

Impact

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Network Associates' ZAC 2001 — a Tactical Tool for Today, a Strategic Solution for Tomorrow

Regardless of how severe today's Y2K problems may be, purchasing decision-makers often find it difficult to purchase products that are simply not designed to solve problems beyond the next 12 months. But, today's Y2K issues are not going away and finding a solution to Y2K problems is of critical importance.

With this challenge firmly in mind, Network Associates has developed a forward-looking, enterprise-class solution that has the ability to tactically address pressing Y2K problems, while ultimately serving as a strategic, long-term enterprise inventory/asset management solution that is integrated with the help desk.

Single-Function Y2K Tools

Information Systems (IS) decision-makers charged with ensuring the enterprise's safe passage through the Year 2000 (Y2K) swamp can choose from a variety of offerings when searching for tools to assess the readiness of desktop PCs and departmental servers for the millennium rollover. Checking the status of BIOS files, application readiness, and scanning data files, the available applications share one major drawback — all focus solely on Y2K readiness, with a usable lifespan of less than 12 months. And, few tools have integration points with current enterprise support chain management solutions.

Juggling Y2K Compliance with Support

Experienced IS managers are grappling with the everyday challenges of supporting a user base demanding immediate solutions to Information Technology (IT) problems as well as the immovable Y2K challenge. Decision-makers are looking to trusted suppliers

for comprehensive help desk management solutions with already-integrated Y2K assessment tools.

Help desk solution suppliers have been searching for clear differentiation points in an effort to alter the competitive landscape. Simply stated, most suppliers' feature/ functionality checklists are eerily similar, forcing buyers to search long and hard for best-of-breed attributes — until now.

Help from Network Associates

Network Associates (NAI) has just introduced a new member of the Magic Total Service Desk product family. ZAC 2001 (Zero Administration Client) is an enterprise-class desktop management solution that includes asset management and reporting tools, as well as a suite of tools for assessing Y2K readiness.

Y2K Capabilities Are Strong

While ZAC 2001's value proposition extends beyond December 31, 1999, its

Y2K capabilities remain comprehensive and compelling. The product's Y2K risk assessment features include automatic corporate PC auditing; BIOS correction; data file and packaged application scanning; standard and custom reporting; and a complete, high-level view of Y2K readiness. In addition, ZAC 2001 serves as a dynamic Y2K-compliance resource. The ZAC 2001 interface includes a central console with active links and fast access to third-party Y2K resource and information sites. The product also provides site-to-site data roll-up to a central database.

ZAC 2001 Strategic Differentiators

ZAC 2001 stands on its own as a capable and effective Y2K desktop management solution. However, many buyers are looking for a longer term value proposition and a solution that will provide additional benefits within existing — and future — IT infrastructures across the enterprise beyond December 31, 1999.

ZAC 2001 provides ongoing enterprise inventory and asset tracking; management reporting; and the ability to audit hardware, software, and system inventory.

ZAC 2001's most compelling differentiators are found in its enterprise integration capabilities and ability to help companies efficiently and cost-effectively implement a complete solution. ZAC 2001 offers seamless integration on three important levels:

- As an add-on to the ZAC Suite, which includes software distribution, software metering, menuing, and remote-

control modules, providing IT with better visibility into technology assets;

- Remote-control capabilities that provide IT with the ability to inspect and take control of the desktop from a central console; and,
- Magic Total Service Desk workgroup and enterprise help desk solutions, which provide on-demand views into the ZAC 2001 inventory database.

Platforms and Pricing

NAI is committed to aggressive pricing and to providing a high-value, low-cost solution. ZAC 2001's price point is approximately \$17 per node for 3,000+ nodes for a one-year subscription. The product runs on all Microsoft clients, NT, and NetWare back-end operating systems.

Aberdeen Conclusions

Clearly, companies need a solution that will help address pressing Y2K problems, and ZAC 2001 should be on any IS manager's short list of Y2K testing tools. More important, however, is that NAI has the products and market presence to succeed in two important, integrated markets — Y2K testing tools and help desk solutions. Because of the integration between ZAC 2001 and Magic Total Service Desk, both products help differentiate and increase the value proposition of the other, extending and enhancing the support chain. Few, if any, suppliers can make this claim, which bodes well for NAI and its customers alike.

— Eric Hemmendinger and Chris Pavlic