

Akorri makes aggressive moves, continues on growth path

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Event summary

- Virtual infrastructure management specialist Akorri reports 160% growth in its customer base in the first half of this year over 2008. It had 120 customers at the end of June and is on track to add 30-40 more in the third quarter.
- The company has extended its BalancePoint virtualized datacenter management software with a number of new metrics for both virtual and physical IT servers and storage.
- Akorri has signed a number of key partnerships with other vendors that should help it reach new customers, and it has been busy filling out its management team with experienced software executives.

The 451 take

Akorri is clearly a company on the upswing, with impressive growth, an extending reach and new, experienced executives who know the virtualization space. In a hotly competitive space, it seems to have a plan and a technology message that's resonating. With one product and a focus on analytics, Akorri already looked like a takeover target for a larger IT management software firm. With the traction it's getting in the market and the reach it's developing, its success may be hard for the larger players to ignore too much longer.

Details

Akorri has all the appearances of a company on the upswing. It reported 160% growth in the first half of this year, finishing the period with 120 customers – and it expects to have between 150 and 160 customers by the end of this quarter. The company continues to extend its flagship BalancePoint offering, which manages performance of virtual servers and storage.

The latest features in the 3.0 release are a virtual machine performance index to gauge performance of individual virtual machines to size them properly for the applications that will reside on them; virtual resource entitlement analysis, which demonstrates actual virtual resource usage vs. allocation; and **Microsoft** and **VMware** cluster support. There is also virtual CPU efficiency analysis and SAN switch performance analysis, for **Brocade** and **Cisco** SAN switches. Akorri is transitioning BalancePoint's architecture from Java to **Adobe Flex** for the sake of better performance.

Akorri has been active on the partnership front, signing up several resellers this year, including one in Japan, and adding **Avnet Technology Solutions** as a distributor. BalancePoint has become a part of Avnet's VirtualPath virtual infrastructure management offerings. Storage software developer **DataLink** is a new technology partner, releasing its Virtual Infrastructure Services offering powered by BalancePoint. Akorri continues to work closely with VMware, announcing support for VMware's vSphere cloud operating system by the end of this year.

Earlier this summer, Akorri expanded its management team, adding Bill Simpson, a veteran software executive who most recently ran channels and strategy at **Virtual Iron Software**, as VP of worldwide sales, and former Virtual Iron sales executive Warren Mead as VP of worldwide channels. Jim Comstock, who was most recently director of SAN strategy at **NetApp**, joined Akorri as VP of business development.

Competitive landscape

Akorri is pushing advanced analytics for virtualized environments rather than just straight-up performance monitoring, an area where **Cirba** and **ToutVirtual** are also trying to stake out ground. **Novell**, through its acquisition of **PlateSpin**, and **vKernel** are also challengers here. Server and application performance analytics specialists like **Netuitive** and **Integrien** have expanded into virtual environments as well.

Other companies in the physical/virtual datacenter performance management space include **Nimsoft**, **ScienceLogic**, **EG Innovations**, **Uptime Software**, **Perfman** and **BlueStripe Software**, all of which have at least some analytics capabilities, although their positioning is not quite the same as Akorri's, which is as much about resource utilization and migration issues as tracking performance bottlenecks. All of these vendors of course have to prove their value as performance management tools above and beyond VMware's vCenter.

All of the Big Four (**HP**, **IBM**, **CA Inc** and **BMC**) have some capabilities for both performance monitoring and analysis that can be applied to virtual environments, although it's enough of a niche for startups to exploit and outmaneuver larger companies in, especially at a lower price point, and Akorri offers a pay-as-you-go plan for BalancePoint.

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