Novell's ZENworks team makes several customer visits and receives hundreds of e-mail messages, phone calls, customer responses, and newsgroup threads—all centered around one subject: What will be in the next release of ZENworks for Desktops? Novell plans to release the next version of ZENworks for Desktops, code-named ZENworks Firestarter, later this summer. This article is a preview of the new features and enhancements Novell plans to include in ZENworks Firestarter. Please note that because details are still being finalized, the features mentioned in this article are subject to change.

**DISK-IMAGING ENHANCEMENTS**

ZENworks for Desktops 3 includes the first version of the ZENworks disk-imaging solution. Disk imaging allows you to take a snapshot of the hard disk on a fully configured Windows workstation and deploy that snapshot to workstations throughout your company's network. Using ZENworks for Desktops disk imaging, you can create workstation names and security identifiers (SIDs) from a central location. ZENworks Firestarter will include the following enhancements to the disk-imaging solution:

- **Compression of Images.** ZENworks Firestarter compresses image files by an average of 40 to 60 percent. As a result, the time you spend deploying these images across the wire will significantly decrease.

- **Server-Based Image Multicasting.** By initiating a multicast session from the server, you will be able to push ZENworks images to multiple workstations during a single imaging session without visiting individual workstations. As a result, the time and bandwidth required to deploy workstation images to more than one workstation will substantially decrease. In addition, ZENworks Firestarter will automate the usual setup procedures required to perform multiple workstation imaging.

- **Advanced Scripting for Imaging.** ZENworks Firestarter will enable you to embed advanced imaging commands within imaging policies. For example, in previous versions of ZENworks for Desktops, tasks such as partition manipulation and conditional imaging were available only from the imaging engine's command prompt. ZENworks Firestarter makes these tasks manageable through ConsoleOne.

- **Pre-boot eXecution Environment (PXE) Readiness.** This feature will ease the deployment of workstation images by eliminating the need to deploy the ZENworks Imaging Partition. The ZENworks Firestarter PXE integration will be available through a separate enhancement pack, currently code-named ZENworks Firestarter PXE. (See “ZENworks Imaging and PXE.”)

**REMOTE-CONTROL ENHANCEMENTS**

The new ZENworks remote-control agent will compress screen data over the wire. As a result, remote-control tasks will experience speed boosts from 20 to 50 percent over ZENworks for Desktops 3's remote-control agent. In practical terms, you can expect to be able to comfortably remote control 1024x768, 256-color video over a 64 kb/s connection.

**THIN-CLIENT INTEGRATION ENHANCEMENTS**

Customer interviews indicate that thin-client solutions are becoming more and more appealing to companies worldwide for delivering applications and services to their employees. ZENworks Firestarter will include support for new thin-client platforms including Windows 2000 Terminal Services and technology
from Citrix such as MetaFrame XP. By integrating tightly with the directory, ZENworks Firestarter delivers greater stability, scalability, and customization options to thin-client environments.

POLICY COPY WIZARD
The new ZENworks Policy Copy wizard will allow you to copy ZENworks for Desktops policies within your NDS tree. As a result, you will be able to deploy policies to a new site or department with a couple of mouse clicks.

WHAT COMES AFTER ZENWORKS FIRESTARTER?
The enhancements included in ZENworks Firestarter are certainly hot—but that’s not why the ZENworks for Desktops product team code-named the version Firestarter. In reality, ZENworks Firestarter is a step toward a much larger project: Somewhere deep in Novell’s development chambers, the Novell ZENworks team is building the next generation of ZENworks for Desktops, which is code-named ZENworks Prometheus. (Prometheus was the Greek titan who stole fire from the gods on Mount Olympus and delivered both fire and civilization to humankind.)

The Prometheus project will extend ZENworks for Desktops far beyond its current capabilities. To whet your appetite, below is a list of some of the features that are being developed for ZENworks Prometheus:

• Eliminating all dependence on the Novell client. ZENworks Prometheus will be fully browser accessible and firewall friendly.
• Extending services for mobile users beyond the current disconnected application access.
• Integrating ZENworks for Desktops with Novell Portal Services.
• Expanding thin-client services.

In addition, the ZENworks team is aggressively pursuing partners that will be able to deliver management tools built on ZENworks Prometheus. These partner solutions may include management of new platforms, new types of devices, or even legacy solutions.

Finally, ZENworks Prometheus will provide simple, manageable, and seamless integration from ZENworks for Desktops 3. Because the ZENworks Prometheus project has just begun, Novell cannot accurately predict when this product will be available to the public.

For more information about the ZENworks product line, visit www.novell.com/products/zenworks.

Ted Haeger works with the Novell ZENworks team as the ZENworks solutions evangelist. Martin Buckley works under two identities: the ZENworks for Desktops product manager by day, and the ZENworks evil scientist by night.