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IBM eServer pSeries Delivers Cost Effective, Dynamically Scalable IT Solutions

By Charles King

With the announcement of its On Demand initiative, IBM raised the strategic bar for UNIX solutions by bringing Capacity Upgrade on Demand (CUoD) and On/Off Capacity on Demand (On/Off CoD) to its venerable eServer pSeries platform. Through CUoD and On/Off CoD features on eServer pSeries, IBM delivers a flexible, cost effective answer to address enterprises' dynamic workload needs without incurring the burden of excess capacity deployed solely to meet occasional peak demand. The new CUoD and On/Off CoD offering for eServer pSeries delivers dynamically scalable POWER+ solutions to enterprises of any size.

The Journey to the On Demand Enterprise

For IBM, the journey to On Demand began decades ago with mainframe-focused back office automation that evolved through client/server and departmental automation solutions, and culminated with network-powered ebusiness applications. Subsequent innovation resulted in the utilization of the Web to deliver complex online transactions and eventually end-to-end business processes. Any enterprise that has made substantial IT investments quickly realizes the considerable economic rewards as well as the economic risks when an infrastructure is unable to meet the demands of the dynamic workloads placed upon it. The ability to scale up an IT infrastructure to meet pressing business needs and then scale it down to maximize efficiency is in the best interests of any modern enterprise.

For some, the concept of On Demand may simply be the latest catch phrase in IT marketing, but for IBM and its customers it represents the future of IT within the competitive enterprise. But what does On Demand actually look like? The ever increasing bandwidth, scalability, and stability of IT solutions now provides the means to create and deliver resilient, variable, and responsive business solutions that are as dynamic as business markets themselves. IBM's On Demand is a framework for developing IT solutions that match an enterprise's constantly shifting business needs any time and anywhere.

The pSeries Difference

The IBM eServer pSeries is the flagship platform for the company's standards-based AIX operating environment, as well as 64-bit iterations of IBM Linux solutions. IBM's eServer pSeries products marry the company's 64-bit POWER architecture with a host of additional IBM technologies and solutions. All eServer pSeries servers are equipped with the POWER4+; IBM's highest performing RISC processor. POWER aficionados are well aware of the platform's sheer computing horsepower, but the company has articulated a roadmap that assures further development of POWER solutions well into the future. The long-term platform support that is a critical concern for enterprise customers is squarely addressed by IBM's commitment to its POWER architecture.

The IBM eServer pSeries offers much more than unbridled horsepower. The pSeries product line was also an early beneficiary of IBM's Autonomic Computing initiative that brought the self-healing and self-managing capabilities of the company's zSeries mainframe solutions to IBM's other product lines. Further, the inclusion of virtualized

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capabilities such as dynamic logical partitioning (DLPAR) and grid computing solutions delivers enormous flexibility in how eServer pSeries customers can deploy and redeploy their IT investments.

Old School/New School Computing

On May 6, 2003, IBM announced new On Demand offerings for the pSeries mid-market p650 and p670 models and the flagship p690. Processor On/Off CoD offers IBM customers a flexible eServer pSeries solution that can scale processor capacity up or down as needed, thus allowing enterprises to activate processors to meet peak demand, and then deactivate them when they are no longer required, helping IT executives manage their IT infrastructure more efficiently. The company also offers pSeries processor and memory CUoD, a flexible method for permanently activating installed resources for rapid, non-disruptive infrastructure upgrades that do not require monitoring by IBM of any kind. In addition, IBM is providing a thirty-day, no charge, no obligation, trial activation period for all CUoD assets on pSeries systems.

IBM's On/Off CoD marks a divide between traditional and emerging models of enterprise IT behavior. The traditional model of IT utilization favors the deployment of excess IT resources to meet peak use requirements. Yes, such behavior helps ensure that a company has the capabilities to deal with most or any business computing need, but it also constitutes a highly inefficient use of IT, human, and financial resources.

There are both business and IT ramifications to IBM's On/Off CoD solution. While the offering provides enterprises greater flexibility in how companies deploy IT resources, it can also deliver measurable financial benefits. By activating IT resources only as they are required, On/Off CoD can increase server utilization levels. This, in turn, allows enterprises to meet peak IT demands without purchasing resources that are used minimally, if at all, during non-peak periods. Overall, IBM's new On/Off CoD offerings provide customers rapid, non-disruptive means for meeting both peak computing and evolving business requirements in ways that are more time- and cost-effective than traditional deployment and utilization models.

What Does It All Mean?

IBM's CuOD and On/Off CoD for pSeries provide new models for enterprise IT deployments, offering businesses myriad opportunities to deploy IT in a fashion that drives business and strategic efforts and makes better use of scarce resources. Not only does On/Off CoD enhance IT flexibility, efficiency, and utilization, it also provides tangible upfront and ongoing financial benefits that have the potential to decrease overall IT TCO. IBM's pay-as-you-go On/Off CoD model encourages businesses to purchase only those resources necessary to meet their typical needs, and helps companies dynamically scale their IT resources to fit peak demands in a highly efficient and cost-effective fashion.

IBM eServer pSeries products offer significant advantages to enterprises that depend on UNIX and 64-bit Linux solutions. The company's On/Off CoD offerings for the eServer pSeries p650, p670, and p690 provide a cost competitive approach to address dynamic business workloads of most any kind. IT managers faced with the challenges of managing workloads that exhibit dramatic usage spikes should investigate these new offerings as potential solutions for meeting occasional peak demands without incurring the burden of maintaining excess ongoing capacity.

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