

EVENT FLASH

New Novell Release: ZENworks Configuration Management

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IN THIS EVENT FLASH

This IDC Flash discusses the new addition to the Novell ZENworks family of products: ZENworks Configuration Management (ZCM).

SITUATION OVERVIEW

On August 14, Novell announced the worldwide availability of ZENworks Configuration Management (ZCM). Novell is adding ZENworks Configuration Management to its stable of configuration management products. This new product has integrated patch, endpoint security, and asset management as well as the ability to provision desktops and single servers. The press release stated the company was augmenting the new Configuration Management product with security features from the recently acquired Senforce Technologies.

ZENworks Configuration Management will be released in three separate editions; Standard, Advanced, and Enterprise. The Standard Edition includes basic configuration management, which includes the software distribution and image management capabilities. The Advanced Edition includes device and wireless control along with patch management capabilities. The Enterprise Edition includes the capabilities for Advanced, along with Linux management, handheld management, endpoint security, and asset management services. Novell plans on leading with the Enterprise Edition in new engagements, and it is planning the appropriate new sales training and marketing campaigns to support this. ZCM runs on Windows 2000 Server, Windows Server 2003, Novell Open Enterprise Server, and SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, and it supports Windows Vista, Windows XP, and Windows 2000 on the client. MSRPs for the Standard, Advanced, and Enterprise Editions are \$70, \$114, and \$225, respectively, per user or per instance. Per-instance pricing is for either a physical or virtual device. Promotion pricing is available to encourage existing ZENworks for Desktops, Servers, and Handheld customers to migrate toward ZCM. However, Novell says that existing customers can use ZCM within their existing environments and that ZCM doesn't force customers to replace what they already have.

Novell has been working for some time to release its configuration management solutions from having to be tied to the requirement of installing Novell's eDirectory as well for configuration management. With this release, IT department customers or prospects are no longer bound to use or start with a setup of Novell's eDirectory or ConsoleOne, which thereby allows customers and prospects significantly easier installation and setup. At the same time, customers gain the flexibility to use either Microsoft Active Directory or the Novell eDirectory if they so wish. This removes a constraint for customers or prospects that may have found implementing Novell eDirectory to be an impediment to adoption. ZCM also marks Novell's further moves toward implementing ITIL and marketing itself as consistent with ITIL best practices in IT service management. Much of the product is designed to support change, configuration, and release managements, in addition to providing reports from BusinessObjects.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

From Novell, expect continued sales training and marketing of the new product. Because ZCM functionally overlaps with ZENworks for Desktops and Servers, Novell will lead with ZENworks Enterprise over other editions. And because Novell is adding this product but not updating the rest of the ZENworks family to be Windows Vista capable, Novell is making it clear that ZCM is the product for the future, and it will lead with this product over the existing ZENworks family in prospect engagements. Novell needs a clearer migration plan for customers to ensure customers do not fall prey to the inevitable competitor campaigns citing Novell's new products and uncertainty over migration paths to move to a competitor product. IDC also expects Novell to increase awareness of ZENworks' ITIL compatibility within the marketplace as it markets ZCM and other products.

For IT departments using the existing product family, Novell has said it is adding this product to the existing product line. It's hard to see Novell continuing with redundant products, so IT departments should see the road map moving forward with existing ZENworks for Servers and ZENworks for Desktops products. Existing customers should also be aware that the current version of ZENworks for Desktops does not support Windows Vista, and Novell's current plans are not to update ZENworks for Desktops to support Vista.

IDC expects that there will be attempts from other vendors to pick off Novell customers with migration incentives. Such campaigns may result in a few customer wins, but there's more smoke than fire resulting from such campaigns. True success will come from whether Novell is able to successfully expand its sales channel and increase sales of the new solution. The company recently inked a deal with Lenovo to start selling Linux operating environments for the desktop, so to the extent that ZCM agents are sold preconfigured into Lenovo Linux (and later possibly Windows) desktops, and to the extent that Lenovo customers want Linux desktops, an expanded sales channel is just what Novell may end up with.

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