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Our expanded SOA management directory will publish January 2005. It will be free to subscribers signed up before December 10th 2004.

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Security rules in SOA management

FEATURE ARTICLE by Keith Rodgers

WHICH comes first in an SOA strategy – security or management? Whichever you choose to prioritize, there's no getting away from what SOA management vendors have been finding in their early engagements with customers: the delivery of web services monitoring and management is closely knitted to effective identity management and perimeter security.

That realization has fueled much of the merger and acquisition activity among SOA management vendors in recent months, most notably the acquisition of Confluent Software by identity management provider Oblix, and last month's merger of leading management supplier Actional with XML firewall vendor Westbridge Technology. Others have scrambled to seal partnerships between management and security specialists.

Conflicting advice

Inevitably, these new alliances have spawned conflicting assessments of how customers should move forward, dictated in part by vendors' own development heritages, and in part by

customers' organizational structures and perceived needs. Customers need to understand what the issues really are, and which responses by the IT vendor community to heed.

How you deploy authentication and authorization, identity management and policy enforcement are all affected.

It's somewhat discouraging – if not surprising – that many organizations continue to treat security and management as separate, if loosely connected, issues. In part, that's because security and systems management have traditionally been the responsibility of separate IT functions. John Lilly, co-founder and CTO of security vendor Reactivity, points out that web services management tends to be the domain of application developers and enterprise architects, while operational staff – such as the VP operations or VP network operations – take responsibility for security.

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“One architecture has to be a master one – I will shamelessly say it should be NetWeaver”

— Pascal Brosset, SAP, page 2

“We knew nothing about Java and I don't think we really understood J2EE ... we decided we needed something different”

— Tony Kenny, Beaumont Hospital, page 8

“The more diverse the network fabric is, the more important it is to have that command and control”

— Dan Foody, Actional, page 12