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BMC Deepens App Monitoring with \$150m Deal

News

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By **Tony Baer**

BMC Software Inc has announced its intention to acquire Identify Software Ltd, a 10-year-old Israeli firm that specializes in a so-called "black box" technology that logs all the relevant parameters of software execution.

The \$150m all-cash deal, pending approval by Identify's venture backers, brings in a product that traces everything that happens when an application executes.

It would complement BMC's existing "Mainframe Transaction Analyzer" offering, which provides similar capabilities inside legacy environments, and BMC Patrol, whose application monitoring capabilities currently stop short of peering beneath the hood at the code execution and API levels.

Specifically, Identify's offering, AppSight, instruments an application in a manner similar to that of a flight recorder or black box.

It records separate channels of data such as user mouse clicks and keystrokes, software code arguments, network and database interactions. Using time stamps to synchronize results from the various data streams, Identify's products can provide different views to software developers, database architects, systems administrators and so on.

In so doing, it complements BMC Patrol's application monitoring capabilities for distributed applications written for J2EE, .NET, or traditional Windows programs.

Today, Patrol can signify when performance drops on an application. The Identify offerings can provide a view that drills down further. And, as long as you have the tool record the session, it can play it back exactly so you can see exactly what happened.

Identify is one of a new class of technology providers that deliver more granular views of software execution. For instance, Wily Technologies, recently acquired by CA, provides similar capabilities on the server end of J2EE applications, while its TimeStock acquisition correlates the end user experience. And TeaLeaf Technologies provides similar capabilities for playing back sessions from the web browser side.

These capabilities supplement traditional design time and QA approaches such as debugging, code profiling and after-the-fact-testing for isolating performance headaches.

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None of these tools, including Identify's, provide a complete solution. For instance, the Identity tools show you what happened, but you must rely on your knowledge or other tools to actually diagnose the problem.

Of course, that's where BMC's other offerings come into play, like Patrol monitoring or Remedy service desk, both of which can alert you when to turn the Identify AppSight recorder on; and BMC's stable of diagnostic tools that can help you pinpoint the problem.

Because the deal is technically pending, BMC couldn't be specific on its plans for the product or the acquired organization. Obviously it would be safe to say that the product engineering team will stay on. But BMC did say that it intended to group the AppSight products with MTA and the Patrol/Remedy offerings in the long run.

BMC expects the deal to close by the end of April.

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