Market Roundup

June 15, 2007

IBM Announces BladeCenter S

By Clay Ryder

IBM has announced the IBM BladeCenter S chassis that is designed for SMB environments seeking to integrate common business applications such as antivirus, firewall, VoIP, email, collaboration, back-up and recovery, and file and print services into a single-bladed solution. The new chassis is designed to run in a typical office environment, operates on 110v power, and can manage storage and up to six blade servers. The IBM BladeCenter S has also been designed to be managed by a single IT administrator and features a wizard-based installation interface as well as a management tool that enables easy select-and-click configuration for an express installation. For branch or remote office environments, such as those common in retail or financial institutions, IT administrators at headquarters can easily pre-configure systems so that a branch manager would be able to simply plug a system in and power it up. IBM BladeCenter S will be available in the third quarter of 2007. No pricing details were released.

IBM was the first vendor to promote the blade architecture and with this announcement, we see Big Blue's fifth chassis design for the BladeCenter. From a market perspective, this announcement is interesting in that it is targeting smaller organizations or branch offices with technology that previously has been positioned more towards the middle or higher end of the IT marketplace. The use of standard 110v power, for example, illustrates the decidedly non-datacenter focus of the product which, combined with wizard-based configuration and management, offers an alternative for smaller deployments that may have multiple single-purpose servers that could reasonably be consolidated into a blade solution, if there was one available at the appropriate scale and cost. At the same time, the BladeCenter Open Fabric manager provides flexibility in interconnecting the solution with other corporate resources that are either locally or remotely situated. As such, it should be a relatively easy affair to have the remote BladeCenter S be under the management auspices of corporate IT as well as have access to centralized corporate resources as warranted by business need.

We can envision that organizations with multiple branch or remote locations would warm up to the notion of the consolidation and operational simplicity afforded by the BladeCenter S, if the economics worked to their advantage. Since many of such locations do not have onsite or full-time IT staff, the cost of managing a bladed environment could be less for the parent organization given the potential for remote management of a simplified environment and commensurate decrease in field service calls. Alternatively, for the small organization, a local service provider could reasonably offer a service to attend to the BladeCenter S while the customer still garners all the benefit from a consolidated and simplified approach to computing. Overall, we are pleased that IBM continues its efforts on addressing the SMB opportunity but more importantly continuing its efforts in making bladed solutions a viable alternative for an ever larger portion of the IT marketplace.

Websense Puts Finger in Web Leak Dam

By Lawrence D. Dietz

Websense, Inc. has unveiled Websense Content Protection Suite v6, the industry's first security software that integrates information leak prevention capabilities with Web categorization and filtering. This combination of content and destination awareness allows automated enforcement, allowing organizations to take advantage of

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emerging online business productivity applications such as Web 2.0 sites, with some assurance that security and usage policies, as well as predetermined business processes, are enforced and sensitive data is protected. Websense Content Protection Suite v6 combines content and context awareness leveraging Web intelligence through integration with Websense's URL database and ThreatSeeker malicious content classification technology, as well as new context-based data recognition capabilities that increase detection accuracy and enable organizations to create and enforce powerful, user-specific data sharing policies.

New capabilities in Websense Content Protection Suite v6 include Context Awareness and Control, which enables organizations to set policies allowing employees or groups of employees to use productivity tools securely. For example, an organization could allow an employee or group of employees to access their personal Web-based email accounts, but restrict them from sending sensitive corporate information through those accounts. Enhanced content awareness with PreciseID Natural Language Processing allows the detection of virtually any type of content while increasing the performance, efficiency, and flexibility of information detection. Advanced security protection through a combination of Websense's ThreatSeeker and information leak prevention technologies adds layers of context, along with advanced risk mitigation capabilities, and is designed to protect information from a growing number of information-stealing, targeted attacks. Management and deployment enhancements include a unique graphical interface to manage large-scale, multi-site and distributed component implementations. This feature and the industry's first multi-platform "soft appliance" option promise flexibility and ease in deploying and managing enterprise implementations for both customers and the channel partners who support them. An important attribute of the new version is the new higher level of granularity and the ability to delegate incident response to the policy owner, which should facilitate timely response by the proper department.

Data leak protection or its more politically correct synonym data loss protection (both acronymed as DLP), and their alter ego content filtering, are making the news. Sageza predicted that data privacy issues would outweigh SOX concerns by IT users in 2007 and we are pleased to say "we told you so." Organizations are becoming much more sophisticated in their approach to protecting sensitive data such as non-public personal information and intellectual property such as trade secrets. The very nature of today's business is to embrace communication with key stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, and contractors. This openness can put sensitive data in peril.

We believe that organizations must adopt a holistic approach to DLP. This means securing all avenues of approach and egress whether they are physical or virtual. Products such as this new version by Websense that offer simultaneous protection on multiple avenues appear to offer the most promise for end-user organizations because they make for stronger defenses, and centralized reporting yields better management control. Organizations must recognize, however, that sensitive data protection requires more than the latest technology. Policies and information classification schemes are the foundations for any successful data protection program.

Sun Updates Solaris Express Developer Edition

By Clay Ryder

Sun Microsystems has announced new functionality for Solaris Express Developer Edition. The OpenSolaris-based distribution targets developers for the Solaris OS, Java, and Web 2.0 with a set of products that are optimized for multi-core processor architectures and includes new compilers and development tools designed to assist developers in creating better applications more rapidly. This new release features a modern GNOME-based desktop including Mozilla Firefox 2.0, Mozilla Thunderbird 2.0 beta 2, and StarOffice 8 update 6. In addition, this update includes NetBeans IDE 5.5 for the development of desktop, Web, and enterprise Java applications. Sun Studio 12 accelerates application performance with auto parallelizing C, C++, and FORTRAN compilers, support for the OpenMP 2.5 API, and a new capability to identify many common but difficult-to-detect multithreading issues, such as race and deadlock conditions at runtime. The company stated that the Sun Studio 12 optimization techniques for x86 systems deliver up to 25% better performance on compute-intensive benchmarks, and up to 80% better performance for memory-intensive, industry-recognized benchmarks. Additional functionality includes new wireless drivers, the first phase of a project to configure network interfaces automatically, new Xorg server enhancements, and new X Window libraries, plus a DTrace provider to allow tracing X client applications. Solaris Express Developer Edition supports a variety of x86-based hardware, and has been optimized for Sun's 64-thread Niagara 2 processor. Solaris Express Developer Edition 5/07 is now available for immediate download. Sun

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Developer Expert Assistance is also available for developers to receive coding advice and learn best practices for development.

While it would be easy to view this announcement as simply the next iteration of an open source project, there are a couple of nuggets that we see as more significant. Granted, this is an open source project that targets the hearts and minds of application developers, and there is nothing wrong with that. However, what we find compelling is the focus on multithreading and wireless connectivity. Are the topics obscure oddities that only propeller-twirling geeks care about, or are these very practical and important considerations? We tend to think the latter.

Even in the purportedly well understood world of Windows-based laptops, configuring wireless connections still tends to be a hit and miss affair, and much more akin to miss when the user is in a rush to check for an important email at previously unvisited location or network. In the Linux or UNIX world, such connectivity gambles are only more extreme. The fact that the Open Solaris community has decided to target this irritating issue is likely to be well received not only by developers, but also by the broader user community. It is also important for Sun to have addressed this basic issue so that developers do not have another reason to shy away from developing on the Solaris environment. Although logically wireless access for the end user should be as easy as wired connectivity, the reality is it not the case as of yet. We believe efforts to automate this process are very important, and are encouraged that Sun and its open community partners believe so as well.

With all the advances in chip architectures from a variety of processor vendors, it has become difficult if not almost impossible to buy a new processor today that is not in some way multicore or multithreaded in design. Yet at the same time, the fire-blazing performance of these processors in many cases is largely underutilized as the software being executed is still of single-threaded design. Developing multithreaded software is a non-trivial task that requires not only new developer knowledge and techniques, but also IDEs, compilers, and other technologies that are capable of creating multithreaded applications. In many cases, the paucity of such multithreaded tools has resulted in developers taking advantage of ever-faster chip clock rates, but none of the inherent parallel processing the hardware has to deliver. This is where we believe the Sun Studio 12 tools will be of considerable interest in the developer community. These tools are the keys by which to unlock the latent multithreaded performance of the latest Sun, AMD, and Intel chips. The ability to automate created parallel or multithreaded code is important, as it should allow developers to easily capture some performance increase in their existing code base while they develop the skills and techniques requisite to capitalize on multithreaded architectures going forward. For those who are unfamiliar with multithreaded architectures, the performance gains afforded by the automated aspects of Sun Studio 12 may prove surprising, and serve notice that multithreaded architectures may have even more underutilized resources than their single-threaded brethren that have been the focus of so much attention.

Everyone Talks about Growth Markets: EMC and WIPRO Doing Something about It

By Lawrence D. Dietz

Wipro Limited and EMC Corporation have announced a global strategic alliance to address customers' information infrastructure requirements, while expanding Wipro's and EMC's reach in the worldwide information infrastructure market. The alliance unites Wipro's applied innovation framework for developing new solutions and services around EMC's industry-leading information infrastructure technologies to enable more organizations, specifically in targeted growth markets, to optimize their infrastructures, secure and protect their information, and leverage their information to unlock its full potential. Wipro and EMC intend to explore collaboration of industry and application-specific solutions in key business areas that solve customer needs related to storage management, information management, content management, and information security. To further enable this alliance, EMC intends to help certify more than 1,000 Wipro practice resources on EMC technologies to support pre-sales, delivery, and solution development. The alliance with EMC is part of Wipro's Applied Innovation initiative that includes new ideas targeted at delivering significantly higher value and business results to global customers.

India has loomed large in the world's economy by establishing itself as a destination of choice for many organizations seeking to outsource some of their operations, especially IT-related tasks. Many of the larger IT vendors have already established development facilities in India seeking to take advantage of their growing talent

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pool. This remarkable achievement would be noteworthy in its own right; however, beyond a position as a mere supplier, India represents a significant opportunity as a buyer and distribution point for IT products and services. It represents a credible and cost-effective jump-off point to address growth markets in both Asia and Africa, markets that have been largely ignored or only addressed piecemeal by other IT vendors.

We view this alliance as highly significant. EMC has been smart enough to harness the credibility and local expertise and presence of a key partner as a conduit for their products. Most hardware and software companies, with the exception of IBM, remain focused on churning out products rather than strategic presence. We believe there is growing demand for IT infrastructure in Asia and organizations the size of EMC must take a top-down, corporate-oriented, strategic approach in dealing with them. We also believe that inside-out marketing makes sense. Building on the local presence of a partner like Wipro saves EMC from establishing credibility in a market they will never understand as well as those who live there. We believe this bodes well for their business in India and Southeast Asia.

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