



Strategic Thinking

New Business Models for Tech Success

SAVVIS Virtualizes Security Elements Across Network/Hosting IT Infrastructure to Create New Managed Security Utility Service

Opening Thoughts

One of the double-edged swords of today's managed services market is the a la carte nature of many of the offerings. On the positive side, an enterprise can incrementally select specific managed services to meet particular information technology (IT) management or business requirements. On the other hand, acquiring these services from multiple 'best of breed' sources can create a complicated vendor management issue and leave gaps in service coverage.

Security is especially important in the rapidly evolving utility computing sector in which providers are offering fundamentally new, service-oriented IT solutions that encompass a major proportion, if not all, of an enterprise's business operations. Safeguarding the security of the utility computing infrastructure and end-user applications is essential to maximize the business benefits of these solutions. The challenge has been how to deliver multi-layered security across all IT systems without building out a complex hardware infrastructure of security devices. In addition, comprehensive security has become increasingly important to meet escalating government and industry compliance standards.

While many managed service providers (MSPs) offer security services, most are packaging their managed security services as a separate, 'add-on' to their other managed services. Few providers offer security services that span the wide-area network (WAN)—the portion commonly referred to as the "cloud"—as well as the local area network (LAN), which is the "core" of an enterprise's operations.

Recently, one of the most striking developments is the shift of enterprise security from a dedicated equipment model to a virtual model. By taking a more holistic view of security components, and by integrating security management into all IT operations, security is now being delivered as a utility service that is less expensive than that of dedicated infrastructure and allow for better capacity planning. New security utility services are appearing that do not require hardware or software to be installed or managed at the customer's premise while also allowing for automatic technology refresh as IT threats change and security solutions evolve over time.

As reported in a previous Strategic Thinking profile, SAVVIS (www.savvis.net) is an IT/network solutions provider that has combined its history in the communications and hosting services markets to build a unique utility computing services capability. This profile examines SAVVIS' new Security Utility services.

SAVVIS' Security Utility and Dedicated Security Services

SAVVIS was founded in 1995, as a high-performance Internet Service Provider (ISP) and has expanded through a combination of internal growth and a series of acquisitions to become a utility services provider that serves over 5000 customers in 47 countries.

SAVVIS' recent acquisitions include Intel's hosting business, known as Intel Online Services (IOS), in 2002; WAM!NET, a leading content management and distribution service provider, in 2003; and the assets of Cable & Wireless (C&W) America in 2004 which included 15 data centers from Exodus Communications, MCI's internet backbone that carried one quarter of the world's Internet routes, and the content delivery network (CDN) of Digital Island and Sandpiper. As a result of these moves, SAVVIS now operates 25 data centers in the US, Europe, and Asia.

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SAVVIS' service portfolio includes managed network, hosting, digital content and voice services. Over the past year, SAVVIS has augmented these capabilities by integrating the legacy security technologies and services developed by Exodus and Digital Island—both previously acquired by Cable & Wireless America—and the security components of Intel Online Services. In addition, SAVVIS has added security technology from Nortel, CheckPoint, TripWire and Cisco among others, along with open source technology and approximately 200 security professional staff to create a managed Security Utility service.

SAVVIS' Security Utility service combines “in the cloud” WAN firewall, distributed denial of service (DDoS) and worm attack mitigation capabilities with hosted firewalls and intrusion detection systems. The Security Utility services also include intrusion detection, email protection, incident management, secure access via IP virtual private networks (VPNs), compliance management and perimeter security at both the WAN and LAN levels, including all of the computing storage devices. They are delivered via a virtualized service delivery platform and managed by SAVVIS' integrated management system which includes a customer portal to give enterprise managers full visibility. To date the company has rolled out more than 5000 cloud-based firewalls and 1000 dedicated security appliances as part of its security services.

SAVVIS has the automated provisioning, monitoring, metering and billing capabilities to quickly deploy the service and enable customers to benefit from SAVVIS' security capabilities without any up-front capital expense. SAVVIS' service management systems also permit it to customize service levels to meet its customers' specific application needs.

SAVVIS has also established a broad set of security professional services. Individual engagements include: vulnerability assessment; security policy development; application code review; architecture design and hardening; log and event analysis; compliance requirements assessment and management; security assurance management. Dedicated Security Services include: intrusion detection services, managed network perimeter security, access and authentication, and scanning and analysis services.

Also of note, SAVVIS completed an examination in conformity with the Statement on Auditing Standards (SAS) No. 70, one of the most important security and quality standards. This certification documented SAVVIS systems and processes including security monitoring, change management, problem management, backup and environmental controls, logical and physical access.

Strategic Thoughts

The utility computing model is gaining greater market acceptance among enterprises of all sizes because it enables them to acquire IT resources and business applications on an as-needed basis. Utility computing services, like those offered by SAVVIS, have the additional appeal of 'out-tasking' the deployment and management of the IT resources and business applications to a third-party.

As enterprises become more interested in utility computing service alternatives, increasingly important criteria for selection will be the depth and breadth of the service provider's security capabilities to ensure the reliability of their IT resources and safety of their valuable data. SAVVIS has crafted a comprehensive set of automated and professional security services to satisfy its customers' concerns, allowing them to easily layer on virtualized security services that deliver on value and performance, while maintaining security best practices, and compliance.

About THINKstrategies, Inc.

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