

Networking: GM, GE embracing Java

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General Motors Corp. is embracing Java-based technologies -- hoping to drive down decisively the cost of integrating network applications used in manufacturing, purchasing, sales, marketing and even engineering, experts told UPI's Networking. The GM decision -- along with a deal disclosed during the first week in August by General Electric Co. -- signals the mainstream corporate acceptance of Java.

Java technology is a portfolio of products that are based on the power of networks and the idea that the same software should run on many different devices and systems. Java emerged from the Internet in the mid-1990s.

"We will simplify integration between systems throughout our network while improving the user experience," said Fred Killeen, GM's information systems and services chief technology officer. "It supports our objective of increasing the value of our development investment while reducing operating costs."

Smaller companies likewise are eyeing the networking technology, including:

-- Wachovia Bank, the fourth-largest holding bank in the United States. Tom Woods, the bank's IT director, is in-process for an installation of a Java-based e-lending platform.

-- Palisades Technology Partners, an IT consulting company, has committed itself solely to Java-based technologies for many applications.

-- BEA Systems Inc., a world leader in enterprise infrastructure software, said its WebLogic Server 9.0 has set a new performance record, surpassing previous "SPECjAppServer2004" benchmark results. This industry-standard benchmark was specifically designed to measure the scalability and performance of Java 2 Enterprise Edition (J2EE) technology-based application servers, the company said.

BEA WebLogic Server 9.0's enterprise-grade kernel provides support for multi-programming models -- suitable for enterprises with a number of legacy operating systems.

"This new record proves beyond a doubt that WebLogic Server offers J2EE-enabled enterprises the best price-performance ratio in the industry," said Ed Whelan, BEA's director of engineering.

Still, the GM deployment is the biggest, most important Java project to date. The project will place Java enterprise software on 320,000 seats. The GM deal and others also will help bolster sales at Sun Microsystems, the developer of Java enterprise software, which lost \$11 million during its last fiscal year, ending June 30.

Java is being used to write Web-browser-based applications, ensure the identities of people who access servers, and enable IT to develop and deploy applications and services quickly and securely.

GM has been using Sun Java Web Infrastructure Suite and Sun Java Application Platform Suite. The company plans to extend its current portal implementation by adding the Sun Java Identity Management Suite to maintain a secure and reliable environment while making the user experience easier through single "sign-on," which decreases the need for multiple passwords.

Sun's recently released Solaris 10 Operating System includes Java

System Application Server Platform Edition 8.1 for running enterprise Java applications on Solaris 10. The company recently disclosed its plans to include the new Java System Application Server Platform Edition 9.0 with Solaris 10 in an upcoming release.

Sun also is introducing the Java ESB, the first fully open-sourced enterprise-service-bus implementation, based on the Java Business Integration specification JSR 208 and reference implementation. The company also is releasing code for the popular Java System Application Server Platform Edition 9.0 and Java System Enterprise Server Bus.

"Many Fortune 1000 companies today are telling us they are tired of lack of integration across the spectrum of software they use to run their business -- and even more frustrating, the amount they have to pay for it," said John Loiacono, executive vice president of Software, Sun Microsystems. "A company of GM's caliber adopting the Java ES is a tremendous endorsement of ... (the) ability to bring an integrated system to customers, large and small, that can dramatically lower their software IT costs."

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