create more links to gain higher rank. There's also the threat of predatory ad clicks by software bots to drain competitors' budgets.

As for IAC's acquisition of Ask Jeeves, it could propel that search provider, now with only 5 percent market share, to new heights. But IAC also could take Ask Jeeves out of the running as an impartial search engine, making it deliver results that pertain only to IAC's consumer content holdings. Similarly, vendors with agendas could acquire other search providers.

Finally, as more data is accessed, protecting confidential data will become more important but also more difficult.

So far, market forces have been sufficient to foster the basic integrity of search results, as well as the healthy competition among major search players. However, as more and more money is fed into search technologies and companies, the threat of corruption grows. In the future, it may be necessary to apply antitrust laws as well as greater intervention by law enforcement agencies.

For now, though, search is the "feel good" story of the new millennium. e

What do you think? Send your comments to eweek@ziffdavis.com.

Reader mail

Health care clues

I read Peter Coffee's March 21 Epicenters column with great interest ("I sense an opportunity," Page 58).

For the past seven years, I have been working to develop software that peers into health care data—or, more specifically, behavioral health care data—with an eye toward developing tools to assist in best-practice management.

The patterns demonstrated in regular physical health care have proved elusive in behavioral health practices. Trouble does not always manifest itself in a single paradigm shift but rather with many subtle clues leading up to an event. Our task has been to see these clues and to provide those in the field with the tools they need to be proactive rather than reactive.

Exacerbating problems, however, is the fact that, by and large, information is locked up in banks of storage with little or no communications among them. It's difficult to see a pattern if you are only looking at a piece of the picture.

With the federal push for electronic medical records, government is finally seeking to achieve what folks like us have been working to achieve for years. The result can be that we finally have the mass of information available and accessible to the proper folks, and that these people have the tools that will let them understand the language the information is speaking.

Lonnie Allen Watson
Chief technology officer
Tidgewell Associates Inc.

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X out x-ware

AS AN IT MANAGER, I COMPLETELY agree with Jim Rapoza regarding spyware and malware (Tech Directions, "Spyware fracas heats up," March 14, Page 56).

On several occasions, my staff and I have had to spend more than 3 hours trying to get rid of an infestation of what we now call UPC (unnecessary parasitic crap) from a user's system. This not only takes up our valuable time but also renders the user unproductive for that period of time. Then comes the discussion about how the UPC got there in the first place and whether it was the user's fault and how we can avoid this in the future—all of which ends up taking even more valuable time.

I want effective tools to find, remove and prevent this sort of malware, no matter what it's called. But I'm also concerned about the legal posturing Rapoza mentioned that may render these tools ineffective. I worry about Microsoft or others not including certain bits of code in their spyware definitions due to the threat of legal action on the part of the publisher of that code.

The bottom line: If we didn't install it for business purposes, then it doesn't belong on our systems.

JEAN DOUGLASS
IT MANAGER
SUR-FLO PLASTICS & ENGINEERING INC.
WARREN, MICH.

Office with no Windows?

IN THE MARCH 14 FREE SPECTRUM COLUMN, Brian D. Jaffe did an excellent job of summarizing the genesis of desktop computing and office software ("Be careful what you wish for," Page 46). However, he omitted an obvious question: "Would you, as an IT manager, want Windows apps (especially Office) separated from the Windows OS?"

BERNIE LASALLE
GCRC INFORMATICS CORE DIRECTOR
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
SALT LAKE CITY

Free Spectrum: Peter J. Karol

Fair use and the French press

RECENTLY, AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE BECAME THE LATEST ADVENTURER TO dive into the Internet "fair use" quagmire when it filed a complaint for copyright infringement against Google in U.S. federal court.

AFP, a news agency that syndicates content to various news publications, took issue with Google News' unauthorized posting of AFP "photographs, headlines and story leads" on Google's news Web site, news.google.com.

The Google News site mechanically aggregates current news stories, posting with each headline the name of the Web site publishing the story, the article's "lead" and often a photograph. A user can link to the full story on the originating Web site or link to other features on the same subject. The case is likely to turn on the question of whether Google's unauthorized use is nevertheless a fair—and therefore defensible—use.

In copyright cases, whether an act of reproduction is fair use is determined according to malleable statutory factors. For example, a court will look to the purpose and character of Google's use of the photographs and text, including whether that use is nonprofit or commercial, the size of the excerpts, and the effect on the market for AFP subscriptions.

In a similar case from 2003, a federal appeals court in California ruled that it was fair use of an artist's photographs to post small, low-resolution thumbnail images of those photographs on the defendant's Web site, which linked consumers to sellers of the images it found. In this case, a court may, however, consider Google News to be more than a mere search engine, as the site arguably conveys enough textual and visual information to satisfy some Internet news seekers' notoriously short attention spans.

The more a use transforms the original work into something new, with a further purpose and a new character, the more likely it will be held fair use. This may be the heart of this particular conflict. AFP has labeled Google's use "not transformative in any way." Google, however, has taken pains to brand itself as unique in the field of Internet news. Google will likely argue that it transforms news clips by liberating articles from their hidden politicized and ideological contexts. In an era where accusations of media bias are shouted on every corner, a court may accept this vision of transformation.

However the case ultimately plays out in court, AFP has scored a preliminary victory: Google has undertaken to remove all AFP articles and photographs from its site. However, AFP might find it ought to have been careful what it wished for. After all, the online newspapers originating AFP's syndicated content (and, incidentally, paying AFP's bills) must have been enjoying Google's complimentary routing service. Hopefully for AFP, subscribers won't mind this end to free press. e

However the case plays out, AFP has scored a preliminary victory.

Peter J. Karol is an attorney with Bromberg & Sunstein LLP, a Boston law firm specializing in intellectual property. He can be reached at pkarol@bromsun.com. Free Spectrum is a forum for the IT community and welcomes contributions. Send submissions to free_spectrum@ziffdavis.com.

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OPINION: TECH DIRECTIONS

Jim Rapoza: Along with an application's cost, IT managers should look at the vendor's approach to fixing problems

PAGE 45

DeviceAuthority brings order to changes

REVIEW: UPDATED ALTERPOINT SUITE LEVERAGES SYNTAX TO EASE CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT

By Cameron Sturdevant

CONFIGURING THOUSANDS OF FAR-FLUNG NETWORK devices is always a challenge for IT staff. AlterPoint Inc.'s DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 provides a well-integrated set of tools that leverages the company's knowledge of configuration syntax to let all levels of network operations staff create and distribute reliable configuration files quickly.

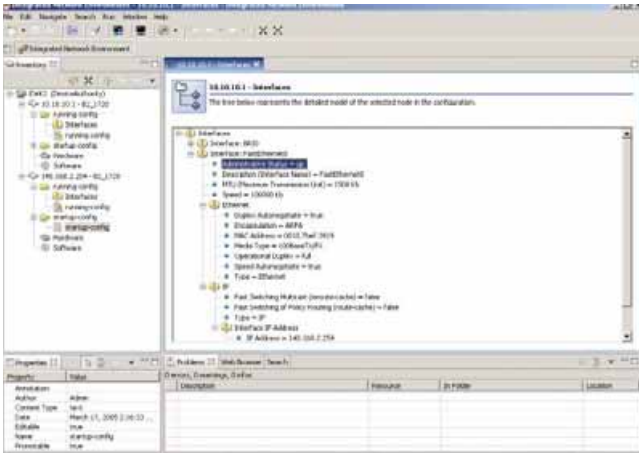
DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5, available now, automates backup tasks as well as configuration and deployment of multivendor switches, routers, firewalls, VPNs and wireless access points. The suite issues reports automatically via e-mail or via a Web interface.

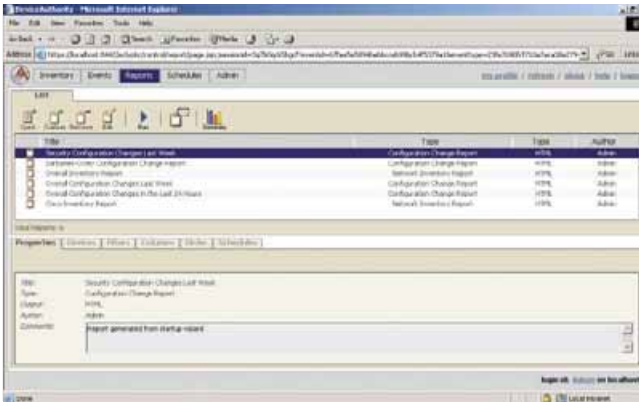
eWEEK Labs used DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 to manage configuration changes on a range of Cisco Systems Inc. and Extreme Networks Inc. equipment. In most cases, we used the suite to copy the existing configuration to our central console. As with previous versions of the product, we could back up configurations and make modifications for redeployment.

DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5's new script-recording tool, along with a syntax checker that pointed out when we tried to code configuration commands incorrectly, should significantly reduce the amount of time senior network engineers need to build new configurations.

Our tests showed that DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 should enable network administrators to cut operations costs, increase network availability, streamline network change procedures and demonstrate regulatory compliance—especially when compared with using handcrafted scripts or a hodgepodge of single-purpose network management tools.

This isn't to say that DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5's extensive configuration management capability comes easily or on the cheap. During tests, we were constantly reminded of just how much network configuration design is an art as well as a science. Equipment groups must be created, and management decisions must be molded into technical expression for network devices.





Top: We used DeviceAuthority to track our network infrastructure devices including Cisco routers; it correctly tracked device configuration files and made backing up files a breeze. Bottom: New reports, including those satisfying SarbOx requirements, are easily accessible through the suite's Web interface.

However, it didn't take us long to see that DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 could do a lot more to help network managers. For example, while

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the product ably pointed out syntax errors in tests, it offered no help on correcting the problem. Company officials said plans include enabling the suite to display the options for a syntactically correct command.

That would be a welcome addition, but we also think AlterPoint needs to include wizards that use best-practice guidelines from network equipment makers to walk network engineers through configuration creation. Competing products already offer these capabilities.

As with past versions of DeviceAuthority Suite, we believe that only the most senior network managers should initially be given access to the product. During the first few months, senior staff should use the tool to create equipment groups and policies. Only then should less-expert staff use the software (see related story, next page).

As with competitors, including Voyence Inc.'s VoyenceControl offering, network configuration management is affordable only for large, high-value networks.

DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 includes DeviceAuthority Server, DeviceAuthority Audit and DeviceAuthority Update and is priced starting at $19,950 for 100 devices. Volume discounts are available. The three components can also be purchased separately, but we think using the entire suite is the best way to keep network configuration costs as low as possible.

Getting rid of guesswork

THE MOST IMPORTANT OF the many changes in DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 is its focus on helping IT managers drive the guesswork out of configuration management. So, although DeviceAuthority Update now includes more than 700 hardware, software and configuration attributes, we were more interested in the added configuration syntax checking.

For the first time, DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 can perform a validity check on Cisco IOS (Internetworking Operating System) syntax strings. Because Cisco's router IOS is quite structured—each configuration command has a strict set of acceptable choices—we wonder why DeviceAuthority didn't gain this capability sooner.

Aside from adding intelligence to the basic product, AlterPoint is clearly trying to move DeviceAuthority Suite into position for network managers at very large enterprises. This version of the suite runs on Solaris 9.0, while previous versions ran only on Windows and Linux.

DeviceAuthority Suite can now integrate with several widely implemented authentication systems that use TACACS+ (Terminal Access Controller Access Control System), RADIUS and Cisco's CiscoSecure Access Control System. Our tests showed that with an ordinary amount of effort, we could carefully control access to the product using already-issued user names and passwords.

These enterprise-class modifications to DeviceAuthority Suite should factor heavily into network managers' evaluation decisions. The new support for Solaris and remote authentication support complement DeviceAuthority Suite's ability to run on Oracle Corp.'s databases, Microsoft Corp.'s SQL Server and MySQL AB's databases.

This means Opsware Inc.'s Network Automation System (formerly Rendition Networks' TrueControl), as well as Voyence's and Intelliden Corp.'s namesake network configuration management offerings, is no longer the only game in town. This is especially true for midsize organizations that make many configuration changes, as when acquiring other companies.

Three pieces

DEVICEAUTHORITY SERVER, the hub of the suite, is where we spent most of our testing time. While network managers will likely spend more time with the DeviceAuthority Audit module, we spent most of our time on DeviceAuthority Server because we integrated other support products, including Hewlett-Packard Co.'s OpenView Network Node Manager and EMC Corp.'s Smarts InCharge real-time network systems management software.

DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 can integrate with a long list of complementary network management tools, including IBM's Tivoli NetView, BMC Corp.'s Remedy ARS and a veritable who's who of network management products from Computer Associates International Inc., Mercury Interactive Corp., Concord Communications Inc. and Micromuse Inc.

Some competitive offerings have much greater integration with one or more of the products listed above, and IT managers should factor product alliances into any buying decision. We ultimately had a good experience

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 AlterPoint's DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 now runs on Solaris and has expanded to 700 the number of hardware and configuration attributes it tracks, thus taking the suite several more steps along the path toward being suitable for even the largest enterprise networks. DeviceAuthority should significantly reduce the time and effort needed to keep routers, switches and other network devices correctly configured. More information is at www.alterpoint.com.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
DEVICE SUPPORT	GOOD
SCALABILITY	GOOD
CHANGE MANAGEMENT	GOOD
PERFORMANCE	GOOD
EXPERT ASSISTANCE	FAIR

COST ANALYSIS: Steep entry costs—a $19,950 license fee—and significant staff resources are needed to initially configure the product. However, if fully utilized, DeviceAuthority should derive significant operations cost savings out of network maintenance. The product neatly combines scripting and distribution tools, along with reports that network managers will find essential for controlling configuration costs.

EVALUATION SHORTLIST

- **Voyence's VoyenceControl** Focuses on large organizations and managed service providers (www.voyence.com)
- **Intelliden's Intelliden R-Series** Specializes in security management in addition to auditing, configuring and provisioning network devices (www.intelliden.com)
- **Opsware's Network Automation System** The rebranded Rendition TrueControl product will soon have new features overseen by Opsware (www.opsware.com)

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using DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 with the other network management tools, but it took (not unexpectedly) a large amount of time to iron out all the wrinkles.

This gave us a chance to work with the technical support staff at AlterPoint, and our experience was favorable. The technicians we cold-called were knowledgeable and invariably answered the telephone by the third ring.

The DeviceAuthority Audit module is where most day-to-day operations happen. The module comes with a slew of useful reports, and new in this version is a report tailored for the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. (It appears that threatening to incarcerate executives really did have an effect on reporting.)

We liked the script-generation tool that automatically captures command-line interactions. IT managers should consider using this feature to transfer expert knowledge from senior network managers to the operations team. We could create scripts, which were then stored in a central repository that was accessible by authorized users. These scripts could be used to redeploy changes or as a model that others could use to make new scripts.

The DeviceAuthority Update governs the actual configuration change process. This is where the aforementioned syntax checking happens. The actions of this component should be the focus of senior network managers because this is where automated policy remediation (approved configurations redeployed to devices that are found to be out of compliance) and software image and patch management functions are stored and processed.

All the components are neatly managed in a rather complex interface. Even after we were comfortable with the product, we returned to the product manual to find the best way to perform several deployment tasks. *e*

Labs Technical Director Cameron Sturdevant is at cameron_sturdevant@ziffdavis.com.

Prep work is key to accurate tests

HALF THE WORK OF TESTING A NETWORK CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT TOOL such as AlterPoint Inc.'s DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 comes before the product is ever installed. (Our review of DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 starts on Page 39.)

IT managers must have a complete inventory of the make, model and operating system of all network devices, including switches, routers, wireless access points and load balancers.

In addition, testing will be greatly enhanced by documenting in detail the change management process. With an inventory list in one hand and a change management process in the other, IT managers should be able to determine quickly which change management products to bring in based on the support level these products provide for equipment and processes already in use.

The next phase of testing determines how much load the change management tool places on network bandwidth. And most important are tests to determine how much control the operator has over this load. Look for scheduling routines that allow phased rollouts of configurations.

Bandwidth measurements are relatively easy to determine. The impact of a network change management tool on IT processes is much more difficult to determine: This is where the documented change management procedure comes into play.

eWEEK Labs recommends that IT managers first see how well the network change management tool fits in to the existing process. Questions to ask are: "Does the product support the various levels of administrative users that exist in our workplace?" and "Can configurations be created and maintained to the standards already in place in the department?"

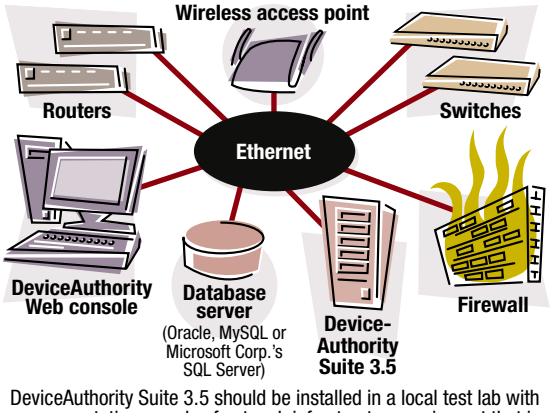
During this process, substantial efficiencies over the current method of change management should be readily apparent, and the decision on whether to purchase the product likely will be straightforward.

If process efficiencies are not easily discovered, managers might be tempted to look at the bells and whistles that are included in many change management products. One example of this is reports designed to show compliance with government regulation. However, these types of reports are usually just fancy doodads and not really a justification for investing in a change management tool, absent other compelling features.

For example, although we liked the Sarbanes-Oxley Act reporting tool in DeviceAuthority, there is no clear evidence that SarbOx requires managers to show this level of detail for network devices that merely transport data without storing or acting on the information.

Finally, it's important to gauge the size of the job. Use network documentation to determine the correct number and placement of components needed to best support the change management product. It's a lot easier to avoid overspending on a project of this size if IT uses the pilot test to understand the best placement of usually expensive network configuration management components to ensure that only the correct number is purchased to do the job. *—Cameron Sturdevant*

Samples make for accurate tests



DeviceAuthority Suite 3.5 should be installed in a local test lab with a representative sample of network infrastructure equipment that is used in the organization.

Source: eWEEK Labs

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e-Synergy aces business basics

REVIEW: WEB-BASED SUITE HONES WORKFLOW AND DATA MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES

By Michael Caton

With modules to manage CRM, human resources, projects, financials, logistics and workflow, Exact Software's e-Synergy delivers more than the sum of its parts. e-Synergy provides midsize companies with a Web-based business management suite that is affordable and relatively flexible.

In eWeek Labs' tests, we found that e-Synergy does a good job of integrating a core workflow system with components for managing customer, financial and HR data in a way that gives companies a good tool for creating internal- and external-facing applications.

The management approach for pricing and revisions hits a good middle ground between perpetual-license and subscription models. Pricing starts at $1,000 per user for a perpetual license, with maintenance and support each costing 10 percent of the purchase price per year.

Exact Software has the product on a long-track development process, with no major version releases in the past three years. But any customer with a maintenance subscription has access to the functions that have been introduced at regular intervals during that time.

We looked at the latest build, which was introduced in January. Although most feature improvements aren't as large-scale as the quarterly releases found with hosted applications such as Salesforce.com Inc.'s Salesforce.com or NetSuite Inc.'s NetSuite, the e-Synergy revisions generally have been more digestible when it comes to getting users up to speed.

Modules define the core functionality of e-Synergy. The application's underlying security model and its focus on workflow and document and content management enabled us to build broad customer- and business-partner-facing applications.

In tests, we could manage a corporate Web site, build and manage programs for developing leads, and manage an extranet for business partners that provided access to core application capabilities. e-Synergy requires Microsoft Corp.'s Internet Information Services and SQL Server 2000.

The workflow engine has a good set of tools for building workflows and forms in the framework of the application, and we particularly liked the ease with which we could repurpose existing workflows for new ones.

The e-CRM and e-HRM modules within e-Synergy provide one-click access to projects. Many of the forms in e-Synergy share common design elements, making the system easy to learn. Building custom forms within e-Synergy is also straightforward.

Although e-Synergy can provide a bevy of capabilities, it has some inherent limitations that companies will need to work around. For example, the workflow engine supports only four steps within a process. For more complex processes, we had to divide the process into a couple of separate stages. (See related story, right.)

Furthermore, the application doesn't include a graphical modeling engine, although it does provide a good linear view of workflows. These tools are common in dedicated BPM (business process management) packages such as Ultimus Inc.'s BPM Suite.

Workflow is the critical component of both e-HRM, the HR management module, and e-CRM, the customer relationship management module. The e-HRM module is also a core component for managing security levels throughout the organization because the module manages roles within an organization. We found both e-HRM and e-CRM easy to manage in tests because they share the same forms and user interface (see screens, left).

Administration takes place on two levels in e-Synergy: at the system level and in each module. System-level administration took a little getting used to in tests, particularly because many core features are controlled by roles and organizational structures

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PADI expands e-Synergy use

CASE STUDY: ORGANIZATION DIVES DEEPER INTO MANAGEMENT SUITE

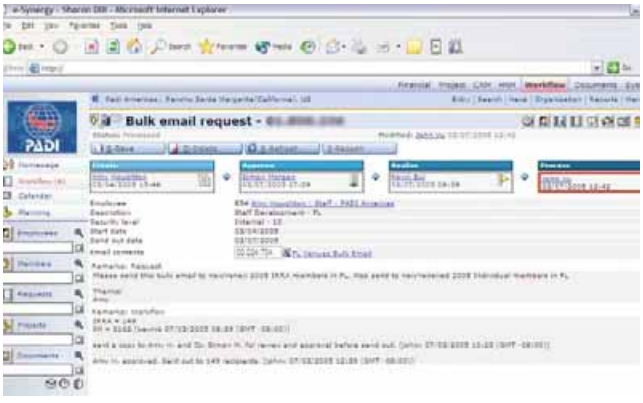
By Debra Donston

WHAT A DIFFERENCE TWO years makes.

In the summer of 2003, eWEEK Labs interviewed Sharon Dill, then director of IT at PADI Americas, about her organization's use of Exact Software's e-Synergy (go to www.eweek.com/labslinks) system. We recently caught up with Dill, who is now CIO of the organization, to see how the system has performed over time.

e-Synergy was originally implemented at PADI, a scuba-diving certification agency, as a way to better manage relationships with its more than 100,000 members.

In 2003, PADI was primarily using the e-Synergy CRM (customer relationship management) module, with about 100 PADI employees on the system. Since then, said Dill, PADI has expanded its use of e-Synergy to include the system's documents, projects and workflow modules, and almost 400 employees are using the system.



e-Synergy allows only four steps within a process, which forced PADI to consolidate its procedure for requesting approval for bulk e-mails.

Many of the new users are in PADI's international offices. Last year, Dill trained employees in PADI's offices in Switzerland, England and Australia.

"We're a global company," said Dill, based in Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif. "Our members tend to travel from office to office—where the sun is shining—so the main driving force [for this expanded use of e-Synergy] was to be able to have customer comments that everyone has access to."

Once a day, PADI uses an XML integrator to upload new information from five Exact Macola databases, located across the globe, into e-Synergy.

In August, PADI Americas and PADI Europe started to make use of e-Synergy's documents capability to cut down on paper and ease access to member information.

"We have a huge file room that's bursting at the seams with paper," said Dill. "In the past, we would create a manila folder, put a member number on it and put any significant pieces of paper in it. Now, we scan this kind of paperwork and link it to members' records in e-Synergy."

Dill said PADI has also significantly expanded its use of workflow and roles within e-Synergy, "so something doesn't get sent out and stuck in limbo if someone is not around."

One of the limitations noted in eWEEK Labs' review of the latest build of e-Synergy, which starts at left, is that the system's workflow engine supports only four steps within a process. Dill said this has not been an issue for PADI, for the most part, but there have been instances when "a fifth step would have been nice."

For example, said Dill, the process for approving PADI bulk e-mail messages had to be squeezed into four steps to make it work in e-Synergy (see screen, left): Marketing makes a request to send a bulk e-mail message; the request must then be approved by an IT executive; the approved request then goes to a programmer who pulls the appropriate e-mail targets; and, finally, the request goes to a Web staff person who sends the e-mail message.

Dill said she would have liked to be able to include a fifth step—where marketing would automatically be informed that the e-mail had been sent—but, instead, the original requester has to go in and check to see if the process has been completed.

Dill said PADI employees are also making much greater use of e-Synergy's projects module—another

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 44]

within the e-HRM module.

e-Synergy's security model limits who has access to what kind of information, so it does not really matter that configuring back-office connectivity for divisions happens in the e-HRM module rather than in the system module. (We expected that information to reside in the system module.)

e-Synergy natively supports other Exact Software back-end systems, such as the company's accounting systems. Otherwise, the system supports connections to accounting and other back-office applications through XML. XML also controls data exchange with client applications such as Microsoft Word and Outlook.

The e-HRM and e-CRM components have a common look and feel, and the major forms within each application have a common design. This made it easy for us to repurpose some of these elements in applications we designed using the form and workflow tools.

In general, we liked the way we could manage processes extensively from within each module. For example, the e-HRM module controls the whole process of managing employees, beginning with hiring. The HR system can then manage

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 44]

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E-SYNERGY FROM PAGE 43

the process, from posting a job description on the Web site to budgeting and hiring.

The hiring workflow provides a good model of e-Synergy's workflow capabilities. We needed to follow the logical steps of associating a job requisition to a role within an organization. After that was done, it was possible to associate a particular job with a candidate who had applied for it via the Web—and, in the process, we could save an HR manager the trouble of filling out employee record information.

The e-CRM module manages customer and partner data. We found that e-CRM provides good tools for users charged with managing customer data. The main screen (as well as the left-hand pane) is search-driven to give sales and customer service staff quick access to customer or partner data. We liked the customization capabilities and the ease with which we could manage workflow from within the e-CRM module.

The e-CRM module works well with the e-Logistics module, which is a combination product management tool and supplier management system. In addition, we could easily tap into the e-Projects project management application and the e-Documents document management system.

On the financial side, the e-Financials module provides budgeting, an executive view and reporting tools for consolidated company financials.

The e-Synergy home page organizes workflow and important documents.

Accounting must be managed in an external application, and data must be imported through native connectors or through an XML connector for Exact Software accounting applications.

Another feature that we thought worked particularly well is e-Synergy's support for synchronizing the user's Outlook calendar with his or her e-Synergy calendar, as well as the document integration with Microsoft Word. If we needed to create a document to associate with a particular customer account, we could create and upload the document directly from Word by providing customer account information.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

e-Synergy Exact's e-Synergy combines a workflow engine with prebuilt CRM, HR, logistics, budgeting and content management applications in a well-designed suite. The application can be configured to run a broad range of applications, including Web-based partner programs that tap the system's CRM application. Workflow and administration have quirks, but companies can clear these hurdles using the system's flexible design elements and security features. More information is available at www.exactsoftware.com.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
EASE OF USE	EXCELLENT
WORKFLOW	GOOD
ADMINISTRATION	GOOD
CUSTOMIZATION	EXCELLENT

COST ANALYSIS: Priced at $1,000 per seat, with 10 percent annual maintenance and 10 percent annual support costs, e-Synergy is priced comparably to other licensed enterprise applications. The big difference is that the company delivers regular feature updates through maintenance in the way a hosted application such as Salesforce.com does, making maintenance and support valuable investments.

EVALUATION SHORTLIST

■ **iCode Inc.'s Everest** Client/server and Web-based all-in-one business management suite that offers more accounting features (www.icode.com) ■ **NetSuite's NetSuite** Hosted application that has broader accounting features but lacks HR and budgeting capabilities (www.netsuite.com) ■ **Salesforce.com's Salesforce.com** Sales- and customer-service-focused hosted application that has similar XML-based connectivity to other back-end applications (www.salesforce.com)

PADI FROM PAGE 43

manila-folder-killing application.

For example, said Dill, a project was created in e-Synergy for a diving seminar that was slated to take place late last month in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. From any browser-based system, the PADI instructor giving the seminar could access information ranging from the members registered for the seminar to the refreshments scheduled to be served at the site.

Dill: Access to customer feedback drives use of e-Synergy.

When eWEEK Labs last spoke with Dill in 2003, she related some targets for e-Synergy that she hoped to meet this year. Many of those goals have been achieved, but she is still working on developing e-Synergy for use as an interface for external customers, among other things.

In fact, Dill said it was interesting to reread the case study that eWEEK published in July 2003 to see how far she had come with e-Synergy and where she would like to go.

"If you would have asked me two years ago if it would have taken two years to get this far, I would have said no—we can do it much faster than that," she said. "I think something of this scale really does take time to nurture."

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Jim Rapoza: Tech Directions

A wild software ride

ALIGN YOUR NEEDS WITH APP MAKERS' FIX PHILOSOPHIES

FINALLY THE LONG WINTER IS OVER, AND OUR thoughts turn to warm-weather pursuits. Some people will plan beach vacations, while others will turn to hiking, fishing and other outdoor activities.

Me? I'm planning that truly American experience of going to a big amusement park. But which one? The quality of rides and the cost are important considerations, but probably the biggest factor is the safety record of the park.

I've narrowed it down to two choices: the world-famous Jim World and the ubiquitous Great Rapoza Experience. Both parks have had about the same number of potential problems that require equipment maintenance, repairs or even outright redesigns. But both handle these problems differently.

The Great Rapoza Experience typically announces every major or minor problem that it finds and rushes to fix it almost immediately. This has earned the park lots of good will in the hard-core ride enthusiast community. However, it also tends to lead to negative coverage in the press, which harps on the problems rather than on the fact that they were quickly fixed.

Jim World, on the other hand, keeps as quiet as possible about most problems and fixes to problems. When there is a major issue, Jim World usually fixes it in good time, but the park also sits on many smaller problems and then quietly fixes them in quarterly park redesigns.

Now that I think about it, these same factors can be found in the software world, and software buyers need to make similar decisions when purchasing applications.

In last week's column, I argued that software vendors should work with researchers who look for software vulnerabilities and that vendors should be open about the discovered problems. But when one looks at the many commercial and open-source software vendors out there, it is easy to see that there are many levels and definitions of openness.

Some choose to address every single problem as it comes to light, an approach that is typical of—but not found solely in—open-source products. Others fix critical problems immediately but sit on smaller problems and fix them in big updates or service packs.

Much of the discussion about these approaches tends to focus on the political issues. Vendor A might say that Vendor B's products are insecure because Vendor B issues multiple fixes. Vendor B might then turn around and say that the single service pack Vendor A issued actually fixed 50 problems that people were exposed to in the months prior to the service pack's release.

But there's really no right answer when it comes to issuing software fixes. Open-source organizations often sit on smaller bugs for months and address them in a .0x release that is essentially a service pack. And commercial vendors will sometimes quickly address less-critical bugs that are affecting many users.

For IT administrators, the political back and forth is much less important than which patching approach best fits their organization's security practices and system management procedures.

With the "fix everything quickly" approach, the administrator benefits from knowing about a problem right away and promptly getting a fix. On the other hand, being put in a position of constantly having to decide which fixes need to be tested and deployed can add a sometimes-unmanageable load onto administrators' backs.

With the "fix most small problems in a big service pack" approach, administrators need only test a single big patch once, which can make deployment a lot easier. However, administrators may also have wasted months dealing with a problem whose fix was being saved for a service pack.

So when looking at security as a deciding factor in choosing an application, you may want to focus less on the raw numbers and more on how the vendor or developer approaches bug and security fixes.

> Some address every problem as it comes to light, an approach typical of–but not found solely in–open-source products.

As for my amusement park choice, all the data is pretty close, so I'm going to have to go with what is by far the most influential factor for most people (and businesses): I'm going to go with the amusement park that offers the biggest discount coupons. e

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PINGS&PACKETS

GooglePreview shows users the Web pages linked to their search results.

BROWSER EXTENSIONS

GooglePreview streamlines searches

LIKE MOST KNOWLEDGE WORKERS, I spend a lot of time searching for information on Google. And it can be frustrating when a results link looks to be useful, but when I click on the link, it turns out to be a site aggregator or something not even related to the search topic.

In these cases, it would be useful to have some way to actually see the Web page before clicking on it. This is exactly what GooglePreview does.

A free extension to the Firefox browser, GooglePreview let me view thumbnail views of the linked Web sites in my Google searches. With this tool enabled, I could quickly see the actual page linked to the result.

GooglePreview pulls the thumbnail views from thumbshots.org and alexa.com. Not every result in my searches showed a preview, and to get GooglePreview to work properly, I had to delete the regular cookie that Google placed in my browser.

Still, I found the free GooglePreview to be a real timesaver, and, like most Firefox extensions, it works on all platforms that Firefox runs on.

GooglePreview, along with many other extensions, can be found at addons.update.mozilla.org. —*Jim Rapoza*

COLLABORATION TOOLS

CipherShare secures group work

THERE'S NO SHORTAGE OF DOCUMENT-, task- and messaging-oriented collaboration applications, but few offer the security options found in Kasten Chase Applied Research's Assurency CipherShare.

Available as a hosted application through Online Systems for $75 per user per month (and a $100-per-user setup fee), CipherShare provides robust security through strong encryption and document workflow features.

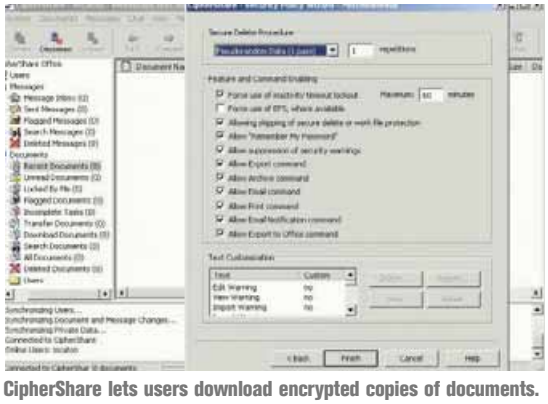
While most applications in this space are Web-based, the client/server-based approach gives users faster access to data and a better integration of the messaging and chat features. In the hosted version I looked at, I found the system easy to use. A nice feature of the hosted version is the ability for users to pool their 500MB of allotted storage in the shared work space.

I had to manually configure some elements of the client software, but for companies that want to ensure that data remains encrypted at all times, it's worth the administrative overhead.

To establish a trusted identity within the system, users have to verify identity via a fingerprint, a text string within the public key. This fingerprint-checking process requires users to verify their identification by phoning a work space's designated security manager.

I liked the way CipherShare handles document management, especially the ability to download encrypted copies of documents and to work with them remotely (see screen, below).

For more information, go to www.kastenchase.com or www.onsys.ws. —*Michael Caton*



CipherShare lets users download encrypted copies of documents.

REMOTE SUPPORT

LogMeIn keeps tabs on off-site PCs

3AM LABS IS HOPING TO REDUCE IT manager woes with LogMeIn IT Reach, a tool that allows system administrators to manage and diagnose issues involving remote machines. (For a review of two remote access management products, see Page 52.)

Released last month, LogMeIn IT Reach costs $13 per month or $100 per year per PC. All remote machines require the Windows 98 operating system or later and a broadband Internet connection. The local PC (used to access the remote machine) can run Windows 95 or later, as well as a Java-enabled browser such as Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator 4.0 or later, or Mozilla Firefox.

LogMeIn IT Reach is easy to deploy and install on multiple machines. I simply created an administrator account and then e-mailed a link to several remote users. After end users clicked on that link, LogMeIn IT Reach auto-installed on their PCs and automatically configured the remote machines so that I could access them. From my administrator view, I could access a snapshot view of each computer's activity, including system information, network traffic, disk drives and processes.

LogMeIn IT Reach's diagnostic tools allowed me to complete tasks such as manage files, reboot the machine and initiate instant messaging chats with users.

More information is available at www.logmein.com. —*Anne Chen*

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EMC helps companies build better SANs

REVIEW: CONTROLCENTER SAN ADVISOR 5.2 GAINS POWERFUL PLANNING, MODELING CAPABILITIES

By Henry Baltazar

THE NEW SAN ADVISOR MODULE FOR EMC CORP.'S EMC CONTROLCENTER IS A powerful management tool that lets IT managers accurately plan storage area network deployments and upgrades.

eWEEK Labs' exclusive tests of SAN Advisor 5.2, slated for release this month, show that the product is a solid addition to the EMC ControlCenter line of storage management products. (This is the first version of SAN Advisor—previously, the product was called SAN Architect.)

SAN Advisor 5.2 has a starting price of $5,000, and prices increase according to the amount of storage managed. EMC currently offers bundle pricing for its ControlCenter SRM Planning and Provisioning suite—which includes SAN Advisor, SAN Manager and ARM (Automated Resource Manager)—for a starting price of $22,000 for 1TB of managed storage. Discounts are available for larger enterprises.

With SANs getting larger and more complex, design tools such as SAN Advisor 5.2 and its primary competitor, Computer Associates International Inc.'s $720 BrightStor SAN Designer, will become more important.

Considering that SANs are becoming more and more complex by the day and that most companies don't have the time and resources to train all their IT staff on SAN technologies, tools such as SAN Advisor 5.2 will become increasingly attractive because they allow low-level staff to do more SAN management tasks.

Our tests show that SAN Advisor 5.2, a Web-based application, will be a valuable tool for mapping SAN resources, planning SANs and managing SAN changes in any company that has large SAN installations.

Given the early state of the SAN design software tools market, however, we believe EMC should make a concerted effort to reach out to non-EMC shops by including discovery functionality with SAN Advisor 5.2.

The best is built in

THE MOST INTERESTING ASPECT OF SAN Advisor 5.2 is its best-practices and interoperability knowledge. At sites that already have EMC ControlCenter, SAN Advisor 5.2 can take discovery information from the repository to create information-rich snapshot files that contain the topology, firmware and driver revisions and hardware inventory of the SAN.

On its own, SAN Advisor 5.2 does not have discovery capabilities, so it would be difficult for IT managers who don't have EMC ControlCenter 5.2 to get full use of the product. As we said earlier, EMC will need to include discovery in future versions of SAN Advisor to stay competitive with rivals.

Without discovery capabilities, administrators must manually input all inventory data. CA's BrightStor SAN Designer comes with discovery features, but currently it discovers only Brocade Communication Systems Inc. environments.

SAN Advisor 5.2 snapshots can be made on demand, or they can be scheduled, which make them a useful way to track changes made to the SAN. After importing discovery information from an eWEEK Labs test SAN, SAN Advisor 5.2 discovered several potential problems in it right out of the gate.

SAN Advisor 5.2 found problems that ranged from trivial things, such as hard drives that were approaching end-of-life status in the test array, to major mistakes such as multipath host bus adapters that were accidentally plugged into the same server director switch—which could have left us with a single point of failure at the director switch. In addition to finding these problems, SAN Advisor 5.2 also did a good

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 50]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EMC ControlCenter SAN Advisor 5.2 EMC's (www.emc.com) SAN Advisor 5.2 is a useful SAN planning and modeling tool that will let IT managers optimize and upgrade SANs. The SAN intelligence in SAN Advisor 5.2 analyzes the configuration of a SAN and points out potential problems and weaknesses before implementation. SAN Advisor 5.2, which has a starting price of $5,000, also does a good job of creating task lists, which senior IT staff can assign to junior staff members.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PLANNING/MODELING	EXCELLENT
INTEROPERABILITY	GOOD
REPORTING TOOLS	GOOD
USABILITY	GOOD

COST ANALYSIS: SAN Advisor 5.2 makes most sense for IT organizations that have already implemented the EMC ControlCenter 5.2 suite. The company offers bundle pricing for its ControlCenter SRM Planning and Provisioning—which includes SAN Advisor, SAN Manager and Automated Resource Manager—for a starting price of $22,000 for 1TB of managed storage. Discounts are available for larger installations.

EVALUATION SHORTLIST

- **CA's BrightStor SAN Designer** A powerful tool for SAN planning and design, but it currently provides Brocade-only fabric discovery (www.ca.com)
- **Onaro Inc.'s SANscreen** Focuses on SAN change management and requires no host agents, making it a good choice for shops that don't use ControlCenter (www.onaro.com)

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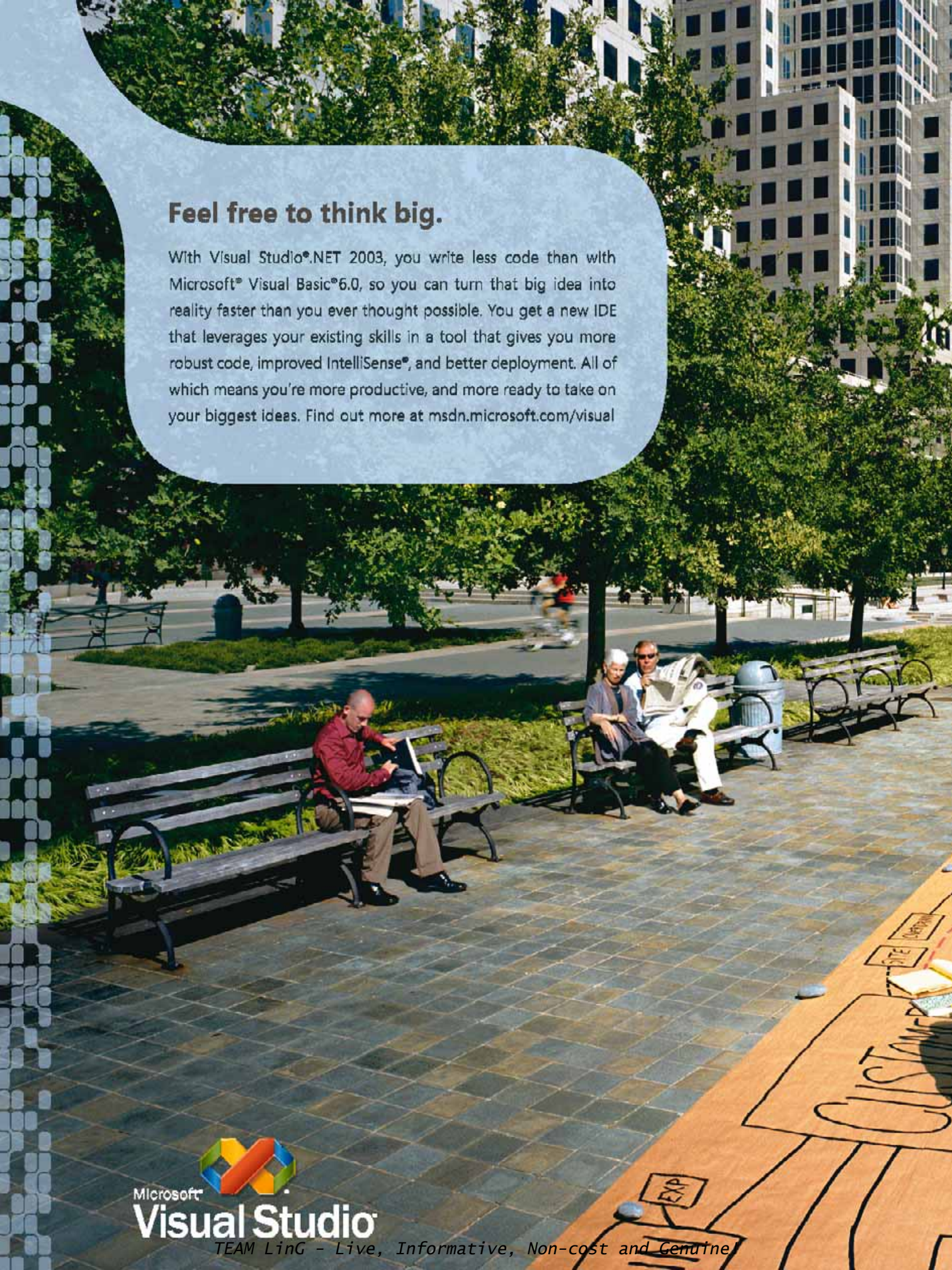

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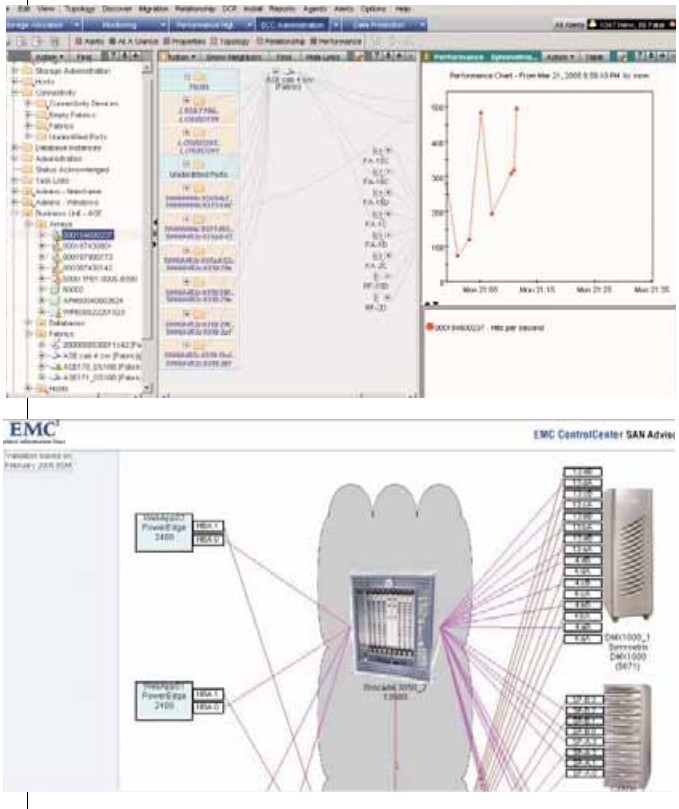
EMC FROM PAGE 47

job of recommending corrective actions to eliminate them.

Planning well

AS A PLANNING TOOL, SAN ADVISOR 5.2 IS easy to use, and it let us create design files that simulated what would happen if we made additions or changes to our SAN. In the simulated environment, it took only a few clicks of the mouse to add equipment to our SAN. When adding equipment such as switches or arrays, SAN Advisor 5.2 helped us determine the right specifications and configuration for new hardware.



The EMC ControlCenter 5.2 console makes day-to-day storage management chores easier to deal with (top). Using the SAN Advisor 5.2 module, IT managers can quickly generate an accurate model of a new or modified SAN (bottom) and see how it fits their storage scheme.

For example, when we tried to add a new array to our test SAN, SAN Advisor 5.2 walked us through basic configuration decisions, including how many disks to install and what types of disks to use. In addition, SAN Advisor 5.2 warned us when new components weren't configured correctly or if our design changes did not meet industry best practices.

After we'd created a simulated storage array, SAN Advisor 5.2's connection tool helped us figure out the best way to connect the array to the SAN, telling us the switches and ports to use.

Using SAN Advisor 5.2's design comparison tool, we quickly generated checklists that described in detail the necessary steps for upgrading a current design to a new one. This comparison functionality is extremely important because it makes it easy for high-level storage administrators to create task lists for lower-level staffers to implement.

The comparison tool can be used to validate implementation changes to the SAN. After an implementation is done, the senior IT manager can use the comparison tool to make sure the snapshot of the new SAN configuration matches its design correctly.

SAN Advisor 5.2 is linked to EMC's Auto Update service. When new interoperability guidelines or best-practice recommendations become available, that information can be added to the software quickly. Using this information, IT managers can rapidly identify outdated hardware, firmware and drivers on their SAN.

SAN Advisor 5.2 does not import performance data into its design files or snapshots. We believe EMC should add this information in future revisions of SAN Advisor because it will enable IT managers to plan upgrades and avoid creating bottlenecks. Competing products do not yet offer this capability, but this is something we expect to see in most products in this space during the next few years.

SAN Advisor 5.2 can export data in the form of PDF and spreadsheet files, which should make it easy for IT managers to e-mail or print out their SAN designs. e

Senior Analyst Henry Baltazar can be reached at henry_baltazar@ziffdavis.com.

ControlCenter fits enterprise

IN ADDITION TO ITS NEW SAN ADVISOR module, EMC Corp.'s EMC ControlCenter 5.2 storage management suite has gained several enhancements that bolster EMC's flagship management platform.

Filling a major void from the last EMC ControlCenter release that eWEEK Labs reviewed (go to www.eweek.com/labslinks for that review), EMC ControlCenter 5.2 now includes agent support for Red Hat Inc.'s Red Hat Linux and Novell Inc.'s SuSE Linux distributions. Agents provide EMC ControlCenter with much of the information it needs to detect problems and monitor storage usage, so the new Linux agent is a welcome addition.

ControlCenter 5.2's StorageScope File Level Reporter SRM (Storage Resource Management) enabled us to track storage usage at the file level in order to discover how much storage was being used to house specific files, such as MP3s or other media types.

StorageScope FLR SRM currently runs as a separate application but will be integrated with the rest of the EMC ControlCenter suite in a future update, according to EMC officials.

EMC's Automated Resource Manager, which eases the process of allocating and presenting storage to servers, has also improved during the last two years. The new deallocation wizard makes it easy to return storage to the SAN (storage area network) pool when servers get decommissioned or when applications are migrated.

EMC ARM sports an improved zone policy wizard, which we used to configure EMC ARM to create zone names based on key parameters such as the types of servers managed and the applications they were running. In the past, EMC ARM created random names for zones, which were difficult to remember and manage.

—Henry Baltazar

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Remote control packages connect users

REVIEW: CITRIX AND WEBEX COVER WEB-BASED BASICS, BUT MYWEBEX PC PRO HAS FIRST-RELEASE JITTERS

By Anne Chen

With work rarely stopping after an employee leaves the office, remote control applications have become a necessity at many organizations.

Web-based remote control applications are often easier for users to navigate than VNC (virtual network computing) or SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) VPNs. Remote control applications are also more flexible, allowing IT managers to add new users easily without having to write one policy for full-time employees and another for contract workers or business partners.

eWeek Labs recently tested Citrix Systems Inc.'s Citrix GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1 and WebEx Communications Inc.'s MyWebEx PC Pro. Our tests show that Citrix has built on the strength of previous versions of GoToMyPC, adding new management and security features. On the other hand, WebEx's product showed its rookie status in tests, delivering spotty performance. Still, with WebEx's robust Web conferencing technologies to draw from, we believe MyWebEx PC Pro should overcome its first-release woes.

GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1

Citrix's GoToMyPC is one of the most effective remote control tools eWeek Labs has seen, and the latest revision will only widen its popularity.

GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1, released in February, enhances the administration center used by IT managers and extends security by allowing administrators to terminate unapproved connections at the firewall and by adding multiple layers of administration to manage users in specific groups.

GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1's price is based on the number of host PCs supported. A GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1 account starts at approximately $200 per month for an annual 10-PC plan. This makes GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1 slightly more expensive than other comparable services, but we believe the application's wide breadth of capabilities is worth the cost.

GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1 requires that the host machine run a version of Windows. However, users' computers can run any operating system to access the host computer, as long as they use a Java-enabled browser (Internet Explorer, Opera, Netscape or Mozilla, for example).

GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1's performance makes you forget you're accessing a remote computer (top). Users easily transfer files among remote computers using MyWebEx PC Pro (bottom).

Setting up GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1 simply means entering an e-mail address and choosing a password. From the administration center, we invited users to employ the service to remotely access their PCs without difficulty.

We especially liked the addition of domain hierarchy in this release of GoToMyPC. The feature let us group users and assign managers to those groups—something that certainly comes in handy in large enterprises. By allowing layers of administrators to manage specific users, an organization could easily allow a manager to give access to specific applications or information to contract workers.

GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1 lacks the robust security of Symantec Corp.'s rival pcAnywhere, but it is secured end-to-end with AES (Advanced Encryption Standard) 128-bit encryption, and we could terminate a user's remote access sessions from the administration center.

GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1 enables IT managers to restrict use of the service by IP address. For example, Citrix can block specific IP addresses from accessing the service.

GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1's reporting capabilities have been expanded. Online reports are now archived for a year versus 90 days in previous versions. Reports

EVALUATION SHORTLIST

- **Symantec's pcAnywhere**
  Provides organizations with industrial-strength security and authentication options (www.symantec.com)
- **3am Labs Inc.'s LogMeIn**
  Not as slick as GoToMyPC, but this free product provides the basics (www.logmein.com)

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can be downloaded in a number of file formats for local availability.

MyWebEx PC Pro

MYWEBEX PC PRO FUNCTIONS in much the same way as GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1, giving users access to remote machines via a Web browser.

Also released in February, the remote control application is available in two versions. We tested MyWebEx PC Pro, which includes tools such as remote printing, file transfer and application-specific access. MyWebEx PC Pro is available free through June 30. After that, the Pro version will cost $9.95 per month for each PC or $7.45 per PC per month with an annual subscription. MyWebEx PC is a free, stripped-down version that offers strictly screen sharing and is limited to one remote PC.

MyWebEx PC Pro is available for Windows 95 and later and supports only Microsoft Corp.'s Internet Explorer 4.x and later on both host and user machines.

MyWebEx PC Pro rivals GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1 in its simplicity of setup. After signing up for an account, we merely downloaded a client onto each PC and assigned a password to each client. We appreciated MyWebEx PC Pro's authentication choices: We could have the host system authenticate the user via password or have the service dial a phone number provided by the user.

MyWebEx PC Pro's application access control is outstanding. It was a breeze to limit remote access to Microsoft Word and Outlook. As a result, only those two applications—and nothing else on the desktop—were available to us when we remotely logged on to our host desktop.

MyWebEx PC Pro has many of the same capabilities as GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1. However, MyWebEx PC Pro isn't as robust as its rival. For example, our IE browser crashed on a number of occasions when we tried to connect to a remote system. When we logged back into our account, it showed that the remote system was still connected, meaning we had to disconnect from the service before trying to connect again.

Accessing a remote PC from MyWebEx PC Pro takes longer than with other services, and we experienced more lag than usual when navigating the remote desktop.

Unlike GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1, MyWebEx PC Pro does not have a screen area auto-matching feature that automatically reduces the host's resolution to that of the remote machine. As a result, we had to do quite a bit of scrolling to see our desktop in cases where the remote computer had a higher resolution than the computer from which we were connecting. e

Senior Writer Anne Chen can be reached at anne_chen@ziffdavis.com.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1

Citrix's GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1 includes welcome administration center enhancements that extend security by allowing administrators to terminate unapproved connections at the firewall. This latest version also allows administrators to manage end users in layers of groups. More information can be found at www.gotomypc.com.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
EASE OF DEPLOYMENT	GOOD
REMOTE PERFORMANCE	EXCELLENT
SECURITY	GOOD
MANAGEABILITY	EXCELLENT

COST ANALYSIS: Pricing for GoToMyPC Corporate 4.1 starts at about $200 per month for an annual 10-client plan. Although some competitors offer basic remote management services for free, GoToMyPC provides more capabilities than most of the free alternatives.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MyWebEx PC Pro

For MyWebEx PC, WebEx Communications draws on its popular Web meeting product to offer organizations remote control. Unfortunately, this first release doesn't provide the reliable performance of GoToMyPC, nor does it perform even at the level of competing free products. For more information, go to www.mywebexpc.com.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
EASE OF DEPLOYMENT	EXCELLENT
REMOTE PERFORMANCE	FAIR
SECURITY	GOOD
MANAGEABILITY	GOOD

COST ANALYSIS: MyWebEx PC is free. MyWebEx PC Pro, which includes file transfer tools and other enterprise-oriented capabilities, costs $9.95 per month for each remote PC or $7.45 per PC per month with an annual subscription. Reliability issues, however, may add to cost in terms of user downtime.

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Peter Coffee: Epicenters

How now, Dow?

INFO TECH DOES NOT CHANGE ECONOMIC RULES

In a November 1999 column, I chastised the compilers of the Dow Jones Industrial Average for what I considered the misguided decision to put Microsoft and Intel on that list. Since that change was made, Intel (after adjusting for a stock split in July 2000) is down 39 percent. Microsoft (adjusted for a split in February 2003) is down 47 percent.

I know that these years have not been one long chorus of "Happy Days Are Here Again," but ChevronTexaco, removed from the Dow to make room for the high-tech newcomers, is up 27 percent (adjusted for a September 2004 split) since its expulsion. Dow Chemical, which has since merged with DJIA exile Union Carbide, is up 32 percent since the date of the Dow list change (after adjusting for a split in June 2000).

What-if games with the DJIA are an arcane pastime: To maintain continuity of the value, a divisor has to be adjusted when external events would otherwise kink the trend line. I can tell you, though, what the value would be if usurpers MSFT and INTC had performed as well as DOW (Chemical, not Jones) and CVX during the past five years. We'd have been sitting pretty on Good Friday (when the markets closed to let me work with static figures) at 10,889. That's 446 points above the actual value—not enough to change my retirement date but worth a respectful moment of silence as we think about the actual nature of IT as an economic good.

Oil in the ground is an asset. If you leave it in the ground today, you can pump it out and sell it tomorrow. On the other hand, if people want to burn more oil today, the price per barrel will go up as more difficult oil wells must be drilled by more aggressive methods. The supply curve, in short, slopes upward. Economics 101.

Microsoft's coders, despite the label of "human capital," are an expense. Even if they don't write any marketable code today, Microsoft still has to pay them. Intel's chip fabs are booked as capital, but they're really perishable goods. If Intel doesn't make chips today, process technology moves on—and Intel may not be able to sell the chips that its all-too-soon-obsolete equipment will be capable of making tomorrow.

On the other hand, if Microsoft can sell the same piece of software to more people, the company can sell it for a lower price per copy—and it had better find a way to do that, since its fastest-growing competition is stuff that's given away. If Intel can sell a greater volume of chips before the next generation of process technology comes along, it can sell those chips at a lower unit price. The direct cost of goods sold is a tiny fraction of the price of a complex chip.

Whether we're speaking of hardware or software, therefore, these supply curves slope downward. What does that make these goods? They don't behave like industrial outputs, and that's why I was immediately hostile to the go-go (or should I say "gaga"?) idea of putting them in the DJIA. I said at the time that these stocks' prices were poorly chosen proxies for economic growth; events since then make me look more right than wrong.

That brings us to some interesting questions: What do you do? And why do people pay you to do it? And what makes your supply curve slope upward so that every unit of your output costs more than the one before? If you can flatten that slope, you'll enjoy more demand at any given volume. Economics 101.

You don't want to make IT vendors rich by playing zero-sum games with your competitors. As I said in the aforementioned column, currency trading is a perfect example: After some adjustment as new tools emerge, the end state is that the same things happen more quickly and the IT vendors have more money. If someone wants to tell me how anyone else is better off, I'm listening.

Your IT investments should be flattening your supply curve. They should be automating tasks so that doing twice as much requires less than, not more than, twice as much effort and expense. They should be leveling out the bumps in your supply chain to reduce the costs of high peak-to-average ratios in manufacturing and logistics.

> IT investments should be automating tasks so that doing twice as much requires less than twice as much effort and expense.

And they should be making you, not IT vendors, richer every year. Invest IT into your company, not your money into IT stocks. e

Technology Editor Peter Coffee can be reached at peter_coffee@ziffdavis.com.

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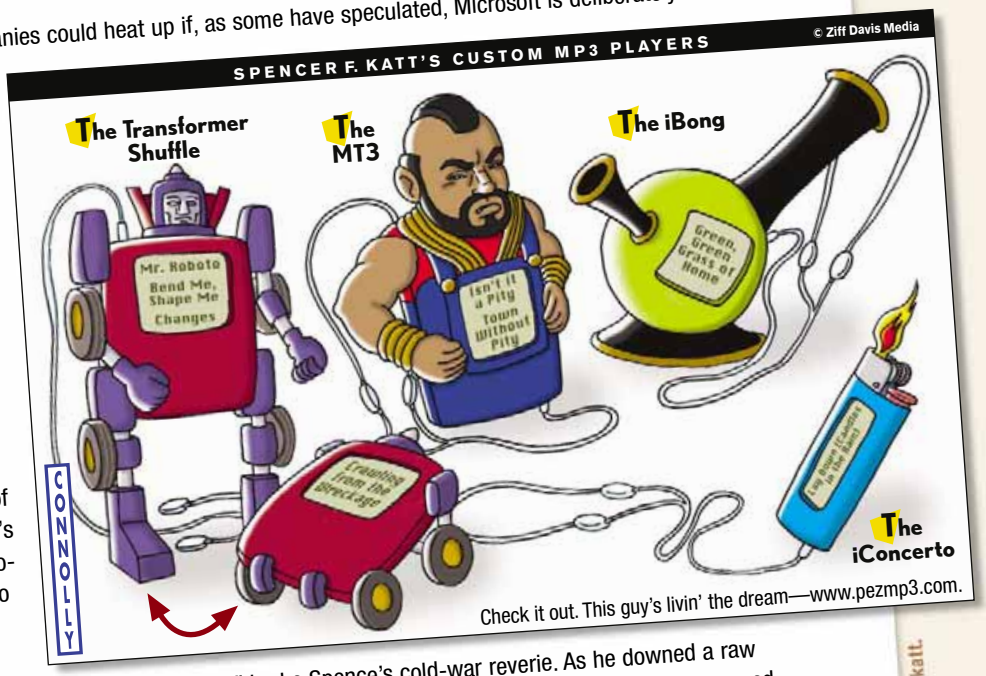
Rocky VI

From: spencer_katt@ziffdavis.com
Sent: Monday, April 4, 2005 12:21 AM
To: eWEEK readers
Subject: M-A-D over patents; open question at Sun; Hurd in the boardroom

"Go for it," Spencer almost imagined **Novell** bigwig **Jack Messman** saying, Rocky Balboa-like, to the Ivan Drago-like threat of **Microsoft's** massive patent buildup. However, the Kitty actually visualized the Novell CEO and **Bill Gates** nose to nose in boxing trunks and decided that analogies to the movie "Rocky IV" paint a rather-unpalatable image when applied to middle-aged high-tech execs.

The cold war between the two companies could heat up if, as some have speculated, Microsoft is deliberately pumping up its patent muscles to use against Linux. And Messman, sounding very much like the head of a software superpower, is not mincing his words about how Novell would respond.



At Novell's recent BrainShare conference in Salt Lake City, Messman told the Kitty that a patent war with Redmond could damage a "nuclear detente" between the two companies. Should the doctrine of mutually assured patent destruction not prevail, Messman said that Microsoft would come out on the losing end of such a stare-down, since "Novell's patents read on more of Microsoft's revenue than theirs do on ours because ours are bigger."

The KattPhone's new ring tone, "Eye of the Tiger," broke Spence's cold-war reverie. As he downed a raw egg, the Kitty answered the phone and heard from a crony who informed him that **Quest Software** has agreed to pay $16 million plus royalties to settle an IP dispute with **Computer Associates**. The lawsuit alleged that the Quest Central for DB2 line of products used proprietary info belonging to CA.

Spencer began shadowboxing around his Litter Box, as his phone crony asked if he'd heard that the Las Vegas Convention Center had removed Comdex from its fall calendar. According to the Las Vegas Sun, Comdex owner **MediaLive International** had failed to confirm the mid-November show dates with the convention center's sales force. Oddly, MediaLive's Web site is touting a November Comdex event in Athens, Greece. "Nice strategy," cackled the Kitty. "Invite tech folks to gather in a country that's outlawed computer games and the use of some handsets!"

The Furball asked his friend if he knew who is going to hold the fort at **NCR**, now that **CEO Mark Hurd** has resigned to take the reins at **Hewlett-Packard**. "NCR board member **James Ringler**, a retired vice chairman of **Illinois Tool Works**, will hold the interim CEO post while the board seeks a new head honcho," said the pal. "Now, whether Ringler will just follow the 'Hurd mentality' until a candidate is chosen is the real question." "Me-ouch!" emitted the mortified Mouser. e

Go for it—blog.ziffdavis.com/katt

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April 18	Digital certificates	Developer Solutions VOIP Solutions
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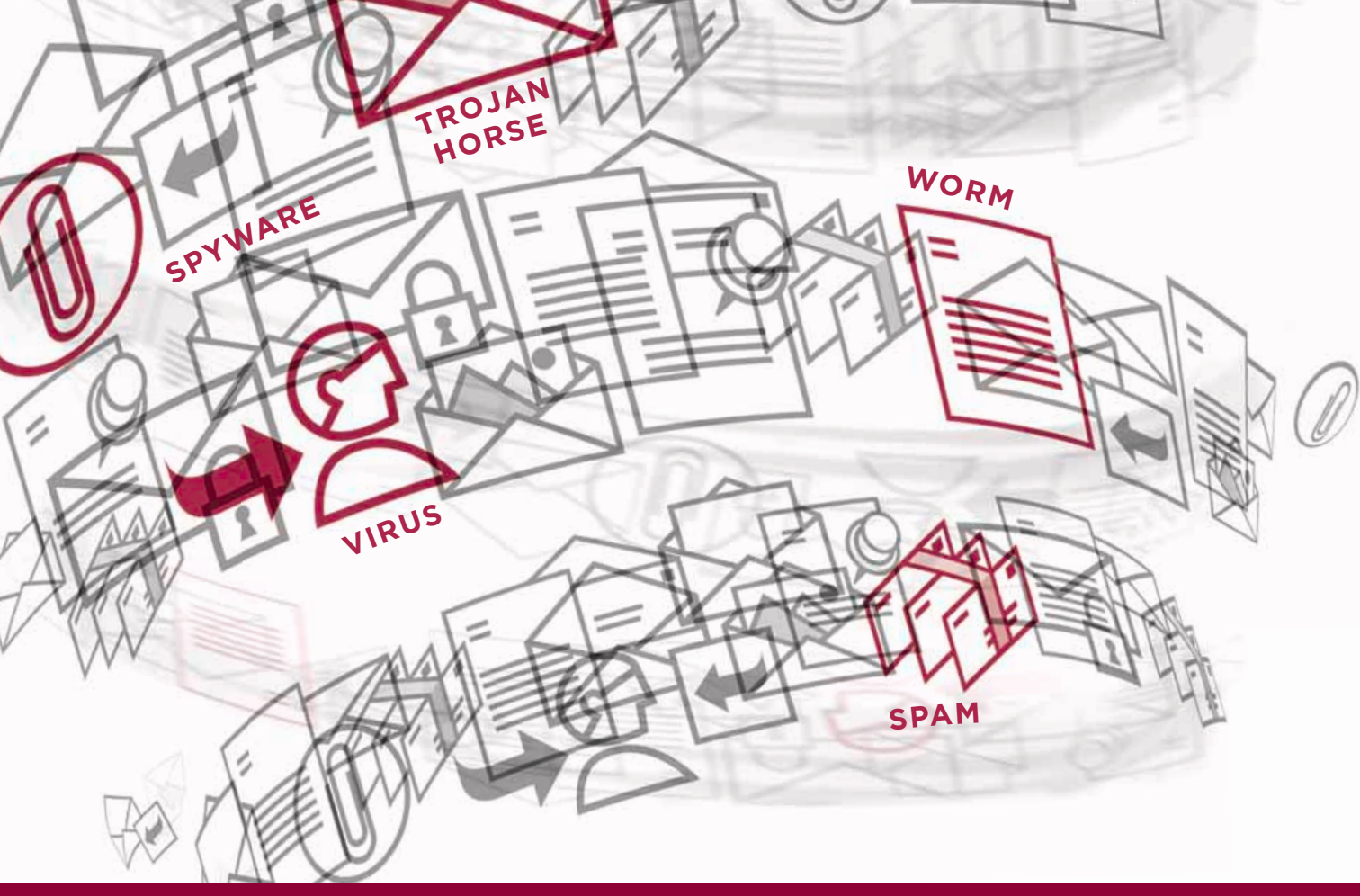

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