Market Roundup
November 9, 2007

IBM Unveils Updated Active Energy Manager

By Clay Ryder

IBM has introduced a new version of its Systems Director Active Energy Manager (AEM), formerly known as PowerExecutive, that allows customers to cap power usage, prevent cost overruns, and monitor energy usage trends to enable better planning before deploying workloads across multiple platforms in their data centers. AEM now supports IBM Systems based upon POWER, IBM System Storage platforms, and System x (x86) with plans for future support of the IBM System z mainframe. In addition, some hardware from other manufacturers is supported. AEM extends the reach and scope of the technology previously provided by Power Executive, while gathering more information and presenting it in a simpler, more centralized way. The latest release now exploits Intelligent Power Distribution Units (iPDUs) to support older servers and low- and mid-range storage devices by collecting power information for the devices plugged into the unit, thereby presenting a more complete view of energy used within the data center. AEM also manages power usage across supported servers through functions such as Power Capping and Power Savings Mode which can provide saving of up to 30% of system power demand. AEM Power Trending and Thermal Trending monitor and report system energy usage as well as inlet and exhaust air temperatures for individual systems. Active Energy Manager can also provide energy management data for IBM Tivoli Monitoring and IBM Tivoli Usage and Accounting Manager. IBM Systems Director Active Energy Manager will be available for download beginning December 7, 2007. iPDU capabilities, Power Trending, and Thermal Trending are no-charge features of the AEM product and are available at no charge, with Power Savings Mode and Power Capping functionality at a list price of under $100 per system.

The desire to save power is not in itself sufficient for organizations to achieve this laudable goal. Power consumption, especially in the datacenter of many organizations, is simply a given cost of doing business, and one that in many cases is not fully understood or correctly measured. With this latest version of AEM, IBM is providing not only a powerful energy monitoring solution, but the capability for organizations to understand more completely their actual datacenter power consumption. This enables IT professionals to approximate more accurately and budget for technology and energy expenditures over time as they will be able to see the actual power used by each IT resource. Being able to cap the energy consumption of systems and/or taking advantage of power savings modes of operation offers datacenter personnel greater flexibility in how they best manage the price/performance tradeoffs of supporting varying workloads throughout the day. In addition, the ability to collect energy data from iPDUs that can support older non energy-aware equipment can provide organizations with a much more accurate understanding of their power utilization. Collectively, this monitoring and data reporting affords organizations the ability to deploy a centralized approach to localized temperature adjustments within the datacenter that are based upon discrete information gathered from specific multiple devices, not just an average temperature in a given location within the datacenter.

Overall, we are pleased to see this latest update, as it incorporates monitoring and management of resources in a way that provides the opportunity for organizations to hone their energy consumption to meet service needs of the IT workloads while taking advantage of some of the latest energy efficiency technologies such as power capping and iPDUs. While effective energy management and capacity planning is a significant undertaking for any organization, the capabilities offered by Systems Director AEM will likely be well received by the facilities and IT professionals tasked with improving the energy efficiency of the datacenter.

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SailPoint Identity Tool May Be Effective Catalyst In Identity Management

By Lawrence D. Dietz

SailPoint Technologies, Inc. has introduced its identity data quality tool designed to simplify and accelerate enterprise identity management and compliance initiatives. Available in December through SailPoint Alliance Network partners as a component of their identity management implementation services, the combined offering establishes a baseline of consistent, reliable identity data and prepares enterprises for successful identity management deployments such as role management, access certification automation, access policy enforcement, and user provisioning. SailPoint's identity data quality tool uses proprietary algorithms to correlate user identities across enterprise resources and simplifies correction of failed or partially failed correlations via a user-friendly graphical interface. After establishing a baseline of identity data, the tool identifies potential security risks such as terminated employees with active accounts, dormant user accounts, nonessential service and privileged user accounts, and individuals with multiple user accounts for a resource. When the tool is combined with the best practices that SailPoint Alliance Network partners bring to these initiatives, organizations can accelerate delivery and lower the costs of identity management deployments while improving the reliability and accuracy of audit, verification, and risk management.

Safeguarding the privacy of Personal Identifiable Information and Personally Identifiable Health Information will continue to be prime concerns of major end-user organizations. The hoopla surrounding the TJX compromise of PII for thousands of credit cards has served as legal and monetary honey attracting lawyers in a variety of state and federal actions, capping an array of data breaches in the private and public sectors. We believe that user organizations will turn to identity management (IDM) as a technological solution and evidence of their due diligence and concern. Many user organizations have shied away from implementing IDM due to the myriad problems associated with correlating user identities across the enterprise and due to a lack of tools to help operations personnel flag suspect activities.

Announcements such as this one by SailPoint may be hitting the market at an opportune moment as planning for calendar year 2008 moves into high gear. It is also comforting for us to note that SailPoint has given its partners prominent attention as the organizations actually responsible for delivering high value-added implementation and likely consulting services to end-user customers. We are also cautiously optimistic that pioneering efforts by the U.S. Department of Defense in employing their Combined Access Cards will trickle down into other sectors as a proof of concept for more aggressive IDM in large organizations.

3PAR WM Software for Utility Storage

By Clay Ryder

3PAR has announced 3PAR Virtual Domains, a new virtual machine software for its InServ Storage Servers that enables organizations to deploy customized storage services to multiple users, applications, departments, and external customers on a shared infrastructure. Through its secure, administrative segregation of users and hosts within a tiered, massively parallel 3PAR InServ Storage Server, the solution seeks to enhance storage service levels over what was previously possible through traditional dedicated infrastructures. Where traditional high-end array partitioning schemes rely on the physical and manual segregation of array resources, 3PAR Virtual Domains uses a policy-based, logical implementation to deliver secure, shared access for up to 2,000 virtual arrays per InServ Storage Server. Through private, logical separation of users or groups of users, hosts, and storage resources, Virtual Domains is designed to give organizations the security and control they require while preserving the inherent benefits of a massively scalable tiered-storage platform. 3PAR Virtual Domains is targeted at internal and external storage service providers who understand the benefits of consolidation but must deliver secure, independent storage services to multiple administrators, applications, departments, and external customers each of whom is expecting independent privacy, control, reporting, and compliance capabilities. 3PAR Virtual Domains is optional software for all new and previously installed InServ Storage Servers with pricing beginning at $1,500 varying based on InServ configuration. In addition to standard management interfaces, 3PAR Virtual Domains is fully integrated within the 3PAR InSpire Architecture, offering support for 3PAR Remote Copy for secured access to remotely replicated domain volumes; 3PAR System Reporter for historical performance and capacity utilization

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reporting; and 3PAR LDAP support for centralized InServ, Domain, and overall IT user authentication and authorization.

For many, virtualization conjures up thoughts of server consolidation, or perhaps teaching a desktop a new trick by hosting multiple operating systems at a time. However, in the realm of storage, virtualization is generally less understood, and at times is often more about segmentation and managing resources than actual virtualization of resources. 3PAR has always taken a different approach to storage than much of the competition; one that focused on parallelism in part for performance reasons, but also one that supported the concept of thin provisioning from the onset. Much of the architectural underpinning of the 3PAR platform allowed the company to embrace the concept of virtualization more easily than it allowed some others, but along with the hardware aspect of the design is the logical approach to not only storage, but access, policy, etc. This approach has some obvious benefits to service providers who want to leverage the totality of their storage investment but be able to divvy it up with complete separation as they see fit based upon customer demand. However, at the same time, end-user organizations that are concerned with compliance regulations, or perhaps simply want to keep internal users segregated in accordance with company defined best practices, may find much in Virtual Domains that is to their liking. As such, 3PAR may find that Virtual Domains opens the door for the company to reach new potential audiences for their offerings beyond their historic customer base.

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