CA Hopes to Deliver on Integration Promise

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CA is positioning its new software suite as the first example of the integration it promised 18 months ago when it outlined its enterprise IT management vision for customers.

CA on April 24 launched one of the first examples of the integration it has been promising when it unveiled its new CA Service Quality Management.

The integrated suite, launched at the CA World user conference here, combines application performance and customer experience monitoring with incident and problem management, and service level management. The aim of the integration is to help IT run its operations more like a business, making IT more responsive to business users and allowing it to create and execute on service levels that are meaningful for the business.

CA integrated its CA Wily Customer Experience Manager with CA Wily IntroScope, CA Unicenter Metric Analysis and Unicenter Service Desk. The combined foursome together provide service level monitoring from the user's perspective, back-end systems and applications monitoring, performance metric capture and aggregation and incident and change management.

Once IT sets service-level agreements with the business application owners based on transaction response time performance and availability, IntroScope can monitor for those service levels and if a transaction breaches an agreed upon level, it sends an alert to the CA Customer Experience Manager, which can trigger an incident to the service desk.

The service desk software can then automatically open a troubleticket that shows the basic problem and the application involved. A help desk operator can click on a link in the troubleticket, get more information and connect to IntroScope to determine where the problem lies. The application team can then use IntroScope to perform root cause diagnostics and see if the problem is a database problem.

"The database administration and application team can work on it, - fix the problem so - the application is back and running, and it's all recorded by the service level management system," said Mike Malloy, vice president of marketing and product development at CA's Wily division.

"Service-level management means something different to different people, whether it's network operations, the service desk or something else to overall IT governance. The goal of the integration is to tie all those together so there is one contract with the IT consumer, and the customer can choose what they tie together," said Jacob Lamm, general manager of CA's business optimization unit.

CA will add the new integration code to the existing products to allow them to capture data from the other products in a normalized way. And there is additional code to help the products pass data in context - in the format and workflow where it needs to be, Malloy said.

He asserted that the integration in the first release - with more planned for later releases, is still "very robust. Service metric analysis is designed to poll a variety of management tools. The service desk has a robust set of APIs to capture data across IT infrastructure. We took full advantage of those APIs. We're not just passing SNMP data," he said.

Long time IntroScope user Cindy Tesar, on hand at the integration launch, was encouraged by the integration between the Customer Experience Manager and IntroScope.

"What I find that's really neat is with the simple click of a button you are brought into the Introscope workstation. You don't have to have a separate tool loaded," said Tesar, systems analyst at Hewitt Associates in Lincolnshire, Ill.

The integration upgrade for the four products is due this summer and is free for customers using the existing software.

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