



New Trends in Desktop Management



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A combination of increasing concerns for desktop security and pervasive broadband access has enabled new means of managing enterprise computing assets.

Under Attack: The Enterprise PC

Security vulnerabilities. Viruses. Malicious intrusions. The hazards of modern enterprise computing continue unabated. And the executives responsible for IT operations are finding the task of protecting corporate information assets to be increasingly difficult and time consuming. In a recent survey conducted by The Aberdeen Group, 84% of all businesses surveyed reported that a worm or virus disrupted their business operations in the past three years. The losses in sales attributed to these disruptions averages \$20M annually. As of January 2006, ThreatCheck logged 3,511 known vulnerabilities, with a record new 1,366 vulnerabilities added in the previous 30 days. Because of these disruptions—resulting from insufficient protection and support of an organization's desktop and mobile computers—many enterprises have failed to deploy the desktop applications they purchased. The reasons for this include the difficulty and relatively high cost of implementing and maintaining enterprise applications, as well as the historically low rates of adoption for applications that depend on **end-user intervention**.

On-demand Applications Harness the Power of the Internet

The pervasiveness of the Internet, combined with dramatic declines in the pricing of computing technology and network bandwidth, has made possible a new generation of enterprise computing in which substantial components of information technology (IT) infrastructure and security can be provisioned and delivered dynamically as an on-demand service. This new computing paradigm is sometimes referred to as utility computing, while outsourced software applications are referred to as Software as a Service (SaaS).

On-demand application services enable businesses to subscribe to a wide variety of applications developed specifically for the Internet. These applications are then delivered over the Internet on an as-needed basis, requiring little or no implementation services, and without the need to install and manage third-party software in-house. The market for on-demand application services is projected to grow from \$425 million in 2002 to \$2.6 billion in 2007, representing a compounded annual growth rate of 44 percent. While hosted services represent only 2% of the application software revenue today, AMR Research estimates software delivered as services to be the fastest-growing segment of the market over the next five years.

Given growing acceptance of “on-demand” security and desktop management solutions, tolerance for expensive, highly complex, and difficult to install and maintain desktop management systems is in rapid decline. CIOs and CFOs, while anxious to lower IT expenses and realize immediate ROI, must also be able to react quickly to new threats. Given the “feast-or-famine” nature of assigning fixed internal staff to combat these vulnerabilities, executives responsible for a company's Information Technology are becoming more receptive to the concept of “software-as-a-service”—buying applications or specific IT management functions as a hosted service, usually billed on a contracted, monthly fee.

This idea has been around for several years – recall IBM's time-sharing of mainframes, or the more recent and rather short lived ASP “phenomenon.” But it appears that buying software-as-a-service is finally an idea whose time has come. In fact, Business Week reports that industry analysts now estimate that as much as half of all software sold to corporations over the next five years, will be paid for on a monthly basis, as part of a long-term contract, a monthly

¹ The Aberdeen Group, July 2004. \$20.1M is the estimated annual loss of revenue attributed to viruse/worm outages for Global 5,000 companies.

² International Data Corporation (IDC), May, 2003.

rental fee, or pay-per-use. Exciting new companies like salesforce.com are building momentum in this business model, while traditional software providers – Siebel Systems, Oracle, IBM, and many more – are scrambling to make sure they have product offerings that can be sold as hosted services.

In the field of Information Technology, desktop management is a several-hundred-billion dollar market, but owing to the breadth of services encompassing the “desktop,” this market is fragmented. There is no single defined leader, and no standard approach for addressing security and data protection, patch management, hardware and software asset management, software distribution, and related support services. Corporations of all sizes today typically solve the desktop management dilemma using internal staff that must select, integrate, and operate a number of disparate tools, applications, and services from a number of varied and often incompatible sources. “The problem today is that IT managers must put together their own approach to client management, using point products that may or may not be combined with product suites. No single vendor does it all.”

No one vendor, that is, until WebEx. WebEx is the undisputed leader in providing services that enable online meetings and web collaboration technology and services that connect people to people. But it is less well known that WebEx is the leader in providing the technology and services that connect people-to-PCs. First introduced in 2001, WebEx Support Center has provided IT administrators with the ability to connect remotely with the PCs in their companies. Since that time, WebEx has added 4,000 customers who depend on WebEx Support Center to save IT time and budget by allowing support staff to diagnose and repair PC problems from a central location. With the recent addition of the WebEx System Management suite of IT services, these IT administrators can now not only connect to, but also protect, secure, and manage the PCs under their control—regardless of the physical location—from a central control point. WebEx is unique in delivering a single solution that integrates all of the functions required to manage desktop computing, while combining this technology with a proven and unprecedented hosted service operation. For the first time, the software and hardware traditionally associated with desktop security and management can be purchased as a service. Industry trends show organizations

clearly moving towards increased outsourcing of all functions not considered core. This leaves WebEx well positioned to be the leader in the next wave of technology companies that have harnessed the power and ubiquity of the Internet not as the end, but rather the means to improve overall business efficiency and productivity.

WebEx Answers the Desktop Dilemma

With the addition of WebEx System Management services, customers will experience a fully on-demand, fully integrated answer to the tedious question of managing PC assets. Key benefits of this solution include:

- **Rapid deployment.** WebEx System Management services deploy rapidly and provision easily, since customers do not have to spend time installing or maintaining the servers, network equipment, security products or other infrastructure hardware and software necessary to ensure a scalable and reliable desktop management service.
- **Support for remote users.** Unlike traditional client-server architectures designed to support only users on the corporate LAN, WebEx System Management works identically whether the employee is operating on the corporate LAN, from home, or from a hotel room thousands of miles from the IT support staff.
- **Lower total cost of ownership.** WebEx customers achieve significant savings relative to the traditional enterprise software model. These web services enable customers to automate asset inventory and tracking, software updates, patch assessment and distribution, data protection, virus prevention, and much more.
- **High levels of user adoption.** WebEx System Management operates without end-user intervention. Asset management and protection, software distribution, virus protection, and data protection occur as non-evasive, “background” automated operations.
- **Secure, scalable and reliable delivery platform.** WebEx Systems Management employs a multi-tenant application architecture that enables web services to scale securely, reliably, and cost-effectively to a virtually unlimited number of users, worldwide.

³ Jim Kerstetter, “Pay-As-You-Go Is Up and Running,” Business Week, January 12, 2004, pp. 93-94.

⁴ Audrey Rasmussen, “Managing desktops and laptops more complex than ever”, Network World Newsletter, July 14, 2004

