Market Roundup

August 24, 2007

IBM to Distribute Solaris on System x and BladeCenter

FTI Enhances Capabilities with Attnex and Integration of Recommind's Axcelerate eDiscovery Technology

EMC Smarts VoIP Performance Manager and Performance Reporter

Sun Launches New Eco Innovation Initiative

:sageza:

IBM to Distribute Solaris on System x and BladeCenter

By Clay Ryder

IBM and Sun have announced that IBM will distribute the Solaris Operating System and Solaris Subscriptions for select x86-based IBM System x and BladeCenter servers. The agreement extends IBM's existing support for the Solaris OS on select IBM BladeCenter servers, and IBM and Sun's support of interoperability through open standards. As part of the expanded support, Sun and IBM will invest in testing and system qualification so customers will realize Solaris's leading performance and reliability on BladeCenter and System x servers. The Solaris OS includes unique functionality such as Solaris ZFS, Predictive Self-Healing and Solaris Dynamic Tracing (DTrace) to help organizations improve their system uptime while reducing costs and speeding time to market. Solaris provides BladeCenter and System x customers excellent application performance on present and future multi-core 64-bit x86 processors. IBM servers that will support the Solaris OS include IBM BladeCenter HS21 and LS41 servers; and IBM System x3650, System x3755, and System x3850 servers. Solaris is supported on more than 820 x86 platforms and runs more than 3,000 unique x86 applications including IBM Websphere, Lotus, DB2, Rational and Tivoli.

This is an interesting announcement in that it illustrates just how much the market for systems and operating systems has changed in the past few years. Not long ago, most any UNIX purchased was an integrated software and hardware affair. With this announcement, we see one of the most popular UNIX platforms expanding its reach not by additional platform support but rather through a strategic vendor partnership… my, how things have changed. Granted, IBM Global Services has plenty of experience and revenue to testify to Big Blue's ability to deploy Solaris solutions; however, with this announcement we see a new level of cooperation between two firms that in the 1990s were sworn enemies, at least with respect to RISC- and UNIX-based computing. The decoupling of Solaris from the SPARC platform has been a reality for some time, although the decoupling from Sun was less pronounced until now.

With this announcement, we expect to see IBM become a strategic partner to Sun and vice versa and ironically, at the same time become an even more agile competitor. As organizations begin to flex their muscles choosing on which vendor's x86 hardware they will deploy Solaris, both Sun and IBM will find themselves exposed to more competitive pressure from another. Nevertheless, we see this not as a zero-sum outcome, but rather a "rising tide raises all ships" scenario. Since Solaris is already by itself a zero-revenue solution, competition will thrive on the hardware beneath and the services associated therewith. It is this segment of the market that is enjoying the growth not only in revenue but in margin as well. As IBM is the first major x86 vendor to have such an agreement with Sun, Armonk and Co. are well positioned to take advantage of its first-mover relationship with the Copernican Company. We expect to see some initial traction on System x; however, we believe that the BladeCenter may ultimately gain the most acceptance for Solaris given the platform's very network-friendly while data center-friendly physical, power, and heating attributes.

Given the acknowledgment of both firms regarding initiatives to bring Solaris on the System z mainframe, we are left pondering just if and when Solaris may find itself on Power architecture platforms such as the System p and

---

System i. If this were to come to pass, it would indeed be a significant event, one with potentially far greater impact on the sales of UltraSPARC and POWER6-based hardware. Such a total decoupling of the OS from RISC hardware could shift the competitive environment dramatically at one level, but also provide Sun another opportunity to showcase its multi-core agility. However, since this is simply conjecture at this time, we will wait to ponder further what might happen.

Overall, we are excited by this announcement and look forward to see just how the marketplace will react. While such an announcement would have been unfathomable a scant few years ago, it serves as a reminder as to the fluidity of the marketplace and just how much the business of selling servers and operating systems has changed since the odometer rolled over into the 21st century.

FTI Enhances Capabilities with Attnex and Integration of Recommind's Axcelerate eDiscovery Technology

By Lawrence D. Dietz

FTI Consulting, Inc. has announced the availability of the Ringtail A2R Connector to integrate two complementary ediscovery applications, Attenex Patterns and Ringtail Legal 2005 litigation technology. The Ringtail A2R Connector will take email and electronic documents that have been processed and reviewed in Attenex Patterns, and migrate those documents into Ringtail Legal 2005 for case management and/or production. The Ringtail A2R Connector creates a repeatable and auditable means to leverage the power of two essential applications during the electronic discovery process, promising savings in time and money. Developed by FTI Consulting, the wizard-like Ringtail A2R Connector provides a step-by-step graphical interface to guide users through the process of exporting email, electronic files, metadata, and attorney work product from Attenex Patterns to Ringtail Legal 2005. FTI Consulting is a Attenex Advantage partner and provides law firms and corporations a secure, managed hosting environment for matters in Attenex Patterns in addition to end-to-end electronic discovery consulting. The A2R Connector touts benefits including a complete audit trail for sensitive corporate data from processing through to production; automation of data conversion from the Attenex Patterns database format to the Ringtail Legal 2005 format; and the ability to create standardized and repeatable ediscovery and document review processes with the industry's leading applications.

The company also announced the integration of Recommind's Axcelerate eDiscovery technology into the Ringtail Legal 2005 document review platform, designed to reduce the time and expense of electronic discovery. The technology can handle hundreds of users, thousands of cases and millions of documents in over 200 languages including Russian, Japanese and Korean, and includes First Pass Review and One Click Coding functionality. First Pass Review automatically organizes multi-terabyte document sets by myriad parameters including responsiveness, issue, privilege and concept group, making review organization and document batching simpler, more accurate, and quicker. One Click Coding makes a computer-generated judgment—with explicit confidence score—about each document's relevance, responsiveness, and privileged nature, expediting the actual review process while improving accuracy and lowering the risk of missing key documents. The Axcelerate integration enables Ringtail Legal users to leverage First Pass Review and One Click Coding technology from the Ringtail interface. This integration also provides de-duplication, near-duplication, email threading, and filtering functionality, while also automatically identifying key documents, people, phrases, and concepts in the document collection. The resulting clustering and auto-coding is intended to allow attorneys, paralegals, and experts to quickly gain insight into any document collection. Attorneys then complete reviews using Ringtail's security and multi- lingual redaction and production features.

Nascent and complex markets require teamwork and innovative approaches. This is especially true in the new and growing world of electronic discovery (ediscovery). As the mass of electronically stored information grows, it becomes more and more difficult to perform manual processes on that data. Large organizations are quickly realizing that their data growth is almost beyond their control. When organizations are confronted with the need to produce ESI for legal or compliance reasons, a sense of urgency combined with the a subconscious dread of potential liability puts the pressure on IT to step up to the plate and work with their counterparts in the legal department to properly resource the organization to deal with legal eventualities in a cost-effective manner.

These two announcements by FTI hit on some key principles for users and vendors alike. First of all, no one company can solve all the problems associated with complex issues such as ediscovery and sorting through mounds of ESI in general. Second, in today's global economy there is a need to deal with multiple languages. In fact, there is likely to be a need to deal with multiple languages even in many single countries. Canada has adopted a dual-language legal framework, and the proliferation of Spanish throughout the U.S. is likely to cause some jurisdictions and regulators to look askance at organizations that ignore linguistic realities. Third, the announcements bring to bear features that many users are going to find quite useful such as making the tedious job of redacting a bit easier. Consequently we applaud the efforts of FTI and its partners as needed steps in the ediscovery market.

EMC Smarts VoIP Performance Manager and Performance Reporter

By Clay Ryder

EMC Corporation has unveiled EMC Smarts VoIP Performance Manager and EMC Smarts VoIP Performance Reporter, targeted at organizations that are seeking to maximize the availability and performance of business-critical VoIP services through comprehensive monitoring, alerting, diagnosis, and reporting on all aspects that may impact IP telephony services. Smarts software scales to manage hundreds of IP PBXs and hundreds of thousands of phones. With EMC Smarts software, enterprise and managed service provider customers can model IT components and their relationships across network, applications, and storage to understand how service levels are affected. While other VoIP management tools provide only network-centric or event-based information, Smarts software provides in-depth, realtime views and flexible reporting on telephony infrastructures, while demonstrating how that detailed information relates to the end-user experience. Smarts VoIP Performance Manager and Smarts VoIP Performance Reporter deliver realtime information about phone extensions, phone calls, voice quality, availability of the telephone service, and interconnections to telecommunications providers. Additionally, the solutions monitor call volumes, call quality, and route patterns to ensure service levels are being met and offer both realtime and historical performance and trend reporting. At present, the Smarts solutions offer support for the following systems: Avaya Communications Manager, Cisco Unified Communications Manager, Cisco Unified CallManager, and Cisco CallManager. Both Smarts VoIP Performance Manager and Smarts VoIP Performance Reporter are now available.

This announcement is the latest example of how EMC has continued to broaden its market position first as a storage device vendor, then a Storage Infrastructure provider, and now an Information Infrastructure provider. As in the past, this announcement illustrates the ever broadening scope of what might be considered storage, or rather now information infrastructure. Perhaps we are witnessing another marketplace blurring of the lines this time between what would be considered information and what would be considered the network. The uninterrupted flow and movement of information, whether it is application, data, or what would often be considered a network service, is fundamental to business operations. In order to achieve this, organizations must be able to model the infrastructure, and be very open to new definitions of the components as they undoubtedly consider to morph over time.

From a best-practices or compliance perspective, this announcement makes a great deal of sense coming from EMC. Ensuring reliable use of VoIP is essential for organizations that are migrating from POTS as the potential value derived from integrated communications and information-sharing over IP is enormous. However, the information delivered from Smarts regarding the VoIP operation offers more than just simple operational data; it also offers a look into some aspects of the behavior of the business through the call-related activities. Although VoIP traffic may not be commonly be thought of as information like that in the database, file server, or email system, it is high time that it should. The contents of a VoIP conversation, provided that the organization choose to store the contents of said conversation, just as it might store email, could be just as valuable in the case of legal discovery as other documents stored within the organization. For less stringent matters of documenting operational activities, it still makes sense that VoIP would begin to fall under the scope of information as opposed to simply a network service. In either case, the complementary nature of other EMC technologies, such as content management, starts to become clear as do the opportunities for organizations to leverage these solutions in their daily operations and overall IT and datacenter strategy.

Sun Launches New Eco Innovation Initiative

By Clay Ryder

Sun Microsystems has announced a comprehensive suite of programs and solutions to help customers design more energy-efficient, eco-responsible datacenters while saving money. The Eco Innovation Initiative is an extension of Sun's Eco Responsibility Initiative, which was launched in November 2005. Among the tools announced are three Eco Ready Kits. The Sun Eco Assessment Kit provides a methodical approach to analyzing data center energy efficiency; the Sun Eco Optimization Kit helps customers optimize, consolidate, refresh, and recycle their hardware infrastructure; and the Sun Eco Virtualization Kit offers virtualization solutions that enable better asset utilization and datacenter energy efficiency. In addition, Sun announced the new Sun Eco Services Suite to help customers improve their data center energy utilization, and tune their cooling air distribution and other infrastructure systems that can impact both operational costs and service levels. The Sun Eco Services Suite encompasses four service offerings. The Sun Eco Assessment Service for Datacenter, Basic is specifically designed to maximize power and cooling efficiency in the IT infrastructure running Web-based services. The Sun Eco Assessment Service for Datacenter, Advanced is a comprehensive datacenter service providing a technical evaluation of datacenter energy use, cooling capacity, rack placement, air distribution, and other environmental factors. The Sun Eco Cooling Efficiency Service for Datacenter helps recover misused air conditioning capacity and direct it to the areas where it is needed, improving hardware cooling and increasing redundancy while helping reduce capital and operating costs.

The Sun Eco Optimization Service for Datacenter provides direct assistance with implementation of corrective actions outlined in the Eco Assessment Service.

The greening of the data center has been a very top-of-mind topic and we have seen many vendors announcing products focused on raising datacenter energy efficiency. With this announcement, we see Sun ratcheting up its competitive positioning to highlight its holistic service strategy that exceeds the tactical approach of merely releasing point products for specific segments of the larger datacenter energy management and efficiency equation. Sun, along with Hewlett Packard and IBM, has helped drive the discussion of energy efficiency in the data center, but for Sun in particular, this announcement shows some of its unique technological capabilities in its processors and systems. The inherent efficiencies of Sun's latest multithreaded multi-core processors can attain system utilization rates of up to 80% (according to Sun), which implies substantial reductions in energy consumed per processing task.

We believe the various service offerings are especially important for organizations with limited IT resources finding themselves up against the same space, power, and cooling limitations as other perhaps larger organizations. In order to grasp the reality of these limitations, objective assessment is an indispensable tool in helping educate IT professionals as well as top-level management. Once organizations have a clear understanding of their power and thermal envelopes in the data center, then follow-on services such as optimization would become a no-brainer for the data center manager. Although the reduced cost of power should be welcomed, the reclamation of power and cooling capacity is ultimately more important. In an era of blades, and other high-density form factors, this headroom for growth is more important than ever. This is a winning scenario as operations cost can decrease in the present but CAP EX for facilities in the future can be reduced as well.

Overall, we are glad to see continued emphasis by the major systems vendors on the topic of energy efficiency in the data center. As each strives to put its best foot forward, the marketplace is enjoying some unparalleled R&D activity related to energy efficiency and are also being blessed by competitive pressures that are focusing the major players on their customers' very real need to achieve more while spending less.