

Enterprise Applications

Intranets, Distributed Databases, Messaging and Groupware

Briefs

Toronto-based **iWay Software**, an Information Builders Inc. company, has announced that its suite of integration middleware including 200 intelligent adapters now supports Oracle9i Application Server (Oracle9iAS). The company said the adapters integrate applications, data and business processes running on Oracle9iAS resulting in cost and time reduction for users. The adapters also support different platforms and standards including Java 2 Enterprise Edition (J2EE), Java Messaging Service (JMS), Extensible Markup Language (XML) and Web services. iWay said the adapters also connect to more than 200 packaged applications, transaction systems, legacy data and e-business formats to enable developers to integrate applications without having to write code. For more information visit the company on the Web at www.iway.com.

Bringing collaboration to Microsoft Excel, **Advanced Reality Inc.** recently launched Presence-AR which the company said provides real-time collaboration capabilities to any copy of Excel running in enterprise networks. According to the Houston, Tex.-based company, Presence-AR lets end users launch secure peer-to-peer collaborative sessions within Excel. Users have the ability to enter and edit data and formulas; cut, copy and paste cells; drag and drop cells; and create and insert new workbooks into a collaborative session, the company said. Presence-AR encrypts data using SSL and can be configured to require multiple authentication methods including passwords, digital certificates and token cards. The Presence-AR Adapter for Microsoft Excel is available now and enterprise site licenses for an unlimited number of users start at US\$50,000. Visit www.advancedreality.com for details.

Webdesk offers application option

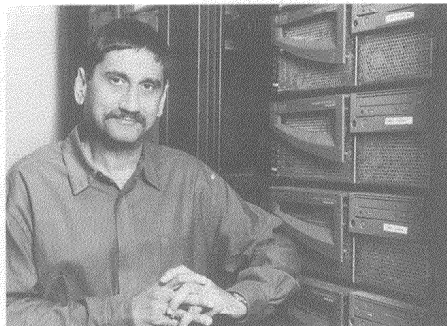
BY CARLY SUPPA

No IT department? No problem. That is the basic catch phrase of Pathway Communications for its latest service to bring intranet and collaboration tools to small- and mid-sized businesses.

Last month the Toronto-based company released Webdesk, designed as an alternative for organizations to install and manage on-site groupware and software. Pathway said Webdesk gives users the ability to access applications including e-mail, file storage and sharing, contact management and polls from any standard Web browser inside or outside the office.

Webdesk software and hardware is installed and managed in Pathway's environment and is maintained by Pathway engineers who are responsible for network security and back-up of all data, the company said.

"Typically if you are a travelling salesperson or a distributed branch network, they all need to share files and they need to share information in a secure and safe manner without the hassles of network management or data management," said Pathway President Ashok Kalle. "If you are a large company, you'd go out and buy a tool similar to Microsoft Exchange that allows you to store files and e-mail. We are targeting the small and medium businesses who can't really afford to buy these expensive collaboration tools."



Kalle: Webdesk is a cost-effective way to get at information

Kalle said that users access Webdesk via the Web with a user name and password assigned by Pathway. He added that all data transfers between Webdesk and the browser is encrypted at all times, and e-mail is automatically virus-scanned by Pathway.

"We have created a system where we have all the servers, data and all the software sitting behind a commercial firewall," Kalle explained. "All data is backed up everyday. You can upload files and create discussion groups. You have a calendar just as in Outlook, an address book and you can conduct polls. You can also store files. For example, if you are travelling, you don't even have to bring your laptop with you if your files are all stored online at Webdesk."

And having access to these fundamental applications was one of the reasons MoneyPower Inc. opted to go the Webdesk route. MoneyPower Inc., a Mississauga, Ont.-based financial services firm, has been relying on Webdesk for the past two months to provide the two-to-five-person firm with intranet capabilities.

According to JoAnne Anderson, president of MoneyPower, Webdesk has enabled the company to link together with several small business partners to share information.

"We can at this point access e-mail, scheduling, we can have discussions through a discussion group and we can upload files that would be commonly used that we wouldn't want to send by e-mail," Anderson said. "We are in our very busiest time of year and one of the most valuable things for me is that I have been able to put my schedule up on the system and everybody can tell when I am busy and when I am not. It has been invaluable to us."

Although Anderson said Webdesk took some trial and error to roll out, she added there is a learning curve with any new technology and is pleased with the system.

Webdesk from Pathway is available now and is priced at \$14.99 for a five-user license. For more information visit the company on the Web at www.pathcom.com.

UM sheds weight on Topcall diet

BY STEFAN DUBOWSKI

Unified messaging (UM) is supposed to provide end-users with a single point of contact, but according to Topcall International AG, UM also acts as a pressure point for IT. To alleviate the strain, Topcall created a Web-based painkiller.

Topcall, with North American headquarters in Malvern, Pa., last month introduced TC/MetaMail — software that turns fax and voice messages into URLs.

The program works in conjunction with Topcall's own UM platform. According to Andy Chaleff, the company's global marketing manager at the Vienna, Austria office, TC/MetaMail addresses a problem with e-mail archives.

"Most people don't offload what they have stored on the (e-mail server) hard drive," he said, "so e-mail back-up is a huge issue."

It's even worse in UM environments, he continued. "Add to that the fax and voice mail component. Even in compressed forms... (they) will increase the burden on the local mailbox."

TC/MetaMail sits on the Topcall server, which is tied to a company's PBX. As voice mail arrives, TC/MetaMail

turns it into WAV files and URLs. The server archives the messages, connects to the separate e-mail server and sends the messages to the appropriate inbox, where the user clicks to view the notifications. TC/Player, another Topcall program, lets the user hear the message on her desktop computer.

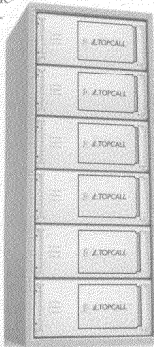
The point is messages are kept not on the e-mail server, but on the Topcall server, Chaleff said.

Alister Sutherland, IDC Canada's director of software research in Toronto, said e-mail archiving is a problem for many large companies.

"The [Topcall] server acts as an internal URL-based resource for accessing the message," Sutherland said. "That makes sense to me. It seems like a good solution, especially in enterprise environments, where you could have literally tens of thousands of messages a day."

While he said the Topcall offering seems like a good solution, he added that the platform adds another box to the e-mail system. As such, "it might actually add a new layer of complexity for IT."

For more information visit www.topcall.com/ca.



TC/MetaMail sits on the Topcall server.