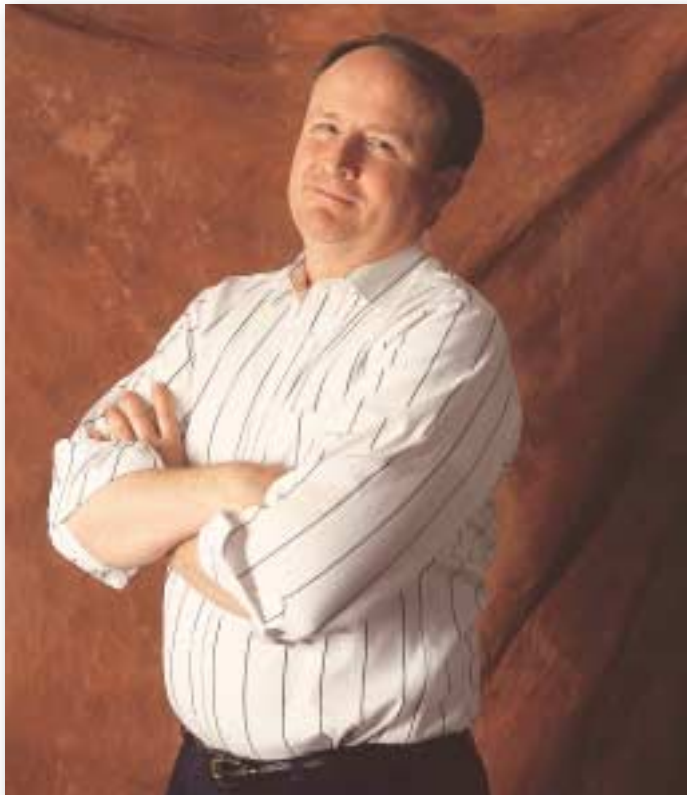


CATCHING UP WITH DREW MAJOR

by Cheryl Walton



As the architect of NetWare, Drew Major has been a Novell icon for 20 years. When we at Novell Connection heard that Drew was joining Volera—the spin-off company Novell recently announced—we were admittedly a little nervous. Although Volera is a Novell operating company, what does Drew's move mean for Novell?

Our anxiety was relieved after we talked to Drew Major, now CTO of Volera. In the following interview, Drew explains why Novell created Volera, what he hopes to accomplish through this new company, and how he will continue to stay involved with Novell itself.

Q: What intrigues you about caching?

A: For one thing, caching solved a fundamental problem on the Internet. The architecture of the browser/web server didn't really scale well without caching. The emergence of caching vendors and caching services have validated that assumption. Caching is actually a very hot area now on the Internet—enabling companies to reach more and more users without adding more and more web servers. Over the next year, the requirements for caching and acceleration services will increase exponentially as people start downloading video content and more and more audio content.

Q: It sounds like you intend to explore the limits of caching technology in Volera products.

A: Definitely. Caching does a number of things. It is actually a play in the middle of the Internet. Besides just pushing bits—providing scalability for bits—caching provides a unique opportunity to include other value-adds on the Internet, such as the flow of the data going through the cache. Caching particularly increases the capabilities around identity. So, for example, Volera will work with Novell to provide value-adds to products such as iChain. With iChain, we will connect the directory with the proxy cache, providing very compelling access-control authorization and remote-access capability to corporations' data. And it will all be done on top of a proxy cache platform.

Q: Why did Novell form Volera?

A: Well, there are a couple reasons. We felt it made more sense because we found out that we need to go through a different sales channel for the products Volera sells. The people that need to buy proxy cache technologies are different customers than the traditional Novell customers and Novell channel.

For example, we really wanted to get Nortel [Networks] to resell our products. When we went to Nortel, because it is such a strategic investment and Volera will be their caching platform for a lot of things they do in the future, Nortel felt that they needed to have a piece of the company as well. Although, of course, Novell maintains supermajority ownership.

Creating Volera also made a lot of sense from a focus standpoint, from a marketing standpoint. I have to mention that it was quite hard for me personally to decide where I needed to go. I am very committed to this caching technology. However, I am continuing with a consulting relationship to Novell, and I spend a fair amount of time with Jack Messman, Eric Schmidt, Carl Ledbetter, and Stuart Nelson in helping develop Novell's strategies. I haven't severed the ties with Novell. And certainly, as an almost wholly owned subsidiary, Volera continues to be tied to Novell.

Q: I suppose it feels a little strange—because you're still so tied to Novell—to leave it after 20 years.

A: Well, it is a new change. But again, I am keeping my foot in the door with Volera. One thing that perhaps people don't know is that I have only been a Novell employee since February 1, 1993. I just saw the paperwork; I had forgotten the exact date. Prior to 1993, I was a consultant and part of a company called SuperSet. So in some sense,

being a consultant to Novell is a little more comfortable than being an actual employee—in some weird way.

Q: You mentioned Jack Messman, Novell's new CEO. Did you know him before he became CEO?

A: Yes, I am very acquainted with Jack. When Superset originally went to work for Novell's predecessor company—Novell Data Systems—that company had some problems. Jack came in, realized what we were building in terms of the file-sharing capabilities, and saw the value that was left in the company. Jack kept us funded while he went out and found a new CEO. Of course, Jack found Ray Noorda and was eventually able to bring him into the company.

Jack has been on Novell's board of directors for 20 years. I know Jack very, very well. When I heard that he was coming over, we had some discussions and will continue to have discussions about the strategy and the direction of Novell. I think that Jack is a man of high integrity and is committed to Novell—in terms of knowing how to run a large organization and getting Novell to continue to focus on its core competencies going forward. I am very optimistic about Jack.

By the way, I will continue to enjoy working with Eric Schmidt as he focuses on strategy and overall architecture. Jack, of course, will focus on the day-to-day things as CEO of the company.

Q: What are your goals for Volera as a company?

A: We have a couple of goals. First, we want to continue to expand the proxy caching market. We have a service offering with Exodus and Global Center that is going to take off.

Second, the thing that excites me the most and where I am going to spend most of my time next year is actually building infrastructure around the distribution of video through the Internet. That is the next hot area. I have had an opportunity to visit a few movie studios, find out the requirements for video, and see where these studios are moving. Given our platform, the opportunities there are huge. Volera on top of the NetWare platform is ideally suited to push the volume of bits.

You know, a movie is a GB or more. It's just a lot of data, and our platform and product are ideally suited to pump that data. We're working on a couple of new file systems for video as well as new ways to push the bits faster and cheaper. I've been wanting to get into video for a number of years, and finally, the stars are aligned in terms of where the Internet is at, where the content people are at, and where the consumers are at. It's a great opportunity for us.

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Q: In what areas do you see the biggest opportunity for Novell's growth?

A: I think that Novell's core competencies run in three fundamental areas—the storage of data, the management of data, and the transportation and delivery of data. Products such as iFolder, the next-generation ZENworks, the next-generation printing—really everything we're doing—are focused around these kinds of solutions. Certainly, NDS eDirectory has the ability to manage data and continues to be very powerful.

I see us actually getting back to our focus—that is where I am pushing development. Just the opportunities around managing and storing data are

huge. And I see it as a very powerful niche. It is what we do really well. It is different than what other people do. In general, we are storing, managing, and transporting data. We're kind of in the middle as an infrastructure play and adding a lot of value to our existing customers and adding new value in the Internet and infrastructure space.

Q: How do you feel about the future of Novell and Volera together?

A: I see Volera and Novell as very complementary: I think that there will be a lot of great opportunities. Volera focuses on the proxy caching elements, and Novell focuses on storage, management, and the transportation and delivery of data.

If I look at the future, I look at where we can win. We've been through some tough times. On the other hand, the opportunities around these areas are mind-boggling. If anything, caching, storage, management, and data transportation are more important than ever. For example, we have a play with iFolder where we can reach every consumer around the world who is connected to the Internet. Everyone is going to need this product. With the Volera side, every consumer in the world is going to want to download movies over the Internet. We can be core to all of that. Companies and consumers also need other capabilities that we provide such as managing identity.

I see us—both Volera and Novell—breaking out into a whole new genre of products—products that are very synergistic to where we've been before, yet very new and forward looking. We're going to continue to sell our file servers in our existing model to our existing customer base, but we are now adding significant new capabilities and moving into new markets. Together, the two companies provide a very powerful solution, and our strengths differentiate us from our competitors.

That's why I'm still here, and I'm still excited. I see such a big opportunity around storage, management, and transportation of data.

You can read more about Volera and its flagship product, *Excelerator 2.0*, in the related article on p. 21. You can also visit www.volera.com. ●