

INSIGHT

VERITAS: Expanding the Storage Foundations and Building Utility Computing

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IDC OPINION

VERITAS Software first announced its commitment to a utility computing strategy a year ago, expanding from its existing base of storage software and high-availability server clustering software. Since then, VERITAS has completed the acquisition of three companies — Precise Software, Jareva, and Ejasent — and has introduced major upgrades across its entire product line centered around availability, performance, and automation. Now, as revealed in the VISION 2004 conference, VERITAS is aligning this diverse product set around its vision of utility computing, offering customers a software "building blocks" approach to implementing a utility computing model. Some key points:

- ☒ VERITAS has revamped and renamed its Foundation Suite to Storage Foundation as part of its broader rebranding and product enhancement sweep, laying the groundwork for its emerging utility computing vision.
- ☒ VERITAS has designed a "five steps to utility computing" road map, giving customers a simple process to implement and design a method to better track their information technology resources — discover existing assets, consolidate what is underutilized, standardize on the best, automate policies, and deliver predictable service levels.
- ☒ Expansion of the CommandCentral family of products to include CommandCentral Availability 4.0 and CommandCentral Storage 4.0 are more of the pieces required to build a flexible platform for VERITAS to deliver the capabilities of automated storage and server provisioning.
- ☒ Integration of the assets from VERITAS' acquisitions of Precise, Jareva, and Ejasent is taking place, with a road map for further integration into VERITAS utility computing.

IN THIS INSIGHT

This IDC Insight discusses and evaluates the impact of VERITAS' announcements and delivery of its products designed to push the company further into the utility computing software space. This document offers a view of advantages and disadvantages associated with these announcements, and it provides suggested courses of action for customers and vendors.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

To make good on its commitments to utility computing, VERITAS needed to do some housekeeping to a product suite that was rapidly becoming cumbersome. In its ongoing efforts to realign and enhance its product portfolio VERITAS started with the basics by renaming and enhancing one of its core capabilities, Foundation Suite, to Storage Foundation. VERITAS also added new features, renamed products, and incorporated the applications gained from its acquisitions of Precise, Jareva, and Ejasent over the past year.

In addition, on April 12, 2004, VERITAS announced a strategic alliance with BEA Systems Inc., with the two companies engaged in joint engineering and sales and marketing activities. The integration of VERITAS' provisioning, performance management, and availability software and BEA's application server suite add to the groundwork VERITAS has put in place to build a fully integrated utility computing infrastructure.

The VERITAS View of Utility Computing

The basic concept of utility computing is creating a computing infrastructure that can dynamically change tasks as processing needs to expand and shrink — in other words, deploy IT resources on the fly as business conditions change. To accomplish this, and many vendors are stepping up to the challenge, requires an understanding of the relationships between hardware and software resources and the particular business service being delivered.

Balancing the maintenance of existing IT resources with strategic new investments requires having a clear picture of what is already deployed. In general, most companies use multiple management systems with a plethora of hardware devices and are challenged with how to monitor these devices for availability or failure, collect performance data, and provision the devices. But often companies are not fully aware of what is installed and where, who is responsible, and what applications are being run and what business problems they solve. In other words, companies often have a murky picture at best of how their IT assets relate to each other.

The ideal world where routers can reconfigure themselves, servers can automatically provision themselves, and applications can transparently assign more resources to themselves — untouched by human hands — does not exist yet, but the opportunities to address consolidation, standardization, and automation of datacenter resources is available today.

VERITAS Gets There with CommandCentral

VERITAS has laid the groundwork and has developed a comprehensive, heterogeneous software strategy to enable utility computing. VERITAS' model allows companies to move toward a simpler and consolidated approach, complementing the existing infrastructure, through its CommandCentral console, the integration point that provides one central view and management of the entire infrastructure.

The VERITAS CommandCentral family of products is designed to deliver measurable services such as online storage, data protection, and clustering, and it operates in conjunction with a customer's existing infrastructure and business requirements. The VERITAS CommandCentral set of products are:

- ☒ VERITAS CommandCentral Storage is a combination of VERITAS' SAN management software (SANPoint Control) and storage resource management (Storage Reporter) software in one solution. VERITAS CommandCentral Storage 4.0 gives administrators one centralized view of the entire storage environment, thereby maximizing the utilization of a customer's existing resources, resulting in a flexible, cost-efficient way to manage, measure, and provision new storage as well as plan for future storage growth.

- ☒ VERITAS CommandCentral Availability is a management product that incorporates the features of Global Cluster Manager, which monitors, manages, and provides centralized and cluster visualization and control in real time. Using VERITAS CommandCentral Availability increases productivity by providing administrators the ability to detect, isolate, and correct errors, rapidly enabling service level agreements to be met efficiently and economically.

- ☒ VERITAS CommandCentral Service is a software portal that enables organizations to implement the shift to a utility computing model. VERITAS CommandCentral Service provides transparency into IT to define resource consumption, service levels, and cost for services used. As a result, IT becomes more measurable and aligned with the larger objectives of the business.

CommandCentral Storage and CommandCentral Availability are scheduled to ship July 2004. CommandCentral Service shipped in October 2003.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

VERITAS continued to demonstrate significant accomplishments over the past year, successfully introducing new products and services as well as presenting its future plans to expand the company's heterogeneous software offerings enabling utility computing. VERITAS has also made significant headway shoring up its broad product portfolio into a more modular yet streamlined set of offerings to help guide its customers through its software building blocks to utility computing.

ESSENTIAL GUIDANCE

For Vendors

Vendors competing with VERITAS should take note that the company continues to meet its commitment to utility computing and remains focused on its strategy, not only by strengthening its product offerings but also through its continued partnership and alliance strategy.

In addition, VERITAS has developed a well-heeled management team, strong balance sheet, and demonstrated ability to execute. VERITAS has the right mix needed to continue to strengthen its position as a serious contender in creating computing infrastructures that can react automatically to changes in business priorities.

For Customers

IDC expects VERITAS to continue to use the new technologies it has acquired to provide a complete set of solutions for its emerging utility computing model.

In addition, VERITAS' investment in its global services organization and formation of consulting practices reinforce the company's commitment and investment in professional services. This organization of consultants will advise customers on how best to achieve the highest level of data and application availability, system performance, and reduced costs.

Customers looking for vendor independence and interoperability across all storage platforms should consider VERITAS software and services.

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