

Entuity's Eye 5.0 Expands Control to the Network Edge

Abstract

To retain a competitive edge in reaching new partners and new markets, business operations are increasingly conducted over ever growing geographical area. Therefore, networked infrastructures in support of such business operations must similarly become more distributed. Entuity's Eye of the Storm revision 5.0 (EYE 5.0) extends its expertise of managing the network core and addresses this shifting emphasis to management at the network's edge – enabling significant new levels of versatility in adapting the new transport technologies and performance requirements associated with the polymorphic growth of network-based commerce.

Event

On October 30, 2006, Entuity, Inc., a private corporation with US headquarters in New York City, announced a new revision of its flagship network management product Eye of the Storm revision 5.0 (EYE 5.0). Through EYE 5.0, Entuity has extended its strong capabilities for managing the network core to the network edge. And it is today, at the network edge in particular, where significant instability prevails as businesses rapidly increase operations over widening geographical areas. EYE 5.0 addresses edge management by incorporating functionality to manage more network devices, supporting new application delivery technologies such as wireless and MPLS IP-VPN, and providing more actionable performance and topology configuration-related information, and supporting these needs in real-time. Through these and other enhancements, Entuity can rightly claim that deploying EYE 5.0 enhances user control and reduces potential for unplanned downtime or work done by IT organization.

Background

Both the functional breadth and the level of automation in data center operations is accelerating through such capabilities as IT process automation, virtualization and grid computing. On the other hand, data center services cannot be made truly efficient without factoring in the edge components of the IT infrastructure. Driven by geographically expanding business operations, the enterprise network at the edge is, in fact, increasingly determining user experience, and as a corollary, network edge performance is increasingly impacting corporate productivity and business performance.

But taking charge of the network edge and a more dynamic data center environment isn't coming without a cost. As the number and variety of devices proliferate at the edge,

the number of tools to manage this expanding networked infrastructure is similarly increasing – which is resulting in skyrocketing IT operational expense. And so it shouldn't be any surprise that many business executives are scrutinizing the IT function and its contribution to the "bottom line" with growing trepidation.

In the past several years, Entuity has made strategic investments into EYE architecture and functionality to improve its adaptability to continuously changing IT operational environments. This design point has made EYE a popular choice with Entuity customers seeking to balance the need for effective management with the need to contain operational costs by minimizing administration and optimizing the relationship between expected return on value, and actually received return on value. In other words, far more than most products in the IT management marketplace today, EYE delivers on what it promises without unexpected deployment shocks or administrative surprises.

New 5.0 Functionality

The new solution brings new modules, applications, and functionality targeted at extending the core functionality of EYE. For instance, strategic investment in data storage has enabled EYE 5.0's new configuration management and connectivity viewer functionality as well as enhanced device inventory management. Similarly, investments into a better user interface resulted in new extensible menus, EYE Network Summary Report (NSR), and reports with customizable panels to display key metrics.

In addition, rapid development of functional modules to the core product as well as third-party products as follows:

MPLS VPN Module: This module leverages EYE's auto-discovery capabilities to detect configuration information for Multi-protocol Layer Switching (MPLS), IP virtual private networks, and from this populate configuration information into EYE's Configuration Management Database (CMDB) – which is designed to provide an accurate resource view of network inventories, assets and topologies and related changes. This module can enable visibility and effective monitoring of MPLS-VPN performance, including improving the performance of MPLS circuits through the identification of overburdened interfaces.

Quality of Service (QoS) Module: Once again EYE leverages its discovery and inventory capability, this time coupled with Cisco's QoS Module CLI (QMC) – to provide a detailed

inventory of QoS configuration. This module also monitors QoS performance through an SNMP-based integration using Cisco's class-based QoS-MIB. It provides pre- and post-policy traffic-based statistics and supports the monitoring of QoS technologies such as Queue management, traffic shaping and packet marking.

Wireless Module: While EYE has supported the management of corporate switched local area networks in prior versions, this module extends support-to-support Wireless Access Controllers (WAC) and/or Lightweight Access Point (LAP) technology – in conjunction with either Ethernet switches or autonomous Wireless Access Points (WAPs).

EYE Integration with Remedy: Entuity's integration with Remedy supports both Action Requests (ARs) driven by events, and ARs associated with specific infrastructure components or objects. In either circumstance, AR tickets can be manually raised or can be set up to be automatically raised based on specific event criteria

EYE also offers advantages in being able to detect and alarm on unauthorized hub additions, speed changes on ports, and a sudden rise in users at a remote location through what Entuity calls its "Configuration Change Events." While this core technology does not alert on device configuration changes, EYE does have an event-based integration with AlterPoint and Emprisa to capture unauthorized or non-policy-compliant configuration changes in devices. The core technology's event trapping and forwarding is also the basis for integrations with Opsware and several stand-alone frameworks. Other capabilities include support for Cisco's IOS IP-SLAs, to capture such metrics as response time, availability, jitter, connect time and packet loss. Many of these data, as well as other performance-related information, are captured in EYE's Network Summary Reports.

By leveraging common architectural components, Entuity's EYE 5.0 delivers out-of-the-box capabilities for management of network devices both in the core and the edge. EMA's interviews with Entuity customers revealed speedy EYE deployment, enhanced network troubleshooting, often significant reduction of "brownout" and downtime incidents, as well as enhanced security and regulatory compliance benefits. EYE customers were obtaining additional network information often in several hours and realized enhanced network control in a matter of weeks.

Key Ramifications

EYE 5.0 extends Entuity's product focus to the management of the unstable but business critical portion of the network, the edge devices.

New EYE functionality, such as the connectivity viewer, enhances the efficiency of troubleshooting processes.

The integrated text and graphics man/machine interface expand EYE product's useful information conveyance across the IT and business organizations.

The capability to "bolt on" modules to the EYE package makes Entuity's product flexible and agile to rapidly respond to technology developments or changes of market requirements. Bolt-on modules also enable customers to minimize burn-in testing and deployment time/cost throughout the enterprise.

The capacity to interchange management data with third-party products extends Entuity's ability to serve as collaborative citizen within the corporate IT management infrastructure and enhance the operational effectiveness in support of business operations.

EMA's Perspective

Entuity's EYE is a well-focused product that provides a variety of critical IT infrastructure management functions in support of business operations. It is designed with a clear sense of administrative priorities, as EYE 5.0 extends the focus to the network edge devices. Its emphasis on real-time functionality leads to better "real world" IT management in support of geographically distributed business operations.

By the same token, EYE 5.0 is not designed to be everything to everybody. Instead, Entuity quite deliberately designed its product for collaborative interaction with other IT management products. For example, the new configuration management function promotes collaboration and partnerships with established configuration and change management products rather than encroaching on their functionality. Although Entuity's extensible solution already touches on infrastructure inventory, performance, and business services support, EYE will remain targeted at the NOC for the foreseeable future.

Both Service Provider and Enterprise users should treat Entuity's product release as a significant, strategic investment. Sophisticated buyers with a clear sense of priorities and requirements will likely find their expectations met, or even exceeded, by EYE 5.0.



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