

INGRAM MICRO

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Business Insights for
Solution Providers

FALL 2008

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SELLING THROUGH THE DOWNTURN

Confident Solution Providers Share Advice
For Energizing Your Sales Today! **pg. 20**

**UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS:
A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY** **pg. 26**

**GOVERNMENT RUSHES TOWARD
SERVER CONSOLIDATION** **pg. 30**

Leveraging
trusted
relationships
is the key,
says Jessica
Tanenhaus of
Mavenspire.

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MICRO**TM
Partner Smart



Lower Your Customers' Risk Exposure, Grow Your Business



Symantec Endpoint Protection and Symantec Network Access Control Deliver Next-Generation Endpoint Security in a single agent, single console.

The IT threat landscape continues to evolve rapidly. Glory-seeking attacks against the masses have been replaced by stealthy, targeted and financially motivated attacks that exploit vulnerabilities in enterprise endpoints — specifically, your customers' laptops, desktops, mobile devices and servers.

Protect your customers with Symantec Endpoint Protection and Symantec Network Access Control. Through a holistic and comprehensive approach, Symantec's Endpoint Security solutions redefine endpoint security to address the needs of the changing threat landscape, while enabling your customers to create a security environment that is easy and cost-effective to manage.

Benefits of Symantec Endpoint Security

- **Improved security.** Eliminates threat gaps and addresses the vast spectrum of known and unknown attacks that comprise the ever-changing threat landscape for desktops, laptops, servers and mobile devices.
- **Decreased complexity.** Delivers a complementary set of endpoint security solutions that improve security, simplify deployment and facilitate overall management.
- **Decreased costs.** Eliminates the need to purchase overlapping technology licenses, and reduces training, support and management expenses as a result of vendor standardization.
- **Increased control.** Gives IT administrators complete control over which endpoints can and cannot access an enterprise network, and improves their overall ability to manage their deployed endpoint security technologies.
- **Consistent enforcement.** Ensures that endpoint security policies are consistently enforced across the entire enterprise.

New Features, Upgrades With Latest Release

With our latest release, Symantec Endpoint Protection 11.0, and a new release coming in September, Symantec Endpoint Protection is even more robust, with easier installation and manageability and improved system performance.

Single Agent, Single Management Console

Symantec Endpoint Protection and Symantec Network Access Control deliver world-class endpoint security and policy-compliance capabilities, all in a single agent and management console. By combining unmatched protection and manageability, along with unified licensing, maintenance and updates, Symantec reduces the cost and complexity of endpoint security.



Symantec Endpoint Protection

Symantec Endpoint Protection combines Symantec AntiVirus with advanced threat prevention to deliver unmatched defense against malware for laptops, desktops and servers. This unmatched level of endpoint protection

protects customers against known and unknown targeted threats, including viruses, worms, Trojans, mutating spyware, adware, rootkits and zero-day attacks.

Symantec Network Access Control

Symantec Network Access Control enables customers to ensure the proper configuration and security state of user endpoints, including those of onsite employees, remote employees, guests, contractors and temporary workers, before they are allowed to access resources on the corporate network. It discovers and evaluates endpoint compliance status, provisions the appropriate network access, and provides remediation capabilities to ensure that endpoint security policies and standards are met. Symantec Network Access Control easily integrates with any network infrastructure, making its implementation more comprehensive, faster to deploy, easier to manage and more cost-effective than competing solutions.

Build Your Practice With Symantec Endpoint Protection

Symantec Endpoint Protection offers a winning foundation for growing security product and services revenue. Symantec Endpoint Protection will help you build or enhance your security practice with:

- A comprehensive solution to customers' most pressing security problems that can effectively and efficiently lower their risk exposure.

“Customer satisfaction with the latest release is extremely high, since it offers an even more integrated product with added security. I especially love the Network Access Control feature because it’s easy to add onto customer renewals and bring the conversation around to other products, such as archiving and maintenance.”

– Stephanie Dash
Senior sales executive, SMP

- A simplified single-console, single-agent architecture that reduces customer errors and expensive service call-backs.
- The chance to displace point-product competitors while providing greater customer value.

“Offering Symantec Endpoint Protection to customers has contributed to at least 25 percent growth in our business,” says Stephanie Dash, senior sales executive with SMP in Rochester, N.Y. “Customer satisfaction with the latest release is extremely high, since it offers an even more integrated product with added security. I especially love the Network Access Control feature because it’s easy to add onto customer renewals and bring the conversation around to other products, such as archiving and maintenance.”

Market Symantec Endpoint Protection With Customizable Templates

Reach your customers and generate sales leads for Symantec Endpoint Protection with Symantec’s professionally designed marketing templates using Ingram Micro’s Agency Express marketing portal. Use this marketing portal to reach your prospects, and let us do the work for you. Alternatively, you can choose to create and send customized files to your prospects. Visit www.ingrammicro.com/agencyexpress.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn how Symantec Endpoint Security can help you grow your business, visit www.symantec.com/endpoint.

Download free trialware at https://www4.symantec.com/Vrt/offer?a_id=48182.

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and

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Jim Manley
Area Vice President,
VAR Division, Ingram Micro

Surviving or Thriving?

WITH THE RIGHT STRATEGY, YOUR BUSINESS CAN STAY STRONG EVEN IN CHALLENGING ECONOMIC TIMES.

It's no secret that the economy has been erratic this year. From high prices at the pumps to reports of layoffs and cutbacks, the news could indicate difficult times ahead. But does an economic downturn mean it's time for technology solution providers to head for the hills?

This issue's cover subject, Jessica Tanenhaus of Mavenspire, based in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C., metro area, doesn't think so. And neither do the other three solution providers we've profiled in our cover story, "Selling Through the Downturn." By turning a keen eye on current market conditions and making adjustments where necessary, each of these solution providers has developed solid strategies for dealing with cautious clients, shrinking technology budgets and other widespread challenges. Read the article starting on p. 20 to find out what they're doing, and to pick up tips you can implement as well.

As you'll see, more than one of our featured solution providers recommends either selling more to existing customers, or offering needed services that aren't part of their core competencies. In our Sales and Marketing Advisor department (p. 36), see how another solution provider, Pittsburgh, Pa.-based 4C Technologies, put a

unique spin on that idea by turning experience in web site design and event planning into a flourishing side business that spawned its own corporate division. Also on the theme of events, check out the story of Rick Chernick, a Green Bay, Wis.-based solution provider whose company's annual customer event has grown into a party worthy of news headlines. (Exclusive expanded coverage of this story is available at the *Channel Advisor* web site.)

No matter what your business model is, a successful strategy, a motivated team and commitment to innovation can help you combat tough economic times. As always, we at Ingram Micro are working every day as part of your team to ensure that your business continues to thrive — and we want to hear about your successes. E-mail us at editor@ingramchanneladvisor.com to tell us what you're doing to generate results, and your story could be featured on the *Channel Advisor* web site.

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High Growth, Low Competition – The Perfect Storm

VIRTUALIZATION

Optimize and manage your IT infrastructure, from the desktop to the data center, by virtualizing your server, storage and networking systems with VMware solutions

The opportunity for Solution Providers to use virtualization to unleash the under-utilized network horsepower of their mid-market and SMB customers is significant and growing, according to findings from a recent Everything Channel Virtualization Study. VMware's channel partner program can help build a robust virtualization practice and make doing business with existing customers more lucrative.

Virtualization essentially lets one computer do the job of multiple computers, by sharing the resources of a single computer across multiple environments. Virtual servers and virtual desktops lets you host multiple operating systems and multiple applications locally and in remote locations, freeing you from physical and geographical limitations. In addition to energy savings and lower capital expenses due to more efficient use of your hardware resources, you get high availability of resources, better desktop management, increased security, and improved disaster recovery processes when you build a virtual infrastructure.

The trend towards the adoption of virtualization as a mid-market solution is clearly in full swing, according to the study. Solution Providers typically cater to mid-market and SMB customers, and nearly half of all surveyed already sell or recommend virtualization products today, while about 11 percent plan to do so in the next 12 months, according to the Everything Channel study. The reason

for this embrace of virtualization is simple. As the industry witnesses an explosive need for server, storage and other IT resources, smaller companies now also face the need to tame their unruly IT networks in a cost-effective, secure and efficient fashion.

The Right Partnerships Build Profits

Customers are getting hip to this trend. About 10 percent of Solution Providers surveyed said their customers had already begun asking for virtualization by name. Solution Providers should be ready when customers ask about how virtualization can help their business.

To help Solution Providers accelerate their virtualization practices, VMware has enhanced its VMware VIP Partner Program. Benefits include the “**advantage +**” deal registration program, training options to build their VMware virtualization expertise, and marketing tools to expand their VMware virtualization opportunities and meet the needs of customers of all sizes.

Within **advantage +** there are several innovative program elements that deliver incentives for closing VMware business:

newaccount+: rewards your business when you bring new customers to VMware.

oppreq+: rewards your business when you bring in new opportunities for existing customers and by demonstrating value selling.

influence+: rewards partners who create a new opportunity, register it with VMware and demonstrate that they have provided “value selling” on that particular deal, even though the opportunity is fulfilled by another VMware partner.

These partner initiatives from VMware make it easier than ever for Solution Providers to gain the training and certifications needed to put them on track to effectively deliver highly reliable virtualization solutions into their customers’ industry-standard computing environment. Higher margins, more business, better

Become a part of the Virtualization Revolution.

Join the VMware VIP Partner Program today at www.vmware.com/partnercentral or call 1-877-869-7762.

Partner with VMware to accelerate your virtualization expertise and opportunities.

solutions. That's where VMware wants to take you.

Virtualization not only lowers the long-term costs associated with growing and maintaining an IT environment, it also enables higher levels of protection for business-critical systems and data, optimizes technology assets, and increases the productivity of IT staff. Virtualization centralizes the management of disparate systems, consolidating multiple server, storage and network consoles into single management interfaces. Virtualization is also a Green Technology, one that helps lower the energy consumption and costs of cooling and powering servers by reducing the number of server and storage arrays needed as a business grows.

Diverse opportunities to introduce virtualization at multiple levels – be it **servers, storage, network**, or even desktop virtualization – present strong upsell opportunities for Solution Providers. To this end, a full 60 percent of Solution Providers who already sell virtualization in some form said they plan to add new virtualization capabilities in the next 12 months. Practically every form of virtualization is rapidly taking off in the Channel. For example, over 50 percent of the Solution Providers already offer – or plan to offer in the next 12 months – virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) products. Asked the same about storage virtualization, 48 percent

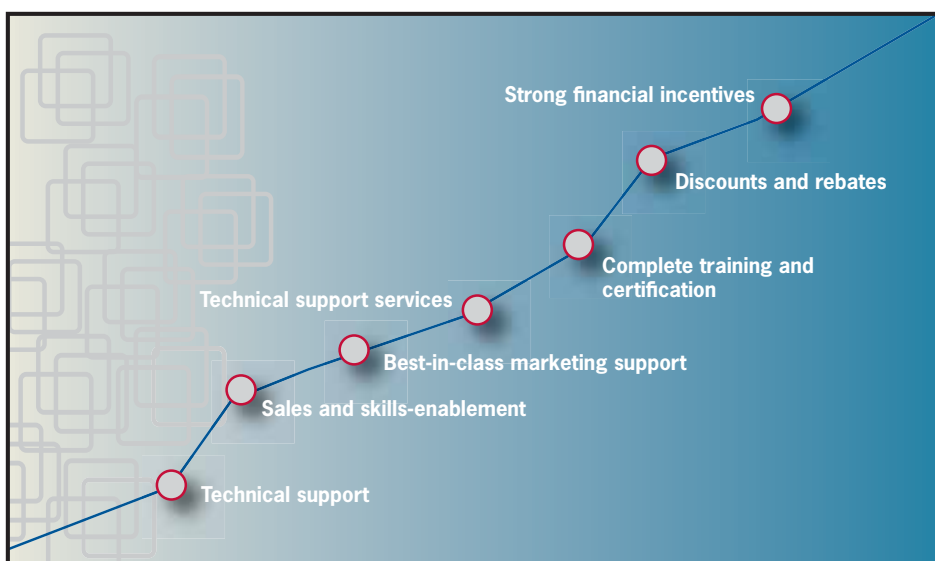
said they sold or planed to sell it in the next 12 months.

The mid-market appears to be a particular sweet spot to server virtualization. Businesses with between 100 and 499 employees provide the greatest growth potential for sales of server virtualization solutions in the next 12-18 months, according to the survey.

As capacity is optimized, the advantages of virtualization multiply. Capabilities such as instant provisioning, enable Solution Providers to create test and development staging environments without additional hardware. By tearing down the individual organizations silos separating stand-alone storage and server resources, business can leverage virtualization in a way that delivers dynamic allocation of IT resources to better respond to changing business conditions. Virtualization addresses the one concern on the mind of every IT organization today: How to optimize network availability and ensure disaster recovery.

With VMware, Solution Providers are positioned to take advantage of the huge opportunity that virtualization presents as a long-term IT solution that can grow along with their customers – one that packs significant upsell opportunity for the Channel as trusted advisors to the booming small and mid market.

VMware Partner Benefits



Partnering with VMware can set you on an upward path towards increased profits and more satisfied customers. VMware is here to support and help grow your virtualization business with world-class sales and marketing support, and the incentives and discounts you look for to help boost your business's bottom line. Contact VMware today and find out why virtualization is the number one technology practice of the CRN Fast Growth 100, the fastest growing solution providers in the channel.

Because of the first IT Staffing Fair's success, a second event has been scheduled for September 25, 2008 in Chicago, with a third tentatively slated to be held in Houston by the end of the year. For details, contact Michael Giambanco, services specialist, Ingram Micro, at (800) 456-8000, ext. 67052 or michael.giambanco@ingrammicro.com.

Ingram Micro Named Preferred Distributor For Citrix

Under the terms of the new Citrix Distribution Program, which took effect Aug. 30, 2008, Ingram Micro is the preferred North American distributor for Citrix's entire line of products sold through distribution.

In conjunction with this news, Ingram Micro is increasing its Citrix-certified technical, sales and marketing support and debuting two new, exclusive Citrix-centric partner-enablement offerings:

- ▶ The Ingram Micro-Citrix Smart Enablement Program rewards partners with redeemable credits for free Citrix-specific marketing elements and training.
- ▶ The Ingram Micro-Citrix End-user Enablement Program provides select Citrix partners with targeted and qualified end-user leads throughout the U.S.

To further enable Citrix partners, Ingram Micro recently added more Citrix products to its Buffalo, N.Y., and Santa Ana, Calif., Solution Centers. In addition, the distributor, which also is a Citrix Authorized Learning Center, announced a number of new Live Online training offerings that make it easier and more cost-effective for Citrix partners to offer remote training on Citrix products. For more information, visit the Press Room at www.ingrammicro.com.

Going Green Gets Easier With New Ingram Micro Service

Ingram Micro has launched a service to help resellers easily identify "green" electronic products. EPEAT (Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool), managed by the nonprofit Green Electronics Council, is an environmental rating system that evaluates desktop computers, notebooks and monitors based on 51 environmental performance criteria.

EPEAT-registered computers and monitors must meet 23 required environmental performance criteria, and are ranked as Bronze, Silver or Gold according to the percentage of 28 optional criteria they meet. Required criteria include Energy Star's energy efficiency specifications to conserve energy, and a system for recycling products at end of life.

Ingram Micro North America's product database now includes EPEAT ratings information — rankings of Bronze, Silver or Gold — along with other product data to enable resellers to easily identify environmentally preferable computer products.

"We are very excited that a distributor of Ingram Micro's size and scope has become the first distributor to partner with EPEAT," says Jeff Omelchuck, executive director for the Green Electronics Council and EPEAT program manager. "Its leadership will help resellers respond to purchaser demand for Green IT options, expand the Green IT market and provide end users with an easy way to determine at point of purchase which products are environmentally preferable."



Ingram Micro Offers New "Live Online" Training Certifications and Virtual Labs to Save Partners Time, Money and Travel Costs

Ingram Micro has introduced a lineup of new and affordable "Live Online" training, certifications and virtual labs offered by VPN Dynamics, a wholly owned subsidiary of Ingram Micro.

According to Ken Bast, vice president, vendor management, Ingram Micro U.S., these new, instructor-led online classrooms will minimize travel expenses and make it much easier and more cost-effective for service providers to train technicians and end users on high-demand technologies, such as networking, security and virtualization.

The new Live Online training, certifications and virtual lab courses are available now to Ingram Micro solution provider partners in the U.S. and Canada. All Live Online courses are conducted in real time, led by highly trained instructors and include 24 hours of sandbox time so participants can demo the equipment at leisure. Featured manufacturers include Citrix Systems, CheckPoint Software Technologies, Juniper Networks, Meru, SonicWALL, VMware and Websense.

For more information and a complete list of offerings, visit www.vpndynamics.com or call (866) 367-8761.

Upcoming Events

If you're a member of Ingram Micro's **GovEd Alliance**, now is the time to register for the **Fall Invitational**, scheduled for Nov. 2-4 in Colorado Springs. Event highlights include the planned announcement of a new program to connect large government integrators with smaller resellers certified by the Diversity Partner Network. Visit www.ingrammicro.com/govedalliance for details and to register.

Registration is also open for the **VentureTech Network Fall Invitational**, which takes place Oct. 15-18 in San Diego. Visit www.ingrammicro.com/venturetech-network today, and be sure to book your flights to arrive in time for the must-see kickoff celebration on the first evening of the event.

Managing Risk and Vulnerability

How to parlay vulnerability assessments and security services into long-term client relationships

By George Hulme

It wasn't long ago that IT security solutions such as antimalware software, intrusion detection and prevention systems, firewalls and web content filters practically sold themselves. It's not so simple now. Today many companies, even small businesses, already have such baseline security tools in place. And one-time, point-solution sales aren't the way to long-term profitability for your business.

"The process of selling security has evolved," says Chris Squier, technology solutions engineer at Ingram Micro. "Today, clients need help implementing best practices to secure business-critical systems and information, and to attain or maintain regulatory compliance with governmental and industry mandates."

That means huge opportunities for solution providers who are able to assess the current security levels of an organization and recommend enhancements or additions to create a long-term, sustainable risk-management program. "There's always more to do than just knocking on the firewall to see if it's secure," says Squier. "When you use vulnerability assessments as a way to help companies secure their infrastructure better, you'll become a trusted advisor, and you can count on a relationship."

Setting the Baseline

The fact is that many owners and managers at SMBs don't understand the real risks to their business technology systems. Enter the security service provider, who, with an objective perspective, is well positioned to show them. "Ninety percent of the time our first engagement with a client starts with a security assessment," says Vincent Liu, partner at security provider Stach & Liu. "It always starts with a baseline, to determine where the customer stands."

Whether you're assessing the vulnerabilities of an application, network, office, campus, nuclear power plant or military installation, the processes of getting to that baseline are the same. The underlying infrastructure is mapped, and potential system weaknesses are identified, quantified and prioritized for remediation. (Network vulnerability assessment can be automated using tools such as McAfee's Vulnerability Manager and eEye Digital Security's Retina.)

As part of the baseline assessment, unsafe conditions requiring remediation are certain to be found. "The key is to ask the right questions of the client," says Liu, who notes several recurring areas where security efforts tend to fail. "Clients often have bad processes for password protection; their systems have



configuration errors; and they have a number of vulnerabilities in their installed software," he explains. "Those are common ways that companies make it easy for people to break in."

Smart solution providers will spot long-term service and consulting opportunities in addressing these and other problems. "Risk and security assessments and vulnerability management lend themselves very well to building long-term client relationships," says Dave Dickison, senior vice president of North American Channels at McAfee. "If clients don't have a security policy, or have one that's outdated, there's an opportunity to help them create or refine that policy."

It is crucial to understand the regulatory environment of the industries in which clients do business. "Much security policy and remediation work is driven from a regulatory point of view," says Dickison. "You're not only showing clients what they should do to improve their security, but what they *must* do from a regulatory perspective."

Why Vulnerability Management?

- **PROS:** SMBs need help
Become a trusted advisor
- **CONS:** Requires specialty expertise
- **BOTTOM LINE:** Worthwhile for solution providers and MSPs

smartstories

Small Nebraska VAR streamlines marketing efforts
with Ingram Micro's Agency Express.



Like many small technology VARs, Intellicom understands the value of an effective marketing campaign and its role in driving sales. But pulling all the pieces together — especially when a campaign involves multiple manufacturer partners — isn't always easy.

In the past, Bryan Kuntz, VP of Operations, had to dig through dozens of individual web sites to keep current with manufacturers' marketing campaigns and to verify available marketing funds. Unfortunately, this process was often time-consuming and cumbersome.

That all changed when Kuntz discovered Ingram Micro's Agency Express.

"With Agency Express, I can log on to one web site and view current incentive

programs from all the major manufacturers we partner with," he said. "By having all this information in one location, Ingram Micro does the heavy lifting for me; I no longer have to waste time on multiple web sites, trying to aggregate this information myself."

Ingram Micro also taught Kuntz how to request CAP-Reseller Market Development Funds from manufacturers directly through this online portal. The process is simple, straightforward and automated.

"In addition, I'm able to use the marketing library to search for marketing collateral, such as postcards, data sheets, e-mails and even partner logos," he added.

If necessary, Agency Express also can act as Intellicom's fulfillment house — conveniently handling all its printing and direct-mail needs.

"Over the years, we've learned that there is a tremendous amount of resources out there available for companies like ours, and Agency Express can help us take advantage of them," added Kuntz. "We're counting on utilizing Agency Express heavily to help us create and carry out our 2008 marketing plans."

Intellicom Kearney, Neb.

Market Segment
SMBs throughout
central Nebraska

Challenge

A small VAR often had to visit many manufacturers' web sites in order to aggregate information on current marketing programs and availability of funds.

Solution

Ingram Micro's Agency Express provided a single web site that consolidates all this information — and more — all in one place.

Customer Benefit

By saving the hours, headaches and hassles of gathering dispersed marketing data, this solution provider freed up the time to focus more on marketing strategies — and on current business at hand.



Partner Smart

Funding Security Solutions

Even when money is tight, stressing regulatory compliance can help clients round up the funds to get and stay secure. Senior managers may not understand the importance of logs to forensic analysis, or know the difference between a buffer overflow and cross-site scripting attack, but they are aware of the importance of regulations such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) and Sarbanes-Oxley — a fact that solution providers can use to their advantage.

“Because upper management understands the risks of noncompliance better than security best practices, the budget always is available for compliance,” says John Kindervag, senior security architect at Vigilar, a security solution provider. “Security people can use compliance funds to fill security holes. When you hint to management that the company could lose its ability to accept credit-card payments if PCI DSS compliance isn’t maintained, you get the managers’ attention quickly.”

Questions to ask highlight the connection among compliance, business goals and security solutions. What, for instance, are the company’s current patch levels compared to its security policies and compliance mandates? If the organization has a mobile sales force, or if executives need the ability to conduct business from anywhere, what is the company’s policy for protecting those notebooks and smartphones? If it needs to provide proof of regulatory compliance and system activities, how are the logs for those systems being captured, stored and managed?

Security as a Service

Tight IT budgets can lead solution providers to another promising opportunity — offering vulnerability assessment, compliance management and other security applications as managed services. These can be more cost-effective for clients than traditional, on-site soft-

Building a Managed Security Practice

If you’re a typical solution provider, you’d like to capture a chunk of the profitable managed services opportunity. More often than not, however, you don’t have the time or budget to build such services from scratch. That’s the beauty of outsourcing managed services from Ingram Micro Seismic. “Ingram Micro is leading the industry in making managed services available to the channel,” says Samuel Van Ryder of Alert Logic, one of the service providers behind Ingram Micro Seismic.

Ingram Micro Seismic offers several managed security services, including Online Backup and Restore, E-mail and Web Defense, and three new services introduced earlier this year:

- ▶ **Seismic Threat Manager**, powered by Alert Logic. This service blends both intrusion protection and vulnerability management technology into a single integrated, software-as-a-service solution.
- ▶ **Seismic Log Manager**, powered by Alert Logic. Service providers can manage server and application log data so their clients can more easily comply with internal policies and government and industry regulations such as PCI DSS and HIPAA, which both mandate that log data be collected, regularly reviewed and securely archived.
- ▶ **Seismic Remote Support**, powered by LogMeln. Following a security incident, or any type of performance trouble, Remote Support makes it easy for solution providers to deliver on-demand support to remote PCs for faster, more efficient incident resolution.

For more information, visit www.ingrammicro.com/seismic or e-mail saleservices@ingrammicro.com (U.S.) or services@ingrammicro.ca (Canada).

ware solutions.

For solution providers, the efficiency of remote management and the recurring revenue from monthly subscriptions boost profitability, compared to project-based security solutions.

Alert Logic, a provider of remote security solutions, offers such services to end customers and solution providers via Ingram Micro Seismic. In this model, a network appliance is placed on-site, but the software, services, reporting and ongoing maintenance are managed remotely. Popular offerings include log management (which automatically collects, transmits, analyzes and archives log data), threat management (a mix of intrusion-protection and vulnerability management solutions) and compliance automation (protecting the confidentiality, integrity and availability of regulated data).

“Small and midsize companies appreciate receiving a turnkey service — there’s no software for them to deploy or manage,” says Samuel Van Ryder, global partner manager at Alert Logic.

“Everything we do runs from our data centers and security operations center (SOC), and in doing that we become an extension of the clients’ businesses.”

While many solution providers may not have the ability, or desire, to build their own data center or SOC to deliver managed security, such services are available for resale through Ingram Micro Seismic. “Ingram Micro Seismic makes it easy for solution providers to secure their customers’ networks and comply with policies and regulations,” says Van Ryder. (For details, see separate article on this page.) And ongoing services, such as continuous threat and compliance management, can provide the glue to keep that relationship intact — and profitable — for years to come.

About the author: George Hulme is a freelance writer based in Minneapolis.

SOLUTION PROVIDER MENTIONS

Alert Logic, www.alertlogic.com
Stach & Liu, www.stachliu.com
Vigilar, www.vigilar.com

Give Your Customers More Control

Build your network access control offering with best-of-breed NAC solutions from Ingram Micro's partners.

Business networks were designed to be accessed — that's how business gets done.

But network access means potential exposure to risk. Protecting your business customers from unauthorized network access, and from the dangers of unauthorized data exchange flowing into or out of their networks, is a vital service that can literally determine whether a business will survive a malicious network attack or a lawsuit charging lack of proper regulatory compliance.

Here's where a quality NAC solution makes the difference. NAC solutions ensure that every endpoint connected to the network is protected and compliant, and that it follows an organization's policies and authorization requirements. This includes everything from making sure antivirus software is installed and up-to-date to seeing that patch updates are in place and the firewall has been configured properly. Once a NAC solution is deployed, if it discovers that a remote user doesn't have an antivirus program installed on his or her computer, it can block that user's access to the network. NAC can also specify which applications and network resources are off limits to particular users or groups.

Balancing your NAC solution is paramount, explains Patrick Wheeler, Symantec's principal product manager. "NAC has gotten a bad rap because it can create problems at the help desk. If NAC finds a problem, users are denied access and are instructed to call the help desk," says Wheeler. "A customer will benefit from a product that runs remediation instead. The NAC product should be able to turn a firewall back on or kick off a patch update to fix the problem, which reduces dependency on the help desk."

Finding the Right Solution

NAC products from leading vendors such as Symantec, McAfee and others can help you build a balanced NAC solution that protects your customers with just the right amount of security. So how can you help your customers decide? Start by assessing their needs. What are they trying to do? Have they had problems in the past with security breaches? Is compliance an issue? How much can they afford to spend?

Bottom line: A NAC solution shouldn't become an impediment to productivity. NAC should also be adaptable to a business's needs, says Dan Wolff, McAfee's solutions marketing manager. "You need technology that adapts the solution to a customer's problem," he says. "You don't want to have to put strong restrictions across the network, for instance, when you only care about restricting those coming in from the outside."

“You need technology that adapts the solution to a customer's problem.”

– Dan Wolff, McAfee

Your Ingram Micro Security Web Resource Center

To learn more about NAC and expand your knowledge about specific vendor solutions, visit the Ingram Micro Security Web Resource Center. Learn more about Ingram Micro's NAC offerings and find valuable resources, such as white papers and case studies from manufacturer partners including McAfee, Symantec, AVG, SonicWALL, Trend Micro, WatchGuard Technologies, Cisco Systems, Enterasys, UPEK and RSA, The Security Division of EMC.

Not an Ingram Micro customer? Visit www.ingrammicro.com or contact New Accounts at (800) 456-8000, ext. 41, between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Eastern time. Or, contact Huy Nguyen at (714) 566-1000, ext. 22443 or huy.nguyen@ingrammicro.com.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit Ingram Micro's Security Web Resource Center
www.ingrammicro.com/security.

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Deduplicating the Midmarket

Deduplication + virtualization = a promising business opportunity.

By Tam Harbert

It goes without saying that storage is critical to any business-continuity plan. But in the midmarket, companies often have to make agonizing choices over what kind of storage to use. Tape is inexpensive, but slow and hard to manage. Disk-based storage is faster and easier, but as data volumes grow it can become too expensive for midmarket budgets. Fortunately, emerging technologies such as data deduplication and virtualization are making high-end, high-performance storage easier and less expensive to implement.

As more midlevel companies phase out tape and move to disk-based data protection, their needs are becoming more sophisticated. “Over the last three years, we’ve seen a shift to higher level needs from midmarket companies,” says Laura DuBois, program director for storage software at IDC. “They are starting to look at technologies and approaches that will deliver higher levels of recovery, higher levels of availability and less overhead in the management of those tasks.” (See chart on this page.)

This trend presents a rich opportunity for solution providers not only to sell these technologies, but to advise customers on how best to deploy them. “There seems to be an underserved opportunity in the midmarket for a variety of software, services and solutions to meet requirements,” says DuBois. “All the suppliers are targeting the midmarket because there’s so much growth there.”

Indeed, that growth is one of the reasons that Ingram Micro last summer formed its Infrastructure Technology Solutions (ITS) Division. “Midsize companies are the fastest-growing part of the market,” says Scott Look, vice president of the division. “The strategy and value proposition of ITS is to simplify, enable and make our partners successful in the midmarket with storage technology solutions.”

Overwhelmed with Data

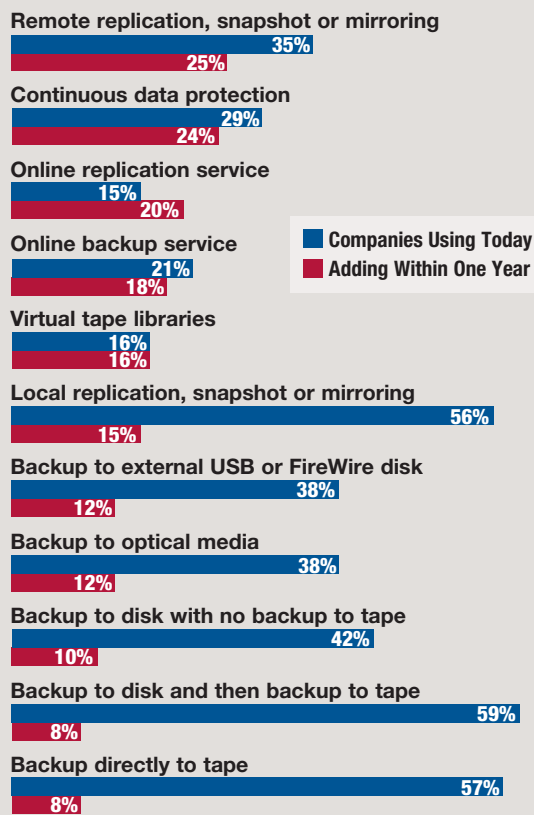
Several factors are taxing the midmarket’s infrastructure and pushing it to more sophisticated business continuity strategies. For one thing, there’s the ongoing data explosion,

Why Deduplicaton?

- ▶ **PROS:** Cures midmarket storage woes
- ▶ **CONS:** Not a casual sale
- ▶ **BOTTOM LINE:** A rich opportunity

Midmarket Data Protection Opportunities

An IDC survey of 314 midmarket companies shows that a significant percentage are moving to remote replication, continuous data protection and online replication



SOURCE: IDC, MARCH 2008

which leads to longer backup times and the expense of more media to store all that information. In addition, more companies need to retain data for longer periods to meet regulatory compliance and corporate governance initiatives. And more data takes longer to back up, time that many midmarket companies don’t have. “For years they’ve tried to throw more tape at the problem, but now they can’t possibly throw enough tape [at it] to stay ahead of the curve,” says Shane Jackson, channel product marketing at Data Domain, which makes deduplication storage systems.

Deduplication technology has begun to play a key role. Deduplication does just what it says — it gets rid of unnecessary copies of data. If 10 people save the

Tap Into the Storage Virtualization Boom

Ingram Micro delivers with a broad roster of leading server and storage virtualization partners.

Server virtualization adoption rates are skyrocketing across all industries, and for good reason. The benefits of server virtualization include lower costs, improved resource utilization, nondisruptive upgrades and increased availability.

The popularity of server virtualization is fueling another hot market — storage virtualization. Storage virtualization lessens the complexity of managing, backing up, archiving and migrating data among pooled storage devices, which ultimately improves underutilization by a large margin.

The Building Blocks of Success

Ingram Micro provides a wealth of resources and support to help you tap into the strong customer demand for server and storage virtualization. Ingram Micro maintains strategic relationships with today's leading manufacturers, so you can offer best-in-class solutions to your customers. Once your customers' products are in place, Ingram Micro offers a broad spectrum of programs and services, from education, training and business development to marketing and pre- and post-sale technical assistance.

With Ingram Micro, you have access to the hottest vendors and product offerings, such as the HP StorageWorks EVA4400, which provides enterprise-class virtualized storage capabilities without any trade-offs. Or connect with VMware and its award-winning VMware Infrastructure 3, which virtualizes servers, storage and networks to transform IT infrastructure into an automated, always-on computing utility.

Ingram Micro Works With You

Ingram Micro doesn't simply have the best solutions from the best vendors — Ingram Micro makes it easy for you to get what your customers need. Using the Ingram Micro Financial Services program, for example, you can increase your buying power and capture more sales with extended credit — in many cases without affecting your existing Ingram Micro credit line.

Your Ingram Micro Solution Center

Extend your sales capabilities through the Ingram Micro Solution Center. With input from participating manufacturers, our facilities offer hands-on experience in a professional environment for all levels of expertise. Through the Solution Center, you can take advantage of:

- Training for your employees and customers
- Proof of concepts
- Solution demonstrations in a live IT environment
- One-stop solution training from best-of-breed manufacturers and software developers

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit www.ingrammicro.com/storage.

Skyrocketing
server virtualization
market spurs
massive demand
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virtualization.



HP StorageWorks EVA4400

- **Powerful:** Enterprise-class availability and performance
- **Simple:** Up to 5 times easier to manage than traditional disk arrays
- **Affordable:** Lower TCO and aggressive pricing make this a remarkably affordable array for midsized businesses.



VMware Infrastructure 3

With VMware Infrastructure 3, more than 120,000 companies of all sizes have been able to slash the costs of their IT infrastructure while streamlining the management of IT environments and delivering improved service levels to the business.

OUR PARTNERS:



same document to central storage, for example, deduplication makes sure that only one copy of the blocks that represent those files is stored and creates a pointer for each copy. This helps in several ways:

► **Faster backups.** Deduplication and WAN compression reduces backup times because it transmits only changes, rather than transmitting the entire store of data.

► **Reduced storage.** Because it backs up only one copy, deduplication reduces the amount of storage required. “We can keep three to six months of customer data in our systems, whereas a system without deduplication we would typically keep about two weeks,” says Jackson.

► **Lower telecom costs.** Deduplication reduces bandwidth requirements, and consequently telecommunications costs, notes Rick Walsworth, director of cross-platform software marketing at EMC, which is also in the disaster recovery and deduplication market.

Midmarket Assistance from Ingram Micro

Launched last summer, Ingram Micro’s Infrastructure Technology Solutions (ITS) Division focuses on blade servers, midrange servers and storage, with a goal of enabling Ingram Micro’s partners to more effectively sell storage, server and infrastructure solutions to the midmarket.

ITS has formed teams around three main vendors — IBM, Hewlett-Packard and EMC — and also has field consultants that specialize in specific technology areas. These certified professionals can help partners develop effective strategies for serving the midmarket, notes Scott Look, vice president of the ITS Division.

ITS is building practices in three specific areas: virtualization, business continuity and security. The division has already launched the virtualiza-

tion practice and expects to launch the business-continuity specialty in the third quarter of this year. The security practice will start in the first half of next year, says Look.

In addition, ITS recently brought on Data Domain, a provider of deduplication storage systems for enterprise disk backup and network-based disaster recovery. “Data Domain is renowned as one of the IT industry’s fastest-growing vendors,” says Look, “and its deduplication storage systems are proven to help channel partners optimize three of today’s hottest IT applications — disk backup, archiving and network-based disaster recovery.”

For more information, Ingram Micro’s customers can call (866) 604-6487, or contact their sales representative.

The Virtualization Effect

All of these benefits are magnified, according to experts, when deduplication is used in combination with server virtualization.

As more midsize customers deploy virtualization, they need a workable strategy for backing up the virtual servers. And when the whole point of virtualization is to reduce costs,



**Because a buck
is a terrible thing
to waste.**

it doesn't make sense to buy more storage to back up the virtual servers, notes Jackson. Because virtual servers are highly redundant, often using the same operating system image, the same applications and much of the same data, deduplication is ideal for backing them up, he says. With Data Domain's appliance, "We see very high deduplication ratios in virtualized environments," says Jackson — as high as 60:1 versus the 20:1 ratio typical in normal backup environments.

The use of deduplication in virtualized environments is a booming business for solution providers, says Jim Franklin, director of EMC's channel marketing group. "That's where we've seen partners really take off."

Steve Hartenstein, area vice president in New York for MTM Technologies, is finding a good business by combining virtualization and deduplication. Five years ago, midsize clients would have a primary data center with a secondary data center for disaster recovery and

business continuity. Now, with virtualization, they are balancing processing loads between the two data centers, rather than just using the second one for backup. "That makes their approach to backup and management of storage dramatically different," says Hartenstein. Software solutions like deduplication help them get the best return from their storage investments.

Some solution providers are finding that they can sell deduplication as a service rather than a product. XiloCore, a business-continuity service network formed by two solution providers — AllConnected and Connecting Point Technology Center — offers managed storage, and business-continuity services to small and midsize companies, says Mike Semel, vice president of business continuity and compliance services at Connecting Point. XiloCore uses deduplication software as a key part of its service. "It's one of the things that's allowed us to reduce the cost of storage," Semel notes.

In fact, the clear ROI of deduplication is one of the reasons it's so compelling. Rather than talking speeds and feeds, solution providers can stress actual customer savings. That entails using software tools from deduplication vendors and third parties to analyze the client's data and storage needs.

"We use tools to help set reasonable expectations for customers based on their actual usage patterns," says Hartenstein. "When you deliver on the reasonable expectations and generate the savings you identified, then hopefully you can work with the client to invest some of those savings in more technology."

About the author: *Tam Harbert is a freelance journalist with 20 years of experience covering technology, business and government.*

SOLUTION PROVIDER MENTIONS

MTM Technologies, www.mtm.com
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SELLING THROUGH THE DOWNTU

*Confident
solution
providers share
advice for
energizing your
sales today!*

By Tom Farre

ARE WE OR AREN'T WE IN A RECESSION? THOUGH economists and soothsayers disagree, the answer may be less important than the sales strategy you adopt to deal with customers' perceptions and concerns.

That's because an economic downturn presents difficulties as well as opportunities to technology solution providers. The downside relates to customer attitudes: Buyers can become cautious when their sales are slowing or when the news is bad. If planned projects aren't considered business-critical, they could be canceled or put on hold.

"In tough times, customers think about shoring up their businesses," says Jim Manley, area vice president, VAR Division, Ingram Micro North America. "They do the basic litmus test: Is this a 'must have,' a 'like to have' or a luxury item? Obviously they will favor must-have projects that deliver better business performance. If a solution isn't increasing their sales capability, if it's not creating efficiencies or lowering costs, the PO's not getting signed."

Cautious customers are balanced by the more daring. "Many business executives see a downturn as an opportunity," says Ken Thoreson, CEO of Acumen Management Group, a sales management consultancy. "They understand that if their competitors start to shrink or cut back, they can gain an edge by investing aggressively in technology."

Successful solution providers are implementing sales strategies that are effective in both situations, as we will see from the four profiles that follow.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

How solution providers view the downturn:

- ▶ Cautious customers think "safety first."
- ▶ Leasing can lower funding barriers.
- ▶ Managed services lessen business risk.
- ▶ Executive management can create budget.
- ▶ Distribution services will bolster the sales effort.

RN



**SELL
SAFETY
FIRST**

▼
**Jessica
Tanenhaus,**
Mavenspire:
Cautious
customers
avoid the
bleeding
edge.

When caution and cuts are the watchwords, they fall back on trusted relationships to educate customers on the best options. They make the buying process as painless as possible. They push ROI to business executives hoping to gain ground during the downturn. They beef up sales support. They run lean by leveraging distributor services. Above all, they don't panic. Instead, they home in on the business value of their solutions and sell that value relentlessly — a sound strategy whether times are good or bad.

Mavenspire: Leveraging Trusted Relationships

At Mavenspire, a 10-person solution provider in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C., area, specialties include business continuity, open-source unified communications and high-level managed services, all linked by a focus on “transformational business technology.” Company executives are confident in their outlook for the coming months, says Jessica Tanenhaus, senior associate. “We’ve had our nervous moments, but we’re confident because our business model adjusts well to changing conditions.”

To what conditions is Mavenspire adjusting? A customer

base that has turned very, very cautious. “No one wants to make any changes, and budgets are getting cut,” says Tanenhaus. “People who six to eight months ago were excited about this or that solution are now saying, ‘Oh, we’ve put that off for six months.’”

This has led Mavenspire to focus not on new customers and revenue growth, but on the bottom line — increasing the profitability of every sale and every customer. Although the company is working to add three to four new customers each month, its main emphasis is on selling more to the existing base by leveraging trusted relationships.

Unified communications provides a good example of the process: Once a customer has part of the solution in place, Tanenhaus can begin discussing the incremental benefits of adding document management, networked storage or managed services. Success hinges on a trusted relationship and the knowledge that comes with it. “We work closely with our customers to understand their business goals,” says Tanenhaus. “If we know that they need to improve the efficiency of their overseas operations, for example, we can show them how unified communications can accomplish that.”

Leveraging Distribution During a Downturn

Savvy solution providers agree: The best strategy for maintaining growth during a challenging economic environment is to strengthen your competencies in consultative selling, solution delivery and customer service. Consider outsourcing or partnering for everything else.

“Whether the economy is good or bad, successful solution providers work to maximize their sales and billable resources while reducing expenses and increasing profits,” says Jim Manley, area vice president, VAR Division, Ingram Micro North America. “Ingram Micro offers a number of resources to help our partners do just that.”



**JIM MANLEY,
INGRAM MICRO:**

Distribution services help solution providers maximize profits and minimize expenses

- ▶ **Partner Communities:** Ingram Micro's partner communities, such as VentureTech Network (VTN), SMB Alliance, GovEd Alliance and System ArchiTECHS, include seminars, vendor workshops and special promotions, as well as the chance to network, partner, brainstorm and share best practices in a noncompetitive environment.
- ▶ **Outsourced Services:** The Ingram Micro Seismic Virtual Services Warehouse provides a wealth of best-in-class managed services, including hosted remote monitoring and management, network operations center, online backup/restore, hosted Microsoft Exchange and help desk services. Ingram Micro also offers an ISO 9002-certified configuration center that frees staff for more profitable work.
- ▶ **Ingram Micro Services Network:** The IMSN is a world-class IT

service delivery organization that provides professional and consultative services in more than 800 North American markets. This partnered organization can supplement your capabilities and expand your reach.

- ▶ **Marketing Assistance:** Ingram Micro's Agency Express is an online marketing portal to assist solution providers in developing fast, affordable marketing campaigns. Ingram Micro's Marketing Services Agency offers full-service marketing communications for solution-provider advertising, marketing and public relations.

All of the solution providers profiled in this article leverage these and other Ingram Micro resources. “Ingram Micro's engineering expertise helps us drive costs out of our business model,” says Dan Shundoff of Intellicom, a member of VTN and IMSN. He also appreciates the clout Ingram Micro delivers. “We're doing well as a \$4 million business in a town of 30,000 people, but on our own we don't make the radar of Cisco, Microsoft and HP. Ingram Micro helps us solidify our vendor relationships.”

NetGain, a managed services provider, actively leverages Ingram Micro's Seismic portfolio, as does VTN and IMSN member Mavenspire. And customers are impressed by its association with a Fortune100 company. “We're comfortable putting Ingram Micro's name in front of customers,” says Jessica Tanenhaus of Mavenspire. “It's reassuring at a time when they're nervous because of the economy.”

SymQuest uses market development funds from Ingram Micro for assistance with business technology summits that help fill the sales pipeline. “With 14 seminars going in one day, we need help with logistics, speakers, underwriting and promotion,” says Mark Lorenzini of SymQuest. “Ingram Micro is a great resource for our organization.”

Even the highly cautious are receptive if solutions promise tangible benefits. Tanenhaus finds business continuity a tough sell at the moment — “they view it like buying insurance, an extra expense,” she says — but IT management solutions are appealing because of the productivity gains and cost savings.

“You really need to come up with metrics, such as the implementation time frame, the total cost of products, services and training, and the expected ROI,” says Tanenhaus. “Education reduces fear, so the more information you can provide, the more in control customers feel.” At times such honesty can kill a sale, but the benefits to the relationship compensate for lost revenue.

Selling more to existing customers requires a well-prepared sales staff, and that means additional sales support. Mavenspire’s budget for marketing and advertising has been maintained, but the message has been tweaked. Advertising and sales collateral now stress safety, cost cutting and case studies of successful implementations, not leading-edge technology and change that might scare the skittish.

To ensure that salespeople understand the breadth and depth of the company’s solutions, management has increased sales training. Team selling is the order of the day: No salesperson goes out unless paired with a business consultant or engineer. And rather than pursuing frenetic activity, salespeople are encouraged to take all the time they need with wary clients.

“In a downturn, more handholding is required,” says Tanenhaus. “Things aren’t going to move as quickly as when the economy is booming and everyone has money to spend.”

NetGain: Selling the Safety of Managed Services

You’d never know the economy was down by talking to Michael Minnich, president and CEO of NetGain Information Systems, a 2008 *CRN* Fast Growth 100 honoree. A 20-person network integrator and managed services provider in central Ohio, NetGain’s sales pipeline is full. Minnich expects revenues to increase 35 percent this fiscal year and well into 2009.

He accounts for this in part by the “five nines” of quality NetGain offers in converged network solutions — quality that clients don’t always receive in rural Ohio. More important, however, is a business strategy that emphasizes managed services, which Minnich considers the perfect solution in an economic slump. “Nervous clients buy safety,” he says. “They’re not looking for the lowest price, but for solutions like managed services that lower risk and make expenditures predictable.”

As an example of this mindset, Minnich cites a recent sales call to a small business that was paying for four hours of



WHAT RECESSION?

▼
Michael Minnich, NetGain: Managed services fill the sales pipeline.

technical support a month. The owner had complained about the quality of service, understandable in light of the time-based, reactive service contract. Believing her to be price-sensitive, Minnich expected sales resistance that never came. “When I laid out our complete managed services portfolio, she was more than willing to spend six times more per month in order to lower her business risk,” he says. “That has to be the lead story when times are tough.”

Minnich hopes to repeat this success by transitioning all his clients to managed services. The sales message is simple: “Stop trading dollars for hours, and let’s trade dollars for results. Instead of paying us for downtime, pay us for uptime. Instead of praising fast response to a crisis, evangelize our ability to avoid crises altogether. If your business is more successful, our business will be more successful.” Clients have been receptive. Managed services now account for nearly 60 percent of NetGain’s revenue, and they often lead to networking projects that make up the other 40 percent.

Minnich likes this ratio because of the business value clients receive from managed services, and the high gross margins from recurring, flat-rate contracts. In fact, his sales compensation model encourages sales of high-profit services and projects. “In a recession, instead of rewarding salespeople for the number of proposals, new accounts or opportunities in the pipeline, they should be compensated based upon gross margin — especially recurring margin,” he says. “This encourages sales of solutions that benefit both the clients and the solution provider.”

SymQuest: Selling Value to the Top
When the economy tightens, technology budgets can shrink. That’s why salespeople at SymQuest Group, a \$32-million solution provider in northern New England and upstate New York, make it a habit to target C-level executives, vice presidents and business owners, rather than IT staff.

“Most people in an organization work within a budget,” says Mark Lorenzini, director of sales at SymQuest. “When you work with top executives and you build a good business case, they’ll create budget to fund the project.” This strategy is serving SymQuest well. Sales of the company’s broad portfolio of IT solutions, copiers and managed services are brisk, with very few customer cutbacks.

“Our conversations with customers aren’t framed in terms of tough times at all,” says Lorenzini. “People are watching what’s going on, but they continue to invest in technology as long as they can connect the dots to a business return.” Returns from the company’s print management services are especially strong. By extending its focus beyond data networks, servers and PCs to scanning, printing and copying,

SymQuest offers a holistic approach that provides differentiation and added value.

Lorenzini cites the example of a typical 50-person business, which might have two or three copiers, several laser printers and myriad inkjets. The copiers are probably cost-effective, the lasers and inkjets probably aren't, but because of their perceived low cost, the company doesn't manage them and has no idea of overall page costs.

To uncover inefficiencies, SymQuest performs a free audit that discovers all print devices on the network and analyzes their usage and cost per page. This results in a report that usually reveals wild inefficiencies — invaluable information for business owners or CFOs to have. Then the sales team presents the benefits that could be gained through SymQuest's Alliance Print Management services, or by improving the utilization and placement of existing devices.

Such high-level selling requires a highly experienced sales staff, which Lorenzini believes takes on added significance in a down economy. "Recruiting and maintaining a high-caliber sales team is the secret sauce," he says. In evaluating a salesperson's potential, Lorenzini looks for an ability to determine clients' needs and align closely with them — a challenge for some salespeople who feel pressured to sell a limited solution set.

He advises getting top executives talking about what they want to accomplish, and then honestly assessing whether there's a fit. Even if there isn't, Lorenzini finds an upside: "Bad news early is good news," he quips. "I'd rather be turned down right away than spend three months working with lower-level people only to discover there's no match."

Intellicom: Moving Forward by Going Back to Basics

Rural America may not be much affected by the national credit crunch and the real-estate collapse, but that doesn't prevent business owners from turning cautious. As a result, Intellicom Computer Consulting, a \$4-million services-oriented solution provider in central Nebraska, has experienced its first slowdown in more than two years, after six years of robust growth.

"If Q1 and Q2 are indicators for the rest of the year, the sky is not falling and it's not a crisis," says Dan Shundoff, CEO of Intellicom, whose lead vendors are Cisco, Microsoft and HP. "We're still experiencing quite a bit of activity in our sales pipeline and in our opportunities, but the pace of that activity isn't as feverish as it was in the past 24 months." Shundoff attributes this to cautious customers deferring large-scale

deployments, such as new telephone systems and server consolidation. He's confident the pattern will reverse later this year and into 2009 as the national economy improves.

Still, two bad quarters defines a recession. Did the slowdown cause Intellicom to shake up its sales function? No, because Shundoff believes in the company's unique sales strategy, where only one or two salespeople pursue new accounts. Technical and customer-service staff do most of the selling, a consultative model based on carefully listening to customers, jointly scoping out their business challenges, and delivering needed solutions and services.

"Our staff proposes solutions that either save customers money or create additional revenue and efficiencies," he says. "We would be doing them a disservice if we changed that during a downturn."

Intellicom did alter its sales tactics slightly to make it easier for customers to buy. Say a large-scale deployment of a phone

system or server infrastructure is on the table. "Even customers convinced of the benefits can be strapped for cash, so we now present leasing options to lower the funding barrier," says John Elliott, vice president of business development at Intellicom. For the most hesitant, Intellicom will propose workarounds that deliver partial benefits while leaving the door open for the full solution later.

The slowdown has caused Intellicom to increase the intensity of its sales activity, prioritizing day-to-day contact with customers to understand their concerns and solidify the relationships. "It's important to retain focus and keep the customers' best interests at heart, without letting desperation leak into your conversations," Elliott notes. "They can always sense that."

Shundoff elaborates on this "back to basics" theme: "If your customer relationships aren't grounded in some core service that insulates you from the competition, you start to lose focus," he says. "My advice for a downturn is, resist the urge to chase something new. Instead, focus on your core service delivery model, control your spending to the best of your ability and don't panic."

About the author: *Tom Farre is the editor of Ingram Micro Channel Advisor.*

SOLUTION PROVIDER MENTIONS

Intellicom, www.intellicominc.com

Mavenspire, www.mavenspire.com

NetGain, www.netgainis.com

SymQuest, www.symquest.com

Sales Tips for Beating the Slump

- ▶ **1. Sell outside of IT.** Business managers have money to spend — if you can show strong ROI.
- ▶ **2. Analyze your base.** Study existing customers to uncover incremental opportunities.
- ▶ **3. Partner strong.** Leveraging partnerships will extend your reach.
- ▶ **4. Upgrade sales training.** The best trained always rise to the top.

Source: Acumen Management Group, www.acumenmanagement.com

smartstories

With Ingram Micro's support, a small Apple solution provider succeeds in a city full of retail giants.



The Windy City can be an especially cold place for an Apple solution provider that dares to go it alone. After all, like most major metro cities, Chicago is home to big-box retailers that cater to price-conscious IT shoppers; smaller businesses are forced to compete with big-box budgets when it comes to slick TV ads and glossy newspaper inserts.

Yet for this local Apple solution provider, the Windy City is a win-win, thanks to the support and teamwork of its multibillion-dollar distribution partner, Ingram Micro.

"We've been working with Ingram Micro from the beginning," says Dustin Templeton, co-founder of the firm. "We've leveraged Ingram Micro's marketing programs and they have been great about finding vendors to fund events and

other sales initiatives. They are really helping us grow."

Today, MacSpecialist has 35 employees, more than double its 2006 number. In addition to its Apple service, training and support, MacSpecialist sells an array of complementary products, many of which were recommended by Ingram Micro.

"The sales and marketing teams at Ingram Micro are always showcasing new technologies and they're great about inviting us to events. They hold a lot of useful training and education seminars that help us further differentiate ourselves from competitors and the big-box retailers."

To demonstrate his point, Templeton reflects on a recent Ingram Micro event that one of his managers attended. "It was a two-day

education seminar on digital signage that was designed to help us create a practice that addresses this growing market," he says. "The event provided us with valuable information that we could turn around and quickly use to boost our business."

Ingram Micro was also the first distributor to extend credit to MacSpecialist when Templeton and two partners acquired it in 2006. Despite its 20-year history, most distributors viewed the business as a startup and required extensive paperwork in order to qualify for credit lines, Templeton says. "We basically started from scratch. Ingram Micro told us, 'We believe in you guys,' and then proved it by making the credit process simple ... Two years later, we've really blown our business plan out of the water."

MACSPECIALIST

MacSpecialist Chicago

Market Segment
B2B, retail, music
and corporate

Challenge
Compete with local
big-box Apple retailers
while building market
awareness.

Solution
Team with Ingram Micro
to create a competitive
market advantage and
stay abreast of trends
and new technologies.

Customer Benefit
In less than two years,
the company has grown
from 16 to 35 employees,
opened a second store
and realized a YOY sales
increase of 40 percent.
Sales are expected to
double in 2008.

**INGRAM
MICRO**
Partner Smart



UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS: **A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY**

Strong demand, effective technology and profitable solutions make a compelling case for UC. By Tom Farre

IT ISN'T OFTEN THAT A PERFECT STORM OF OPPORTUNITY hits the channel, but when it does, smart solution providers catch the wave. Unified communications (UC) represents such an opportunity today.

Defined broadly as presence-enabled communications that integrates telephony, desktop and business applications to deliver a unified user experience, UC offers a willing market, effective technology and a profitable business case.

▶ Customers large and small are buying into UC's benefits, which range from lower costs to more-efficient communications and streamlined business processes.

▶ Manufacturers such as Cisco Systems, Microsoft, Nortel Networks, 3Com and many niche players are providing manageable and interoperable solutions that deliver benefits to every class of customer.

▶ The comprehensive nature of UC solutions helps solution providers establish long-term client relationships.

▶ All this is happening in a market that still has plenty of room for profitable growth.

"Many of our solution providers have been doing large and midsize unified communications installations for some time, and now a new group is starting to do smaller installations as

well,” says Hector Carveth, technology solutions engineer at Ingram Micro. “Overall, unified communications is one of the most promising opportunities in IT today.”

Greg Starr, COO at I.T. Works, a Texas-based provider of Cisco and 3Com UC solutions, agrees. “The market for unified communications is still emerging — we run into clients every week running old phone systems and old networks that need to move up to today’s technology,” says Starr. “This gives us a reason not just to sell them some servers, switches and routers, but to sell them a complete solution, including a phone system, video conferencing, training and more. It’s profitable for us because of the stickiness — unified communications ties us into the client’s long-range plans.”

There’s also the opportunity to provide value-added services, such as integration of existing networking and telecom gear with UC technology. “The reality is, 90 percent of enterprises have Cisco in their backbone, and 90 percent have Microsoft on the desktop, and some are more committed to one vendor’s vision than the other,” says Chan Bulgin, solution director of application development at DynTek, a national systems integrator. “We enhance the value of these technologies by making them work really well together.”

Similarly, there’s opportunity in integrating Nortel telecom gear with software-based UC, thanks to Nortel’s UC alliance with Microsoft. “Nortel’s enterprise customers are seeing the benefits of bringing traditional voice to the desktop to enhance their communications,” says Jerry Olson, president of New Vision Communications, an Omaha, Neb.-based solution provider specializing in Microsoft and Nortel’s UC technology. “We have been using unified communications in our own business for about a year now with great success, and have been effective in demonstrating it to prospects and clients.”

What Customers Like

UC piques the interest of many customers because of the cost savings — due to lower telecom expenses, easier management and perhaps reduced travel costs from online collaboration. But as customers learn more about UC’s capabilities, they warm to the business benefits. “Based on the economy, I would guess that 60 percent of customers dial into UC for the cost savings,” says Bulgin. “The other 40 percent may start out discussing costs, but when they realize how UC allows them to re-engineer their businesses, this wins them over.”

Indeed, a recent survey suggests that UC is being woven into the planning fabric of traditional IT organizations. According to a May 2008 survey of 800 members of two large Nortel user groups, 58 percent of respondents said they were more interested in deploying UC than they were 12 months ago. The most-anticipated benefits — all chosen by more than half the respondents — included the following:

- ▶ Improved user productivity through accelerated communications
- ▶ Enhanced workflow productivity
- ▶ Enhanced customer service
- ▶ Improved collaboration

Real-World Benefits

Such benefits resonate with the staff at DynTek, which uses UC in-house via a Cisco-Microsoft integration. “UC allows people to communicate effectively without wasting a lot of time,” says Brian Gancherov, solutions director for Microsoft applications infrastructure solutions at DynTek. “If you can view someone’s presence, or IM them to find out when they’re available, there’s no phone or e-mail tag. And unified messaging allows you to receive and respond to communications in any format based on your availability at the time.”

Productivity gains can also arise from videoconferencing, a UC feature deployed in DynTek’s network through Microsoft Office Live Meeting. “Online meetings with customers and our sales team have saved me numerous days of travel,” says Gancherov. “My laptop has a webcam built into it, so I can be up and running wherever there’s an internet connection.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ▶ Multiple vendors offer quality solutions.
- ▶ Lower costs pique prospects’ interest.
- ▶ Business benefits can seal the deal.
- ▶ Integration services are key to success.

Virgin Megastores USA Goes UC

Better internal collaboration was the driver behind DynTek’s recent UC engagement with Virgin Megastores USA, an 11-store retailer of entertainment products and clothing. To improve knowledge sharing,

collaboration and support between the home office in Los Angeles and the satellite stores, the staff needed to more easily switch from voice to IM to audio and videoconferencing, without having to worry about the cost of conference calls. They also wanted a solution with the potential to integrate voice mail, e-mail, conference calling and IM in a seamless and natural way.

The retailer had previously deployed a VoIP system based on Cisco Unified CallManager and Cisco Unity voice mail. To enhance the UC functionality with presence and conferencing, company executives considered adding tools such as Cisco IP Communicator and Cisco Unified MeetingPlace; they also considered a software-based approach from Microsoft. They chose the Microsoft solution for several reasons.

Virgin Megastores USA had been running an older version of Cisco CallManager, which required an upgrade to support presence and other UC features. By integrating the existing Cisco system with Microsoft’s UC software, DynTek was able to extend the life and value of the phone system. And the client liked the flexibility and user experience of Microsoft’s UC approach through its close integration with everyday applications, such as Microsoft’s Office Outlook 2007 and Microsoft Active Directory.

The initial solution consisted of Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 and the Office Communicator client, along with LG-Nortel IP phones, model 8540. Each store was equipped with a Microsoft RoundTable conferencing and collaboration device, which presents a panoramic view of participants in a conference room while highlighting the speaker. To create a seamless solution, DynTek's engineers performed custom integration work on the gateway between Cisco's and Microsoft's technology.

The initial returns from the new system have been highly positive. The ease of setting up audioconferences and the inexpensive videoconferencing have improved communication and collaboration among store employees. And the retailer expects to save \$50,000 annually that it was spending on outsourced videoconferencing. In fact, the UC solution has worked so well that deployment is under way on a unified messaging environment.

For their part, DynTek executives were pleased that they could assist by integrating Microsoft's software with Cisco's IP communications technology—an engagement that in certain circumstances could have led to a single-vendor solution. “The demand for UC solutions is strong on both the Cisco and Microsoft sides,” says Bulgin. “We look to leverage the infrastructure that's in place and bring in best-of-breed technology from all of our key partners.”

Microsoft RoundTable

Many Ways to Lower Costs

At I.T. Works, the UC conversation most often turns to cost savings — especially at SMBs with multiple locations, where telecom costs can get out of hand.

Case in point: I.T. Works recently deployed UC at a 70-employee federal credit union in East Texas. Previously, each of the firm's seven branches had its own phone system — mostly analog technology and some ShoreTel VoIP — that was a hotbed of costly inefficiencies. Telecom management was beyond the capabilities of the IT staff, leading to expensive service contracts. Even minor moves, adds or changes required a service call to the branch. Because the multiple systems were not integrated, a simple change to the voice-mail message or background music meant a visit to each location. And lack of central call routing required each location to purchase extra phone lines for direct-dial extensions.

The seven locations were linked by a Frame Relay WAN, but the local telco discontinued support and mandated a switch to MultiProtocol Label Switching (MPLS) technology. This entailed installing new networking gear at each branch, a perfect opportunity for I.T. Works to propose a converged solution from Cisco. Cisco routers, Power over Ethernet (PoE) switches and IP phones would be installed at each location, backed at company headquarters by Cisco Unified Communi-

cations Manager Business Edition, with integrated voice mail running on a Cisco server appliance.

The client did consider a ShoreTel solution for VoIP, but Cisco easily won out, says Greg Starr of I.T. Works. Although the initial cost of the two approaches was comparable, the ShoreTel solution was more complex, as new networking equipment would be required in addition to the VoIP. The client liked the simplicity of the Cisco network with its centralized management and the ease of telecom moves, adds and changes.

“To add a phone at the home office or a branch, all they have to do is plug it into a PoE port and buy a license,” says Starr. “It's also easier to set up a new location. Instead of buying a new phone system as they did before, with Cisco they just buy the router and switch they would need anyway and plug the phones in. That saves a ton of money.”

The Cisco solution also led to reduced toll charges — there's no charge for calls between locations, and Cisco's least-cost-routing feature places toll calls from the branch nearest the recipient. In addition, Cisco's technology reduces the number of phone lines required, as direct-dial calls can be routed to the branches from headquarters.

Perhaps the most important benefit is the sense of control the client receives from Cisco's consolidated solution. “No company wants to be at the mercy of a service provider in managing the phone system,” says Starr. “After we train them, they appreciate having control of their own destiny.”



UC Resources at Ingram Micro

If UC sounds like a business you'd like to be in, consider tapping into Ingram Micro's extensive resources. Ingram Micro's certified support engineers can help you build and support multivendor solutions. In-depth sales and technical training is available. In addition, UC technology is deployed for staff training and customer demos at Ingram Micro's Solution Centers in Buffalo, N.Y. and Santa Ana, Calif. Ingram Micro's customers can find additional information and resources at www.ingram-micro.com/unifiedcommunications, or contact technical support by calling the Networking Help Desk at (800) 445-5066, ext. 76295.

About the author: Tom Farre is the editor of Ingram Micro Channel Advisor.

SOLUTION PROVIDER MENTIONS

DynTek, www.dyntek.com

I.T. Works, www.itworksite.com

New Vision Communications,
www.newvisioncommunications.com



The company may not have designed a better mousetrap, but iDeal Technology has certainly reinvented the corporate coffee machine.

The venture began when Bijan Chavoshan, Director of Digital Signage at the Yorba Linda, Calif.-based solution provider, began chatting with business neighbor Vickie Sharples, who heads Design Build Marketing, a newspaper and web-content publisher for building professionals. Sharples wanted to reach more customers and had concocted a mix of digital photo frames and coffee machines that would deliver coffee and ads to about 1,500 roofing distributors around the United States.

"I'd actually purchased some hardware equipment and it wasn't coming together as well as I had hoped," she recalls. But after talking with iDeal, Sharples soon had an all-in-one, seamless kiosk that worked.

"Making it look simple is part of iDeal's approach to business," says Chavoshan. Behind the scenes, though, the solution provider did a lot of initial research to determine the most appropriate, cost-effective and rugged devices for the coffee-pot/digital signage kiosk of Sharples' dreams.

"We already knew who the experts were: Tom Jones and his technical support team at Ingram Micro," Chavoshan says. Ingram Micro also helps iDeal's clients, often small to midsize companies like Design Build Marketing, with payment options.

"The financing and leasing are yet another reason to do business with Ingram Micro and work closely with its Digital Signage Division," Chavoshan says.

Working together, iDeal and Ingram Micro's digital signage experts designed and tested the ruggedized kiosks, and Sharples created the content and sold space to advertisers.

RoofersCoffeeShop.com — the name Sharples uses for the kiosks and online community — debuted in March 2008 and already has 50 kiosks in Southern California. According to Sharples, within 12 months, at least 1,200 should be in place around the nation.

"I've been to about six or seven locations where they're installed, and it really is a talking piece, because who doesn't love coffee?" says Chavoshan. "Vickie's a visionary, and we are working smart to help her vision by leveraging partners like Ingram Micro to find the technologies best suited to making her business goals into business facts."



iDeal Technology

Market Segment

Digital signage solutions for distributors, retailers and SMBs

Challenge or Opportunity

Trade web-operator and publisher wanted to expand ad base

Solution

Worked with Ingram Micro's Digital Signage Division to create, design and build kiosks that feature coffee pots and digital images on LCD screens

Results/Benefit

Ingram Micro's Digital Signage Division's product, technology and marketing knowledge made it easier and faster for iDeal to implement the client's business dream, resulting in a satisfied customer and end users

GOVERNMENT RUSHES TOWARD **SERVER** CONSOLIDATION

*A bonanza awaits **virtualization experts**
who can mine the public sector.*

By Tam Harbert

THE GOVERNMENT IT MARKET ISN'T GROWING as fast as it used to. IT-contracted spending by the federal government is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of only 4.1 percent annually over the next five years, from \$71.9 billion in 2008 to \$87.8 billion in 2013, according to market research firm INPUT.

But for solution providers who specialize in consolidation through server virtualization, the market is hot and getting hotter all the time.

Government agencies have experienced "server sprawl" at least as much as large corporations have. They are often saddled with legacy equipment and applications. And they are tasked with providing more and better services to constituents while their budgets remain flat.

"We are perfect for that market," says Aileen Black, vice president of VMware's Federal Sales Division. To prove it, she points out that Federal is the fastest growing division at VMware, which is itself experiencing heady growth. And, notes Black, 93 percent of VMware's federal sales are through the channel.

At the federal, state and municipal levels, government is consolidating IT operations to provide better service at lower costs. "Virtualization is a way to do more with less," says Jason Bystrak, a senior manager in Ingram Micro's channel marketing group. "Rather than buying more servers or more data center space, [agencies] can virtualize servers and storage so they can do more without changing their overall IT plan."

As a result, solution providers who have solid virtualization

expertise and understand the subtleties of the government market will find ample opportunities for consulting, solution sales and ongoing services. One of these is Sean Burke, president of Govplace, a solution provider who specializes in public-sector data centers. Burke has seen his business increase exponentially over the last several years. "And this next year it is just going to explode," he predicts. "There are a lot of RFPs out there right now, and all the implementations will be happening over the next couple of years."

A Virtual Bonanza?

There is a lot of running room in this market. Literally. Federal agencies are riddled with many far-flung data centers

that have sprung up over the last decade as servers dropped in price and IT staff took advantage. In fact, no one seems to know exactly how many data centers the government has. "There's been a proliferation of server closets for at least the last 10 years" in the federal government, says Andrew Fanara, team leader for the Energy Star products group

in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Even at his environmentally conscious agency, he notes, "We have more equipment in more dispersed locations than we previously thought."

Part of the problem is that agencies are forced to react to whatever needs are in the political spotlight at any given moment, notes John Slye, principal analyst at INPUT, a government market research firm. The U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security, for example, was thrown together in a matter of

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Government agencies embrace virtualization to:

- ▶ Conserve energy
- ▶ Consolidate server sprawl
- ▶ Obey policy mandates
- ▶ Stretch existing budgets



says Burke of Govplace. The demand on resources is exceeding the supply at government data centers, so agencies try to support more applications and services within existing budgets.

The Rush to Consolidation

Consolidation efforts are already widespread at the federal level:

- ▶ The U.S. Army is looking to consolidate 80 data centers down to three. NASA and the Jet Propulsion Labs have published a request for information on how to consolidate and virtualize some 19,000 computers.

- ▶ The U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security wants to take 22 data centers down to a handful.

- ▶ The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture has embarked on a consolidation and virtualization project that could save \$40 million per year.

“You can’t hear an agency CIO give a speech,” says Slye, “without hearing about how they are trying to drive data-center costs down by closing some and consolidating.”

Although large federal contracts typically go to large government systems integrators, there is plenty of room for smaller solution providers to play a role because of the small-business requirements in contracts. The big systems integrators usually subcontract virtualization work to resellers who specialize in that area.

Some of the best opportunities are at the state and local levels, according to Bystrak of Ingram Micro. Even though states may

months. Today, more than five years later, it is still struggling.

Although the government is using virtualization for many of the same reasons as commercial companies — to save energy, cut the number of server boxes, reduce operating costs and pack more processing into less space — there are other drivers as well.

First, there are legislative and policy mandates forcing agencies to go green. In addition, both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Energy Star Program and the U.S. Dept. of Energy have turned their attention to increasing the energy efficiency of data centers. (See sidebar, page 32.)

Second, the economic drivers for government data centers are subtly different from those of commercial entities. In corporations, the primary driver is saving money. In government, it’s all about doing more with the budget you have,

be even more budget-constrained than federal agencies, they seem to be consolidating their infrastructures more effectively and efficiently, says Slye. “The fact that their data centers are naturally more geographically centralized and that they generally have fewer bureaucratic layers to navigate through helps them act more quickly,” he explains. Many states, including Washington, Georgia and Michigan, have ongoing projects to consolidate patchworks of state and sometimes municipal data centers into a few centralized operations.

Counties are also on the virtualization bandwagon. California’s Orange County, the fifth largest county in the U.S., hired Govplace to help it consolidate some 45 different agency data centers into one primary data center. The county wanted the primary center to offer technical expertise and IT services such as application hosting, database ad-

ministration, data warehousing and hardware co-location services, so that the agencies could focus on their primary mission of serving county residents. Although the transition wasn't mandatory, so far 37 of the agencies have made the switch. Govplace calculated a 400 percent return on investment (ROI) for the county, representing a cost savings of \$500,000 over three years.

Making the Virtualization Sale

Because government agencies need to squeeze more efficiency out of current operations in order to fund other activities, a key to successful selling is the ability to show ROI in hard dollars. "If solution providers can come in and show how the agency can attain a quick return on investment, that's a competitive edge," says Slye.

Several vendors offer training in how to assess data centers for energy efficiency. For example, in April IBM announced a free program to train solution providers in best practices to help clients improve data-center energy efficiency.

Indeed, a well-done assessment can be the single most important factor in winning new projects. "We typically close 85 percent to 90 percent of the deals where we do a virtualization assessment, and they lead to considerable revenue," says Craig Cook, director of client services at Long View Systems, a solution provider in Denver.

Another path to virtualization projects is through a back door. A solution provider called in to fix another problem can sell the client on the virtues of virtualization. In fact, that's how Long View got its first government account in the United States. It was originally hired by a large airport authority to fix a technical problem, and ended up doing a virtualization project that consolidated 80 servers down to five. "The original project had nothing to do with virtualization," says Cook, "but it led to a project worth \$80,000 in virtualization services."

In fact, being familiar with all the different vendors as well as all the different variations on virtualization can be key to becoming a trusted advisor to government agencies, says Tom Simmons, area vice president of Citrix Federal. Solution providers should understand what the government customer needs, what technologies are available from different vendors, and how those technologies can be integrated to solve the customer's problems. Simmons notes that many hardware vendors have started incorporating virtualization features into their servers. "A VAR who understands that can show government customers how to realize virtualization benefits just by turning on what they've already bought," he says. "After establishing credibility and a presence with that customer, the solution provider can pull in other technologies that could give the customer a virtual, end-to-end experience."

And that can lead to a long and fruitful relationship, because after the initial virtualization work, the solution provider often stays on to help run the data center. Govplace, for example, still works with Orange County and even has

Measuring Data-Center Efficiency

At least a couple of government agencies are developing tools to help assess energy use at data centers.

- ▶ **The U.S. Energy Star program**, which sets voluntary energy-efficiency specifications for a variety of products, is working on a benchmark for data center efficiency. Energy Star already has benchmarks for about 10 different types of buildings, such as hospitals and warehouses, and wants to add data centers to that list. So far, about 200 data centers have agreed to furnish the EPA with data on their facilities, such as utility bills, over the next year, says Andrew Fanara of the EPA's Energy Star products group. The plan is for the EPA to issue a standard benchmark in the summer of 2009.
- ▶ **The Energy Star benchmark** would allow data center operators, or solution providers doing assessments, to compare the energy efficiency of a given facility to other data centers in its class. Thus, they would know how energy efficient that facility is relative to its peers. Having such hard data can help sell solutions, Fanara adds. "Because if you need capital to make improvements, that's what it's going to take to convince the CIO or CFO." (For more information on the EPA's Energy Star Data Center specification, go to www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=prod_development.server_efficiency.)
- ▶ **In addition, the Energy Department** recently released a beta version of the Data Center Energy Profiler (DC Pro), an online software tool to help organizations identify key energy-saving opportunities in data centers. By entering information about the facility, the data center operator can get a report that details how energy is consumed by the center, potential cost and energy savings, a comparison of energy utilization versus other data centers, and a list of steps to save energy. (For more information on DC Pro, contact DOE's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Information Center at (877) EERE-INF or (877) 337-3463. To download the beta version, go to www.dcpo.ppc.com/.)

an office at the county's data center. "A lot of people think that virtualization for consolidation is a point solution — you walk in, you walk out," says Burke. "But it's not. It's a new way of running data centers. It's a continual change in architecture that still needs to be managed."

About the author: *Tam Harbert is a freelance journalist with 20 years of experience covering technology, business and government.*

SOLUTION PROVIDER MENTIONS

GovPlace: www.govplace.com

Long View Systems: www.longviewsystems.com

Enterprise Search Finds Its Place

Promising solution can be customized for virtually any industry, company size and price point.

By Alan S. Horowitz



For many companies without an effective search tool, the telephone is an essential enterprise search device. “Studies show people spend seven to 15 hours a month looking for information,” says Michael Cizmar, president of MC+A, an enterprise search specialist. “If they don’t find it, they pick up the phone, and now two people are involved in the search for information, causing even greater inefficiencies.”

Such inefficiencies are driving the market for enterprise search. “We classify enterprise search as the ability for employees to directly search their network for the resources to do their jobs,” says Michael Healey, CTO of GreenPages Technology Solutions. Although some companies may incorporate customer-facing platforms, such as a corporate web site, within enterprise search, we’ll focus here on searches behind the firewall.

Imagine being able to Google one’s own network, and you get an idea of the power of enterprise search. Within a law firm, an attorney could quickly find documents relating to a case. A financial services executive could instantly find all relevant documents when a borrower becomes a late payer. Salespeople would be more effective if they could instantly locate a sales presentation created by a colleague.

Solution providers targeting this market find business benefits as well. Even very small companies can be good prospects. Professional offices with just a few employees, for example, might have thousands of documents that need to be searched. Profit margins are high because the technology is relatively new and requires technical expertise. As a result, there’s less competition than in more mature markets.

The familiarity end users have with Google’s internet search can also open the doors for additional sales opportunities with new and existing customers. “People understand the day-to-day search capabilities of Google, so when a VAR

shows how this same technology can be applied and leveraged within a corporate environment, the ROI is realized almost immediately,” says Melissa McCann, Google vendor business manager at Ingram Micro. Besides Google, other companies in the space are Microsoft and Coveo.

A Customizable Solution

The entry-level Google Mini search appliance sells for \$2,990, and more robust appliances start at about \$30,000. The total solution can run into six figures, and for national firms as high as seven figures. The best opportunities, notes Cizmar of MC+A, are those from \$100,000 to \$200,000 per solution. A key difference between appliances is the number of documents they can search and the document license purchased. The Google Mini searches 50,000 to 300,000 documents, depending on the document license.

Customized solutions are common, as this is not an out-of-the-box-and-off-you-go technology. Solution providers can customize solutions based on a client’s content, types of files, security requirements and search results, where results are presented to reflect the client’s preferred format and appearance.

Ingram Micro Can Help

Sound like a business you’d like to be in? Ingram Micro can demonstrate the technology at its Solution Centers in Buffalo, N.Y., and Santa Ana, Calif. The distributor also offers pre- and post-sales tech support and a dedicated market development specialist for Google. To become a Google authorized reseller, at least one person at a solution provider’s locations needs Google certification, which requires a one-week technical course. For details, contact your Ingram Micro sales representative.

Why Enterprise Search?

- **PROS:** Broad appeal and high margins
- **CONS:** Not a casual sale
- **BOTTOM LINE:** Still time to get in

About the author: Alan S. Horowitz is a freelance business and technology writer based in Morris Plains, N.J.

SOLUTION PROVIDER MENTIONS

MC+A, www.mcplusa.com
GreenPages, www.greenpages.com

ASK THE ENGINEERS

Ingram Micro's Experts Respond To Solution-Provider Questions.



Ingram Micro's Solution Centers are staffed by certified engineers on call to answer your questions. All technologies mentioned are deployed at Solution Centers in Buffalo, N.Y. and Santa Ana, Calif.

Q How can my price-conscious customers take advantage of server virtualization without buying separate virtualization software?

A One way is through Microsoft's new Hyper-V hypervisor-based virtualization software, which is included with Windows Server 2008. We've been running Hyper-V in the Solution Centers since December 2007 and have found that it delivers greatly improved virtualization performance, reliability and security over previous solutions from Microsoft. One caveat: Hyper-V does require newer hardware — x64-based processors with Intel VT or AMD-V hardware-assisted virtualization and hardware Data Execution Protection (DEP) — so it makes sense as part of server-upgrade or server-consolidation solutions.

Thomas Mann, Microsoft Engineer and Instructor



Q How have security solutions for server, desktop and notebook PCs evolved to address the changing malware landscape?

A This answer comes from my colleague Eric Penoyer, a technology solutions engineer at Ingram Micro: Today's more sophisticated threats require layered, integrated solutions that avoid the complexity and resource-intensiveness of multiple point products. As an example, Symantec has replaced the popular Symantec AntiVirus with Symantec Endpoint Protection (SEP) 11.0, MR 2. Featuring a smaller memory footprint and a single management console, SEP 11.0 combines antivirus and antispyware protection with desktop firewall, intrusion prevention and device control — all at roughly the same price as the product it replaces. SEP 11.0 also includes the potential to upgrade customers to Symantec Network Access Control for a robust approach to endpoint security.

Andrew Schmidt, Solution Center Engineer



Q I'm interested in offering digital signage solutions to retail and education customers. How difficult is the systems integration?

A It's not difficult, but the key is to understand the entire solution. Digital signage starts on the floor with a plasma or LCD monitor, a mount, an electrical outlet and networking. Also needed are a VGA-to-CAT5 converter at the media player and the reverse at the monitor. Alternatively, an appliance-like media player can be attached to each monitor, eliminating the need for video cabling back to the data center where a centralized player would be. Each solution requires custom content, usually created via Adobe Photoshop, Flash or video files. The content runs on signage-management software that provides playlists, scheduling and other functions that complete the solution.

Francis Murello, Senior Technical Manager, Solution Centers



Have a question for the Solution Center engineers? Submit it to editor@channeladvisor.com. You'll win a free T-shirt if your question is published.

Half Off is Twice as Good

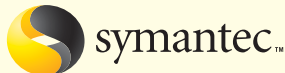


Now your customers can get up to 50 percent off MSRP when they switch from any competing endpoint security product to either of these Symantec solutions:

- Symantec Endpoint Protection with Symantec Network Access Control Starter Edition
- Symantec Multi-tier Protection with Symantec Network Access Control Starter Edition

Plus, your orders qualify for the Symantec Big Draw promotion and can earn you up \$575 in extra rewards.

To learn more, visit www.symantec.com/partners/smb_resources/products/promotions.jsp.



NETGEAR ReadyNAS Brings Enterprise-Level NAS to the Masses

Packed with technology previously reserved for upper-echelon, high-end storage servers, the ReadyNAS family of NAS devices brings enterprise-level technology to the masses in a cost-effective manner. Features such as hardware RAID, Gigabit Ethernet, and continuous system monitoring and backup capabilities make the ReadyNAS bullet-proof and virtually ensure that your customers' data will never again be lost to hardware failure. With an easy web browser interface and setup wizard, ReadyNAS can be configured with minimal effort — saving you valuable time. ReadyNAS's patent-pending X-RAID technology automates the volume expansion for you as you scale from 1 HDD to 4 HDD.



NETGEAR ReadyNAS products carry an industry-leading 5-year hardware warranty.

CONTACT
Jackie Sommer
NETGEAR's Market Development Specialist
(800) 456-8000, ext. 67264
Or visit www.netgear.com for more information.



What Are Your Customers' Backup Plans?



Your customers have taken the time to store all their data on their desktop or laptop computers. Everything that matters to them, from financial to sentimental. But they're just one system error, one spilled latte, one stolen backpack away from losing it all. This scenario is easy to prevent.

Use backup software.

Use software to automate the backup process. An easy-to-use program creates an automatic backup, keeps logs and notifies the user if there's a problem.

Where to back up.

The best backup medium is an external hard drive. High-capacity external drives are very fast and allow your customers to keep all their data in one place. WD's extensive line of external hard drives is sleek, stylish and made for a grab-and-go lifestyle. Most drives come with our



easy-to-use backup software.

Let WD be your customers' backup plan.

For home users, WD's **My Book Home Edition** is a solid choice, with capacities up to 1 TB.

For customers with multiple computers, the **My Book World Edition** is a great network storage device, with those up to 1 TB.

And for those people on-the-go, the **My Passport Elite** is a perfect portable companion, with capacities up to 320 GB.

Check out www.ingrammicro.com/westerndigital for more insight on which is right for your customer.

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(949) 493-3805 or mark.frisch@wdc.com
Or visit www.westerndigital.com for more information.



A WHOLE NEW WORLD

How one solution provider turned a knack for event planning into success — and how you can, too.

By Vanessa Gonzales

Can a favor for a customer grow into a thriving side business? It did for 4CTechnologies, a Pittsburgh-based IBM Premier Partner founded in 1986.

“4CTechnologies would often get requests to help out with customers’ web sites,” says Kathy Olek, director of strategic planning and development for 4CDesignWorks, a division of 4CTechnologies. “We added a person to do that, and it snowballed into branding, flash design, e-newsletters, and then into other types of traditional marketing.”

Thanks to word of mouth from happy clients, the requests increased until in 2005, the company created 4CDesignWorks to focus on marketing, both for 4C itself and on behalf of its customers.

In addition to web design, traditional marketing and branding, one of 4C’s specialties is event planning, an area in which the company has enjoyed a great deal of success. If you’ve ever thought of holding your own event, but weren’t sure where to start, check out some of 4C’s proven tips for making the process go smoothly.

► **Consider your audience:** 4C always looks for ways to tailor each event to the attendees’ needs and interests — right down to how invitations are delivered. In Pittsburgh, end users like receiving traditionally mailed invitations; but when managing events for clients in other cities, 4C will send e-mail blasts to cater to those markets’ preferences. They’ve learned to always route R.S.V.P.s through a web site — either their own or their client’s — which allows for data-gathering as well as convenience. By requesting information such as title, company size and purchasing budget during the registration process, Olek says, it’s easier to tailor and target the event’s content to attendees’ interests.

► **Ask for help:** Co-op funding from partners can help push your event to the next level, so Olek recommends expanding your search beyond manufacturers to include partners in industry and public-interest groups. (Note: Ingram Micro customers can apply for manufacturer co-op funds at ingrammicro.com/agencyexpress.) And be sure to



start seeking funds well in advance of your event because, according to Olek, “When you bring partners in late, you just don’t get the bang for your buck.”

► **Make it memorable:** If you’re holding your event at a location other than your company’s headquarters, consider choosing an unexpected venue over a bland hotel conference room. For example, 4C once hosted an e-mail archiving seminar at a local museum affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution.

In addition, Olek recommends adding impact by creating a strong theme and carrying it throughout the event. For the e-mail archiving seminar, 4C’s team came up with a pirate theme, which was reflected in everything from the treasure map on the invitation to the venue decorations and giveaways.

► **Be prepared:** Over the past few years, Olek has encountered and overcome every challenge — from missing projector light bulbs to a keynote speaker who was delayed overnight by a canceled flight and arrived 10 minutes before his presentation was due to start.

Although some glitches are unavoidable, Olek heads many of them off by visiting the venue several times to scope out its layout and sound system, and to look for any potential obstructions that might prevent attendees from seeing the presentation. On the day before the event, the entire team holds a rehearsal when show time arrives. They try to be ready 30 minutes before the official start time to greet early arrivals. And at all times, they follow Olek’s most important advice: “Always make your clients and potential clients feel like they are guests in your own home.”

About the author: *Vanessa Gonzales is the managing editor of Ingram Micro Channel Advisor.*

System Builders and Vendors Unite at the System ArchiTECHS Invitational

Attend the conference on Sept. 18-20 for outstanding business-building and partnership opportunities.

Want to improve your white-box solutions, increase overall revenue and develop new partnership opportunities? Ingram Micro's System ArchiTECHS community is the answer.

"System ArchiTECHS is Ingram Micro's community for qualified system builders who specialize in creating customized hardware solutions using the latest technology," says Ryan Grant, director of channel programs at Ingram Micro. "Members partner with Ingram Micro to influence suppliers and leverage each other's business expertise. They also benefit from special offers, partnership opportunities, business-building services and face-to-face events."

These benefits come together at the System ArchiTECHS Invitational, the community's first-ever standalone conference. To be held September 18-20 in Las Vegas, this invitation-only event will bring together system builders, business experts, manufacturer partners and Ingram Micro executives to help you succeed in the white-box solutions space.

The event will feature a technology solutions fair and educational workshops focused on business management for system builders. Plus, it's a great forum for getting to know executives from key product manufacturers and Ingram Micro. Attendees will have the chance to study emerging technologies in action and learn how best to take advantage of Ingram Micro's value-added services.

Conference highlights include:

- Keynote addresses by major channel chiefs
- Sessions on leveraging managed services and Web 2.0
- Technology solutions fair with manufacturer demo stations

Perhaps most important, the Invitational will offer rich brainstorming and collaboration opportunities. Says Grant, "Attendees will have plenty of time to develop profitable business relationships with each other, with manufacturers and with Ingram Micro personnel."

Succeed in white-box solutions. Join us for this exclusive event that brings together system builders, business experts, manufacturer partners and Ingram Micro executives.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To register for the conference, System ArchiTECHS members can call Holly (Hartman) Niedzielski at (800) 456-8000, ext. 67852 or e-mail holly.hartman@ingrammicro.com.

Vendors and system builders interested in joining System ArchiTECHS can call Esther Han at (714) 382-2739 or e-mail her at esther.han@ingrammicro.com.

OUR PARTNERS:



THE FOUR ESSENTIALS OF UC SOLUTIONS

The feature article on page 26, "Unified Communications: A Perfect Opportunity," offers great examples of how unified communications (UC) has helped businesses transform the way they operate. Below is a recap of what's needed to successfully venture into the growing UC arena.

INFRASTRUCTURE ▼

Routers, switches and voice gateways connect vital UC components. Look for scalability, voice and integration capabilities. A **Cisco Integrated Services Router (ISR)**, for instance, acts as a tidy all-in-one bridging device.



CLIENTS ▲

As "smart devices" go, the **Cisco 7975 IP Phone** and **LG-Nortel IP Phone 8540** (pictured) offer a variety of sophisticated features. Remote collaboration has also advanced with products that provide a spectrum of interactive meeting experiences — from Microsoft's **RoundTable** device to Cisco's high-end **TelePresence System 3000**, which joins meeting participants in two locations in a single, high-resolution virtual conference room.

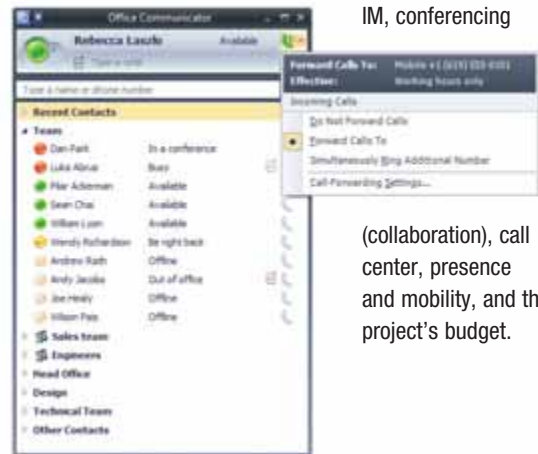
CALL PROCESSING

Call processing needs will affect whether a UC solution is software-, application-, or hardware-driven. Noteworthy are:

- ▶ **3Com.** First-to-market with IP telephony and application solutions that are proven for small and midsize businesses and large enterprises alike. Key products — **The NBX IP Telephony** and **Asterisk IP Communications** platforms
- ▶ **Nortel.** A variety of portfolios of scalable, flexible and high-quality IP telephony solutions. Key products — The **Business Communications Manager (BCM)** appliance and the **Meridian** platform
- ▶ **Cisco.** Secure, scalable communications appliances that have the capacity to serve up to 30,000 users. Key products — **Unified Communications Manager**, **Unified Communications Manager Express** and the **UC 500 Series**
- ▶ **Microsoft.** Flexible and cost-effective, software-based VoIP solutions that integrate with a variety of UC technologies and optimize Office applications. Key products — **Office Communications Server 2007**, **Office Communicator**, **Exchange Server 2007** and **Microsoft Outlook 2007**.

APPLICATIONS ▼

There are hundreds of applications from manufacturers like Microsoft, 3Com, Cisco and Nortel, and from third-party providers like IPcelerate and CyberData. Ultimately, making the choice boils down to functionality requirements, such as voice mail, e-mail, IM, conferencing



(collaboration), call center, presence and mobility, and the project's budget.

BETTER COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

Unified communications offers a profitable way to deliver solutions that change the way people communicate and perform. For more information, call the Ingram Micro Networking Help Desk at (800) 445-5066, ext. 76295, or visit www.ingrammicro.com/unifiedcommunications.

smartstories

Deployable technology experts help one Ingram Micro customer zoom in on new IP video surveillance sales.



In 2007, Dynamic Computer Solutions of Topeka was noticing an increasing end-user interest in IP video surveillance solutions. There was just one challenge: This solution provider was lacking the technology expertise and manufacturer relationships it needed to close these deals.

Its technical and sales teams needed a better understanding of IP video surveillance technology — and how it could solve real-world business needs. The company needed a solution fast.

President Mitch Miller immediately turned to Ingram Micro — and the Technology Solution Engineer (TSE) program — for help.

Within a few weeks, an Ingram Micro deployable

engineer and a representative from Axis Communications were on site with the solution provider, co-hosting a successful, two-phase surveillance training event.

First, the experts focused on the sales and technical staff — teaching them about the technology from a technical perspective as well as from the sales and marketing standpoints. Participants learned about customer pain points and how this technology can help businesses become more profitable, robust and secure.

A few hours later, the experts held a second seminar — this time for 12 end-user customers and prospective clients. The attendees learned the practical applications of

IP surveillance, and how it could address their current business issues.

“Out of the 12 customers in attendance, eight of them either wanted a sales proposal immediately or asked to schedule a site survey and discuss the physical security needs of their properties,” said Miller. “We attribute that success to this seminar. Furthermore, the sales people were now confident enough to talk to many customers who weren’t even at this event,” he added. “The value of having access to these technical resources is incredible.”

Dynamic Computer Solutions of Topeka Topeka, Kan.

Market Segments
General, Financial, Government/Education

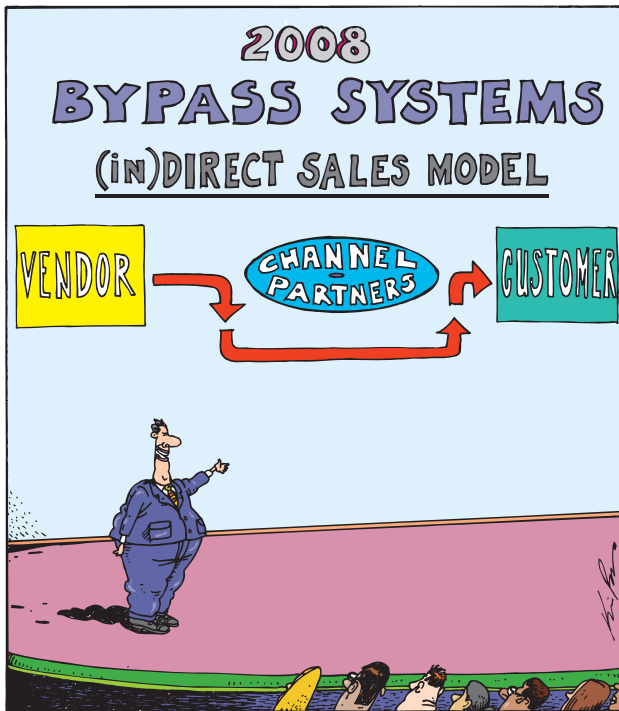
Challenge
Train a solution provider’s technical and sales teams on IP video surveillance while generating end-user demand for the technology.

Solution
Use a two-fold training approach to create interest in the technology — and the skills to generate new sales leads.

Customer Benefit
Technology-focused seminars helped this solution provider develop its competencies, and successfully generate end-user interest and incremental business opportunities.



Partner Smart



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"And as you can see, this year's sales model allows our reps to... let's say, 'bypass' the middle man."

Meet a model partner:
Juniper Networks. At Juniper, we don't believe in competing with partners. Truth is, over 96 percent of our domestic enterprise business goes through the channel. And since Juniper's sales team has a deliberate dependence on the channel, our partner-enabling practices are second to none. In short, we make it easier and more profitable for **J-Partners** to deliver high-performance networking solutions, services and consulting.

So get maximum loyalty, to drive maximum revenue out of every sale. Join **Juniper Networks' Award-Winning J-Partner Program:** visit www.juniper.net/channelpartner or call 1.866.298.6428.