

# Microsoft Seeks to Boost Management Initiative

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Company officials announce the beta release schedule for a handful of products that flesh out Microsoft's growing Systems Center family.

Microsoft continued to move the ball forward on its Dynamic Systems Initiative at its Microsoft Management Summit on March 28 when company officials announced the beta release schedule for a handful of products that flesh out its growing Systems Center family.

Among those new Systems Center products is the Systems Management Server 2003 Service Pack 3, which will be available in April.

It integrates the catalog of 300,000 known applications gathered by Asset Metrix, which Microsoft acquired in 2006.

"This will enrich our ability to report on those assets in a business fashion, instead of a technology fashion, so that you can see what are the applications you have in your environment," said Kirill Tatarinov, corporate vice president of Microsoft's Management and Solutions Division, in his keynote speech [here](#).

The follow-up to SMS 2003, Configuration Manager 2007, began final beta testing a month ago.

In that release, the applications catalog will be linked dynamically to Microsoft's data center, where customers will have access to continuous updates.

Tatarinov also announced that Systems Center Data Protection Manager 2007 will begin beta 2 testing in the next 30 days and will be generally available later in 2007.

It will provide data backup for all of Microsoft's applications and server software, including Sharepoint, SQL Server and Exchange. It also adds the ability to back up to tape archive.

But even more impressive is its ability to perform backups over slow speed remote connections in a more "bandwidth-friendly" way and the ability of end users to "self serve," said Peter Christy, principal analyst at Internet Research Group in Los Altos, Calif.

Microsoft also moved forward on the virtual machine management software, code-named Carmine, that it previewed at the 2006 summit.

The new Systems Center Virtual Machine Manager 2007 will begin beta 2 testing in the next 30 days. It will be generally available late in 2007.

In going up against the Big 4 enterprise management players such as BMC Software with its Remedy Action Request System help desk or Hewlett Packard with its OpenView Service Desk acquired with Peregrine, Tatarinov said that Microsoft will begin beta 1 testing on its new Systems Center Service Manager, code-named Service Desk, in the next 45 days.

It is unique from the help desk software marketed by those "dinosaurs" in its use of the Service Modeling Language support included in its CMDB (Configuration Management Database and in the self-service functions it will allow end users to perform, he said.

In meeting the requirements of IT shops with heterogeneous computing environments, Microsoft sought to bring in more third-party partners.

Aside from the integration Microsoft announced with Cisco Systems and EMC on March 27, Tatarinov said that HP desktops will also work with its configuration management software.

At the same time, rival and Big 4 member CA announced its integration between two of its Unicenter offerings with Microsoft's SMS and Operations Manager.

CA will integrate its Wily Introscope application performance monitoring and management software with Operations Manager 2007 and its Unicenter asset management software with SMS.

CA Asset Adapter for SMS 2003 uses standard, published protocols get data from SMS and monitors for changes from the CA asset management console and share asset data under its control with SMS 2003.

The new Wily Management Pack for Microsoft System Center Operations Manager 2007 allows IT operators to integrate desired metrics collected by Wily Introscope from applications, back-end systems and middleware into the Operations Manager 2007 console.

"This is in response to customer demand to pull the pieces together," said Jacob Lamm, senior vice president of Business Service Optimization for CA in Islandia, N.Y.

"Microsoft has been making moves into this space for years. What we've come to realize is as that happens, it creates more and more opportunities for us. We think these two technologies will allow us to generate more business and leverage our strength while not competing where we don't have to," said Lamm.

As Microsoft continues to make progress on filling out its Dynamic

Systems Initiative, it is gaining momentum.

"This year we've met all our deliverables on the Systems Center front. Everything we're showing is here now or will be here in 12 months in beta form," said Tatarinov in his keynote speech.

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