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Nimsoft Snags Indicative to Take On Big Management Rivals

Nimbus' acquisition of Indicative Software provides availability and performance management combined with business service management.

Nimsoft on April 8 will bring new business service management functions into its fold when it announces its plans to acquire Indicative Software.

The privately held Nimsoft bills itself as a cheaper and simpler alternative to larger vendors' offerings for monitoring the availability and performance of networks, servers, databases and applications.

The "Big Four" vendors in this field are IBM/Tivoli, Hewlett-Packard's OpenView, CA's Unicenter and BMC Software's Patrol. With Indicative, Nimbus will add new end-user response time monitoring and BSM capabilities.

The big vendors have "really got a top-down approach. They start at the business service and work down to the device level," said Nimsoft CEO Gary Read, who will lead the combined companies. "[Nimsoft's] Nimbus starts at device management and we push our way up into BSM. The two products fit together extremely well."

Nimsoft, which has focused on service-level management and primarily served small and medium-size enterprises, will gain other synergies with Indicative.

Indicative brings to the table agentless technology for monitoring end-user response times as well as passive monitoring of real application traffic, rather than the active monitoring in Nimsoft's product.

"Nimbus till now was based on synthetic transactions that are issued on a predetermined time basis to test the application. Indicative looks at all the real transactions hitting Web-based applications and monitors their response time. By putting the two together we can give customers the best of both worlds," said Read.

Ironically, Indicative's namesake product was originally developed at Hewlett-Packard and initially marketed as a product dubbed Firehunter.

Indicative executive John Smith, part of the original HP OpenView team, will remain with the combined companies, as will most Indicative employees, Read said.

Both Nimbus and Indicative products will continue to be sold separately in the short term, although over time Nimsoft intends to combine the two code bases.

Nimsoft's product integration road map calls for taking key portions of the Indicative technology and adding it to Nimbus and vice versa, and then working toward common components across both product lines.

"Our new Web 2.0 capability will become a common user interface over time for both products. We will also have common data collection using both, and we will evolve into a common database schema in the back end as well," said Read. "We will continue with both product lines, and you will see development accelerated on both products as we make use of each other's technologies."

The combined company will create a somewhat larger David to the Big Four Goliaths, with 161 employees and 616 customers worldwide. Nimsoft will retain Indicative's Fort Collin, Colo., location. The acquisition, the price of which was not disclosed, is expected to be completed this week.

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