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 Alan Pelz-Sharpe

Oracle enters the E-mail Archiving market

14-Apr-2008

Tags: Document Management (ECM), E-mail Archiving and Management, Marketplace at Large, Selecting Technology, WebCenter Content

Oracle announced today that they were entering the archiving market with the release of "Universal Online Archive." UOA is an interesting entry to a market and positions Oracle to compete more directly against EMC and IBM in the e-mail and messaging archive space. It's interesting as only a year ago nobody was much interested in archiving, but in the past twelve months we have seen everyone from Dell to Google try to gain a foothold, and the market shows no signs of slowing down. It remains a chaotic and confusing sector risking a

consolidation (which of course might not happen, or at least not soon).

UOA is built on top of Oracle 11g with technology acquired from Stellent, as well as from e-mail capture experts ZL Technologies. Why would Oracle be interested in archiving e-mails you may ask? Well the answer is simple: because there is an awful lot of it. And by archiving it, the messages will move out of Microsoft's servers and into Oracle databases. Remember in most firms e-mail is by far the single largest type of "data."

The Oracle offering is a pretty elegant one - making use of good technology from ZL and leveraging their own in house product stack- but it's too early to tell how well it will run for real, At an architectural level it looks decent, and should provide a competitive offering against EMC (who is releasing an upgrade to the current emailXtender product later in the year) as well as HP and Symantec -- who both also have serious ambitions in this space. It's yet more evidence of the morphing of the ECM sector away from collaboration (*left almost solely in the hands of Microsoft SharePoint*) and into the broader compliance and archiving worlds.

For buyers it should be noted that the EAM (E-mail Archiving and Management) market is very much in transition at the moment. There are some truly awful products out there, and some new but relatively untested approaches arriving. It's a market characterized by confusion - and an array of very differing and irreconcilable approaches - from Backup/DR through Archiving to compliance and legal discovery. You need to tread with real caution when selecting products and ensure you really do your homework both on the product roadmaps and the vendor itself. Some vendors are in a state of flux, and others on the brink of either acquisition or irrelevance.

Oracle's entry to the market adds to the options out there, but the entrance of major vendors like Oracle, Google, Dell, and HP in the past year is also a sign that sufficient R&D money and subsequent marketing and training will come to a sector that sorely needs it. It's a market that we will be covering in depth soon, so watch this space...

Excerpt from the WebCenter Content Evaluation

Document Management (ECM) Evaluation Stream looks at... Oracle UCM and WebLogic

"On the one hand, the WebLogic dependency is good, because it brings it in line with other Fusion middleware applications and enables you to use Oracle Enterprise Manager for many management tasks. However, this also has some implications and you must ensure that your system admins understand the intricacies of WebLogic. More generally, it means that you have no choice in your application server, which is quite limiting...."
(p. 223)

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