Market Roundup

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EMC Makes Insignia for Exchange and Data Protection

By *Joyce Tompsett Becknell*

As part of an ongoing effort to improve the state of mid-market storage solutions, EMC has announced two new solutions in its Insignia line for small and mid-market businesses. The new products are the EMC Insignia Solution for Exchange and the EMC Insignia Solution for Data Protection. Both solutions will use the new EMC CLARiiON AX150 and AX150i storage products with EMC Insignia software. The Exchange solution includes the ability to automate Exchange Server 2003 migration and the ability to restore individual email messages, an entire mailbox, or the whole server without complex manual intervention. In addition to the hardware, the solution includes automated EMC Storage Administrator for Exchange, and Retrospect for Windows backup and recovery software. The Data Protection solution is designed to protect both servers and end-user devices within the SMB environment. The solution combines the AX150 hardware with support for most tape drives and Retrospect for Windows backup and recovery software. The solutions are available from EMC Velocity SMB channel partners.

EMC first announced its new Insignia program in February, built around the mantra of store, manage, protect, and share. With this program, EMC demonstrated it appreciates that while SMBs require much the same feature sets in their products as their larger counterparts, they need more help with acquiring and using those products. EMC pledged to provide products that were priced affordably, easy to purchase through the reseller channel, and easy to install and manage. The Insignia program intends to provide products that are installable and usable without dedicated storage staff, and they are priced competitively. EMC has also dedicated these products to the Velocity partners, who are focused on this space. But one of the most important bits is that these are integrated solutions: all the pieces are there, and they work. For data protection in particular this is an important feature. SMBs like the ease of doing one-stop shopping that gets them to solution as quickly as possible. EMC has joined the ranks of vendors who are putting serious time and effort into providing proper, sensible solutions for these customers.

The focus on Exchange and data protection is timely and another sign to us that EMC has the right idea. Email is mission-critical for most organizations, and the ability to manage it properly has traditionally meant staffing, something which is difficult for small companies to justify. With a solution that is largely automated, SMB IT staff should be able to spend less time managing email, and more time working with IT areas that actually contribute business value rather than provide basic functionality. Data protection is another aspect of IT that SMBs—like their bigger counterparts—have struggled with. Having backup is not enough as the amount of data continues to multiply. Data needs to be stored in appropriate media, and be fairly easy to restore in the mostly inevitable event of data loss. The fact that some of the first products EMC is bringing to market are in these spaces demonstrates to us the company's commitment to SMBs as a segment and to its understanding that integrated solutions for business needs and not disk and tape are the way to win that market.

Packateer: Shaping Network Service

By *Siamanto*

Many organizations today operate in a variety of locations and managing the network traffic as it flows over the Wide Area Network (WAN) that links together business locations is now of paramount importance. WAN application management is the order of the day. This week Packateer Inc. released the latest version of its operating software. Packateer is a specialist supplier of solutions to manage traffic over WAN links and that can improve the quality of service experienced by the end consumers of IT services. Managing quality of service is an area that is certain to receive increased attention as the use of new bandwidth-hungry and latency-sensitive applications such as IP telephony continue to expand. The new software combines with the various appliances provided by the company to boost the performance of business-critical applications while ensuring that network costs are optimized. Beyond this, the software also delivers knowledge concerning which applications are consuming network links while allowing dynamic, centralized management of much of the network infrastructure thereby significantly decreasing operational risk. The use of modules that provide service level agreement statistics on a wide range of application performance, including IP telephony and other business applications, can deliver organizations the detailed, realtime knowledge needed to ensure that IT operations truly support business objectives.

There is no one working today who could deny the importance of good communications in every business. For organizations that are widely dispersed, the dependence on wide area communications to link together remote offices is total. However, WANs can be expensive if the supporting infrastructure and telecommunications links are not well designed and actively managed. Over the last few years many companies have almost come to believe that when they are faced with service issues on their WAN infrastructure, the "obvious" step to take is simply to increase the bandwidth between the locations concerned. The fattening of communications pipes may be the appropriate solution to some operational issues but it is certainly not the fix for everything. In many situations, especially those where "latency" rather than "bandwidth" is the real issue to be tackled, fatter pipes may not be apposite. In such scenarios alternative technologies come very clearly to the fore.

The secure access to data, business-critical systems, and information is an objective of almost all organizations. WAN systems are here to stay and for the first time in many years it has become obvious that WAN systems need to be managed actively if the business is to prosper. Luckily, the infrastructure tools to make them work effectively are now becoming available and organizations are now in a position where they can concentrate on finding new ways to exploit IT effectively wherever customers are located.

Cisco Technology Enlightens a Nation

By Susan Dietz

Cisco recently announced the completion of the initial implementation of the first IP network for the Navajo Nation. The entire IP network of 660 phones will eventually serve all 110 Chapter Houses. The Navajo Nation includes 250,000 citizens in a vast, three-state reservation, many areas of which do not have the infrastructure for traditional services. The "Internet to the Hogan" is an overall initiative to drive connectivity to families in remote areas, including to Chapter Houses and the Hogan, which is a traditional Navajo dwelling. Some Nation residents currently have to spend up to twelve hours traveling great distances just for access to social, health, educational, and informational services. However, with the roll-out of this network, expected to be fully complete in the next twelve months, Navajo Nation residents will have quick and easier access to numerous services using voice, video, and data on a single line, all at a greatly reduced cost. Some of the advantages of this service will be distance learning and teleconferencing with several major universities near the reservation, telemedicine services to allow medical patients to receive health care, after-hours access to the Internet for school children, information on agriculture presented in the Navajo language, and access to government services and information such as housing, children's health insurance, e-government, job listings, and voting.

Many people don't realize that conditions on many Native American reservations rival those of developing, third-world countries. However, with the advent of IP networks, areas that could not traditionally support infrastructure can now connect with the rest of the world. There has always been a need to reach remote and underserved populations, especially emerging nations. Those governments most likely badly want to extend their reach and their citizens' ability to communicate, but the cost of infrastructure for traditional wired stuff is usually

very high. It would appear that Cisco may be poised to address the needs of the developing world, on whichever continent that developing world may be located.

American Indian reservations are a little bizarre in that rather than being like the underdeveloped regions of, say, Africa that have islands of technology, the reservations are islands of poverty and underdevelopment surrounded by the most technologically elite country in the world. E-government is one of the most popular initiatives going right now, so it shouldn't be a strange idea that a semi-sovereign tribal government is incorporating the technology. It's a business solution that benefits Navajo citizens, and by doing that, the entire tribe prospers. As the tribe prospers as a whole, then it would seem their march toward the goal of total sovereignty and an end to dependence becomes that much closer. It's a dream shared by many nations, not just Native Americans, and it's likely that Cisco is also invested in that dream.

TalkTalk Heats Up UK Telco Market

By Siamanto

There has been much debate over the past few years concerning the ongoing business models of the incumbent Telco suppliers throughout Europe. Last week a company best known for selling cell phone handsets along with air-time contracts caused a stir in the UK that will cause the existing suppliers of landline connections and broadband services to think very seriously about the future of their revenue streams. TalkTalk from the Carphone Warehouse announced details of a plan that provides a standard UK telephone line and free calls to UK landlines and landline numbers in twenty-eight countries, all bundled with a "free" broadband connection. The Talk 3 International calling plan costs £9.99 ($17.80) a month plus an £11 ($19.58) per month line rental charge and includes a broadband connection running at up to 8MB/sec and with a high monthly download limit of 40GB. This offer seriously undercuts other programs currently available.

The move by Carphone Warehouse is certain to appeal to a wide customer base and comes at a time when the traditional European Telco operators are considering the long-term future of their revenue streams. Currently the bulk of their income is derived from call charges and line rental, but with the rapid uptake of broadband connectivity coupled with increasing utilization of VoIP technologies it is anticipated that call revenues face considerable challenges going forward. The question for the Telcos is: with what services can they replace significant portions of their existing call revenues? If the plan launched by Carphone Warehouse succeeds in taking significant numbers of customers away from the major incumbent, BT, this is a challenge that must be faced now. This is especially the case as the offer of free international calls is likely to appeal to one of the Telcos' most valuable customer communities, namely those individuals making regular calls abroad.

It is abundantly clear that Europe's telecommunication companies need to remodel their business plans. The requirement is to find new value-added services for which customers will be willing to pay. It is known that offerings such as pay-per-view TV and movies are amongst those being looked at to help the Telcos generate new revenues. The new chargeable services will need to be brought on-stream quickly. While the announcement of the Talk3 International calling plan has attracted significant attention, competition for customers is growing in intensity throughout Europe. The European telecommunications market is set for a period of rapid evolution and it will not be surprising to see significant consolidation at a European scale and major casualties along the way. Competition is now a reality rather than being just a government-encouraged exercise.