Pulse 2008: IBM simplifies IT service management to facilitate business and IT convergence

Carl Greiner

May 2008

Pulse 2008: IBM simplifies IT service management to facilitate business and IT convergence

IBM's Pulse 2008 conference reaffirmed the company's attempt to further simplify and leverage its extremely robust Tivoli IT service and infrastructure management offerings while continuing to expand, integrate and leverage their capabilities to better improve the convergence of IT and business. By acknowledging that the traditional IT automation initiatives tended to be silo centric, the ongoing integration efforts within Tivoli solutions are targeting more holistic enablement of IT to better respond to dynamic business needs and industry specific issues.

Perhaps the most refreshing take away from the event was that IBM is finally attempting to package its very complete, though discrete, Tivoli management offerings into more understandable and less acronym-centric solution sets, leveraging robust integration, improved price points, deployment models, best practices, and global services capabilities, all that target more holistic IT automation. Acknowledging that such automation, or industrialization, remains as the key enabler for enterprise deployments of SOA, Web 2.0, dynamic componentized infrastructures and applications, and cloud computing initiatives, reaffirms the company's direction to tighten IT's link with its business constituents. The stated target is to better automate and respond to dynamic business needs with expanded automation and management capabilities.

The breadth of the IBM offerings, services and partner ecosystem make this undertaking realistic, and the introduction of Quick Start and expanded assessment offerings allows incremental and targeted projects to proceed. The need to leverage all IT and business assets to support services across the enterprise in a managed and cohesive manner is paramount for enterprises today, and we believe the holistic approach being taken by IBM will gain strong traction. This approach is quite different from the past since it provides the overall direction toward business solutions, yet targets the key enablers that must be done to become successful. The solutions, which are mostly existing but with some new functionality and enhanced integration (supporting both IBM and heterogeneous offerings), will provide enterprises with the capability to streamline their critical pain points against a more complete set of business objectives.

As impressive as the simplified packaging and messaging, was the continued expansion of the Tivoli portfolio's functionality and integration. Key functionality announcements centred around service delivery and process automation focusing on a common set of capabilities within the

Tivoli Process Automation Platform. Beyond enhanced integration throughout the portfolio were the following new/enhanced products:

- IBM Tivoli Service Request Manager extending its service desk and catalogue capabilities with a built-in service catalogue for improved problem resolution and automated interaction capabilities

- IBM Tivoli Asset Management for IT addressing improved IT asset lifecycle management

- IBM Maximo Asset Management further addressing enterprise asset and service optimization

- IBM Tivoli Business Continuity Process Manager including System z

- new offerings in applications and systems management and monitoring

- a new version of the IBM Tivoli Monitoring software that includes consolidated views of energy management information with automated capabilities to set power utilization thresholds and actions not only for the data center but also the enterprise

- enhanced security management including expanded federation

- expanded service provider enhancements as well as more focused global technology services.

While the event highlighted a host of new Tivoli/IBM functionality and services, the overriding benefit delivered through this event was the company's demonstration of enhanced integration and simplification of the critical IT automation functions that enable a more responsive IT linked to business initiatives. Embracing business and IT convergence with more easily understood offerings will certainly bode well for IBM and Tivoli's continued success.

Client re-use disclaimer

- This is a verbatim reproduction of independent material that has previously been published by Ovum within the last 6 months

- Ovum operates under an Independence Charter. For full details please see www.ovum.com/about/charter.asp

- Neither Ovum nor the analysts were paid by the client to write any part of the material

- Ovum may have been paid by the client for the right to re-use the material

- Ovum may have a deal with the client to supply research or consultancy. However, no other relationship exists between the 2 companies (e.g. shareholdings, loans, non-executive directorships etc)

- While we take every care to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this material, the facts estimates and opinions stated are based on information and sources which, while we believe them to be reliable, are not guaranteed. In particular, it should not be relied upon as the sole source of reference in relation to the subject matter. No liability can be accepted by Ovum, its directors or employees for any loss occasioned to any person or entity acting or failing to act as a result of anything contained in or omitted from the content of this material, or our conclusions as stated

- This material is the copyright of Ovum Europe Ltd.