

## **WS-Management's Success Depends on Wide, Deep Vendor Support**

**Donna Scott, David Mitchell Smith, Cameron Haight**

Microsoft is pushing a new version of its Web Services for Management Extension (WMX) standard. But more work and industry support will be needed before WS-Management can help you manage Web services.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

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### Event

On 8 October 2004, AMD, Dell, Intel, Microsoft and Sun Microsystems announced the publication of WS-Management (based on Microsoft's earlier WMX), a Web services standard that defines a common approach to exchanging management information across hardware, software and applications. The vendors plan to submit WS-Management to a standards body in 2005, and will announce specific plans to incorporate the standard into their products when the specification is further developed.

### Analysis

Microsoft and its partners are introducing yet another standard definition for management that will overlap with Hewlett-Packard's (HP's) and IBM's work with the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS) — a specification known as Web Services Distributed Management, or WSDM). Microsoft hopes to get element suppliers of servers, storage, networks and application software to use WS-Management to enable access to embedded management information via a standard protocol. Earlier protocols, such as Simple Network Management Protocol and Web-Based Enterprise Management, were limited in their ability to get element providers to focus on "control" — changing the element's configuration or capacity — which is critical to enabling real-time infrastructure. WS-Management has other advantages: It is simpler than WSDM and is designed to scale down to all types of devices.

If Microsoft can influence hardware and software suppliers to broadly embed this management functionality into their products broadly, its management products will more dynamically manage the environment and move the environment further toward real-time infrastructure — while *appearing* to be somewhat heterogeneous. Another advantage for Microsoft is that, like other management standards efforts that preceded it, this standard would not require that the company or its partners invest in developing and maintaining "adapters." One big challenge is that WS-Management needs to gain support from a premier multivendor management vendor, such as Computer Associates International, HP or IBM, all which currently back WSDM.

**End-User Recommendations:** Expect little useful standardization focused on managing Web services. Gartner believes the WS-Management initiative will take until at least late 2006 to sort out. Both this effort and WSDM are still focused on management using Web services, which does not address the actual management of Web services. However, given that standards could enable a more dynamic and lower-cost management environment, IT organizations should encourage vendor participation and leadership in this area.

**Analytical Sources:** Donna Scott, David Smith and Cameron Haight, Gartner Research

### Recommended Reading and Related Research

- "Effective Web Services and SOBAs Require Management" — Use Web services middleware solutions to manage and monitor Web service faults, capacity, availability, performance and service levels. **By Frank Kenney**
- "Client Issues for Web Services Management" — Web services management technology solutions will remain immature throughout 2004, so focus on establishing the processes and organizational structure for Web services support. **By Frank Kenney and Cameron Haight**

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