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# Market Roundup

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LANDesk: At-Your-Service Management  
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Unified Communications  
Iomega REV 70GB Backup Drive



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## LANDesk: At-Your-Service Management

By *Tony Lock*

This week LANDesk announced details of a new product, LANDesk Service Desk, as it continues to develop its suite of systems and security management solutions. The software is targeted to help organizations in their efforts to effectively manage customer service and to meet their various service level commitments. The new solution is a direct result of a licensing agreement and development relationship signed with UK-headquartered Touchpaper. The new service desk software will integrate tightly with the LANDesk Management Suite, LANDesk Security Suite, and LANDesk Process Manager offerings with the aim of supplying comprehensive system monitoring and management capabilities. With such tools it becomes possible for organizations to effectively manage nearly all aspects of their IT systems usage and to employ sound incident and change management practices to deliver IT services efficiently and cost-effectively while minimizing the risk associated with such tasks, both routine and extraordinary. LANDesk Service Desk will provide process-driven call management, role-based privilege sets, automatic actions, assignment, service levels, and escalation capabilities. Facilities supplied will include effective incident resolution and an intelligent provisioning interface, and will be able to automatically monitor service levels as incidents develop. The software will also supply direct access to realtime information, and will provide accurate updates along with significant statistical reporting capabilities to keep support managers aware of the effectiveness of the service function. LANDesk Service Desk is scheduled to be available at the beginning of August 2006 and will be sold through existing LANDesk Expert Solution Providers channels. List price for a core solution supporting 1,000 employees is around \$40,800. Additional fees may apply for supplementary consoles and functionality.

The announcement highlights how rapidly the company is strengthening its solution lineup and follows rapidly on from the launch in June this year of LANDesk Process Manager 2.0, a business process management ("BPM") engine and a change management solution. These developments should help give existing customers confidence following the announcement in April 2006 that the company had reached a definitive agreement to be acquired by Avocent Corporation, a supplier of IT infrastructure for the centralized management of enterprise data centers, branch offices and small to medium-sized businesses. When news of the \$416 million deal was released, it was stated that LANDesk would continue to operate from its existing physical facilities as an independent division of Avocent.

LANDesk enjoys a well respected reputation and is frequently deployed in organizations of all sizes around the globe. However, the company is particularly strong in the mid-scale market sectors. With the solution set now available to LANDesk and its extensive partners the company is well positioned to appeal to many new organizations, a task made simpler with the Service Desk capabilities just announced; it is common practice for many organizations moving down the ITIL road to begin by focusing their efforts around service and help desk procedures. These are often the most visible element of IT service management and can provide a solid base from which to address all elements of ITIL service delivery along with IT support and development process enhancement. Service Desk is a very competitive area in which Touchpaper already serves more than 1,700 customers in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific. It will be interesting to see how LANDesk plans to take its expanded Service Management capabilities to market and to monitor its progress and the reaction of its major competitors.

## Microsoft and Nortel Pair Up to Tackle Unified Communications

By *Clay Ryder*

Microsoft and Nortel have inked a four-year deal for the development of integrated voice and data communications products such as unified voice, email, presence, IM, and video communications for Office 2007. Dubbed the Innovative Communications Alliance, the pair will jointly develop these products scheduled for release in 2007, cross-license select intellectual property, and collectively drive sales and marketing activities. Microsoft has indicated that this initiative seeks to provide organizations with transition path from traditional phone systems and corporate PBXs to unified communications based on software that spans phones, PCs, and servers. Nortel indicated its desire to migrate 20% of its existing installed base to the newer technologies. As part of the initiative Nortel will become a strategic SI for the products and services developed under the cooperative agreement.

Unified communications has garnered a great deal of interest over the past year as data communications vendors such as Cisco have jumped on the cost-savings and efficiency bandwagon and began to promote serious, integrated voice solutions seeking to displace the traditional corporate telephony network. While there is a great deal of enlightened self-interest on the part of vendors such as Cisco, Nortel, et al, the fact remains that unified communications offers considerable value to organizations, especially those seeking to develop sustainable competitive advantage in how they view, interact, and ultimately sell to their customer base and prospects. The market has witnessed the availability of various VoIP schemes and equipment for the desktop, however, for many the lack of out-of-the-box integration with the desktop/laptop/mobile device has limited the value proposition of said solutions, which in turn has limited their appeal.

Obviously, Nortel, the former telephony giant, would love to catch some of the market charm that Cisco enjoys, and Microsoft as the de facto purveyor of client-side information consumption technology would dearly like to be able retake some its leadership in areas of communications, messaging, office productivity, and the coolness factor. With Google, Yahoo!, and Skype eating into edges of Microsoft's software stronghold, it is no surprise that the Redmond Giant has responded with this alliance in the quest of delivering its view of the future of unified communications. Nortel for its part would gain access to most common information access points, i.e., the desktop and many mobile devices, and could work to ensure that its backend technology is the preferred mechanism by which organizations achieve unified communications. Of course, there is much work to be done to make this all a reality, which is one of the reasons why this initiative was announced.

There are very few that stand a chance of competing against Cisco's Unified Messaging initiative and the company's entrenched position in the enterprise; a Microsoft/Nortel combination could possibly be one of the few, the proud, and the heavily bankrolled. Nevertheless, we do not expect to see unified communications as the norm in organizations for quite some time, as there is a plethora of services, data, and connectivity issues to be overcome. But at the same time, the market cannot overlook the possibilities afforded by unified connectivity, nor can it afford to abdicate its role in the market to a single major player. With all the work that there is do, it will take many. We believe the Innovative Communications Alliance will help keep the market focused on innovation and the potential of unified communications, which to our point of view is a good thing for everyone.

## Iomega REV 70GB Backup Drive

By *Susan Dietz*

Iomega Corporation has announced its latest contribution to high-capacity removable storage for backup and archive needs. Aimed at small and medium-sized businesses, the new Iomega REV 70GB Backup Drive is now available worldwide. In both external USB 2.0 and internal ATAPI models, the new Iomega REV 70GB drive utilizes a removable, 2.5 inch 70GB REV disks that is purported to double the capacity of first-generation REV 35GB products. The removable disks also claim a shelf life of thirty maintenance-free years, and can reportedly store as much as 140GB of data with compression using standard backup software. In support of its existing REV customers, Iomega REV 70GB Backup Drives offer backward read and write compatibility with first-generation REV 35GB disks. With the introduction of the REV 70 Backup Drive, Iomega's REV platform now features two

capacity points, the REV 35GB drive and disks and REV70 GB drive and disks. The price points are either \$600 for the REV 70GB USB 2.0 Backup Drive including one REV 70GB disk, or \$580 for the REV 70GB ATAPI Backup Drive, including one REV70 GB disk. Extra REV 70GB disks are available for \$69.00 each or in four-packs for \$250.

The price points certainly would seem to back up Iomega's claim to be aiming at the SMB market, and since it is most likely a dependable product backed by a decent warranty (three years for the drives, five years for the disks), there is most likely a huge potential in the targeted SMB market. We can even imagine sales in consumer markets. In both areas, there is an absolute desire and need to save information and move it to another location in case of fire, theft, flood, viruses, inquisitive cats, or other disasters. The biggest issue is getting Iomega to do a good job of marketing it, and if the past is any indication of the future, getting the word out to all and sundry is going to be a spotty endeavor, at best.

Remember, too, that several big companies—Microsoft and Symantec among them—are or will be offering online back-up for customers, and neither company has shown any lack of marketing ability. However, there is definitely a segment of the SMB market that will probably be looking askance at the idea of storing their material “out there, somewhere” in a place where they can't touch it or carry it around with them. Issues of security are bound to come up; as are questions about availability should the SMB have a problem with its accounts payables for a month (or so). Buying the needed backup all at once may certainly be attractive: touching and feeling what a person owns is more immediate and somehow more real than relying on “the cloud.” However, SMBs as a group often don't have any internal IT resources, so relying on a big name like Microsoft or Symantec rather than the DIY needed for maintaining their own backup drives—no matter how simple—is an attraction most likely to be strongly considered. When all is said and done, we believe Iomega's sales will be pretty strong, provided customers know that there is something for sale.