



Data Center News:

Aperture unveils new capacity planning tool

By Bridget Botelho, News Writer
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Connecticut-based Aperture Technologies Inc is introducing a new capacity planning application to address data center management priorities, such as energy efficiency, according to Sean Nicholson, Aperture's director of product development.

"The trend within the past four to five years has been toward power conservation. Prior to that, the goal was to maximize space and pack in as much density as possible," Nicholson said. "Greening data centers is important. Our customers are looking at how their resources are being used, which applications to virtualize and consolidate to save power."

Aperture's other software, Vista, which is four years old, also details things, such as the equipment in a rack and power supplies.

The Aperture Vista Capacity Management enables data center managers to visualize and predict aspects, such as cooling and available space, so IT managers can tell how many blade servers they can pack into the room, for instance.

The capacity planning tool gives a bird's-eye view of their data center on a computer screen, allowing users to see every rack in the room. Users can click on a specific rack and get all the details of the servers in it, including the remaining amps, wattage being used, BTU load, the model and manufacturer.

Server utilization is seen with the software, including heat output, power use and density. Various reports can be generated with the software to track infrastructure usage over time. It also forecasts future application pipelines to predict the consumption of data center resources and can help determine when key resources will run out so data center managers have lead time for future data center planning.

Capacity planning tools ease data center management projects

Data center managers who do not use capacity planning software are often left guessing. "One of our customers said he finds applications to consolidate by walking around the data center looking for tan boxes. The new servers are all black, so when he sees a tan one, it is old, and the application running on it is probably a good one to virtualize," Nicholson said. This method may work, but it's a gamble and a time waster.

Tom Roberts, director of data center services for Trinity Information Services of Trinity Health said capacity planning has always been done manually by taking readings and calculating loads and capacity from the data collected.

He expects the Aperture capacity planning tool to give them a more efficient and quicker way to manage the data centers at Trinity Health -- the fourth largest Catholic healthcare system in the country, managing 46 hospitals, 379 outpatient facilities, 26 long-term care facilities and numerous programs.

"Power and cooling are the two fundamental resources we must track and stay ahead of. Finding out you have a problem two months prior to having a problem is not soon enough. Capital planning and readiness takes nine to 18 months, so a system that gives us a trending method is a huge advantage for us," Roberts said.

Facilities and IT management have not traditionally cooperated on data center planning and capacity management of the data center. Also, when looking at the data center, plans considered floor and rack space and did not have to cover power and cooling capacities, according to Bill Clifford, chairman and CEO of Aperture.

The new capacity planning tool will be available in June ranging in price from \$30,000 and up, depending on the size of the data center.

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