

1E upgrades NightWatchman, seeks to bring power management to SMEs

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Sector: Enterprise Software

Event summary

- 1E's NightWatchman 5.5 will, for the first time, be supplied with its own management console. Thus, it's no longer necessary for admins to use the Windows Systems Management Server (SMS) or Systems Center Configuration Manager (SCCM) console.
- Sleeplessness Client Detection (SCD) is a new technology that analyzes why some PCs won't go into sleep mode when they should. The utility should enable more PCs to go to sleep more often, saving energy and reducing carbon emissions.
- The addition of a console means that 1E can now address SMEs, most of which do not have a Windows systems administration tool like SCCM. 1E is recruiting both distributors and resellers in Europe and the US.

The 451 take

1E is one of the global leaders in enterprise desktop power management, and is growing strongly. As we have said repeatedly, this is a 'green' technology where demand is building and which has a quick return on investment. Although these enhancements are not critical, competition in this market is strong, and for systems management specialists, the barriers to entry are not high. All the leading vendors are adding features. 1E, already strong on scalability, stability and reporting, has now made NightWatchman easier to configure, especially for SMEs, an important improvement. The product is becoming a 1E flagship, and we expect it will have no difficulty recruiting distributors and resellers.

Details

With NightWatchman 5.5, **1E** has made four small but significant improvements that should widen the appeal of the product.

First, it has added a management console, so customers can manage energy consumption separately from other systems management activities. Although only some large enterprise customers will use the console, 1E can now target smaller businesses that don't have management tools. Configuration is now an easy step-by-step process (pre-configured settings will be added in the next release).

Second, in a sample of 16,000 PCs, 1E found that half failed to go to sleep on at least one occasion in 24 hours, and over a week, 90% failed to go to sleep at least once. This problem, known as 'PC insomnia,' is caused when device drivers, screen savers, applications or agents create events that reset the Windows activity timer, preventing the system from entering a low-power mode. Sleeplessness can undermine the economic benefits of power management.

1E's new technology analyzes the cause of the sleeplessness and seeks work-arounds for common problems, without overriding the Windows timer.

Third, NightWatchman clients can now use a local 'alarm clock' to wake up, instead of using a networked message. And fourth, 1E has made it easier to schedule and carry out tasks in the maintenance window, reducing the impact on employees.

Competitive landscape

The desktop power management is currently enjoying strong growth, and although overall market figures or aggregated sales are not yet available, we believe 1E and **BigFix** have a lead over near rivals **Verdiem** and **Faronics** (Verdiem has recently signed a deal with **Cisco** that may increase its sales in the coming year). Other suppliers, such as **Criston**, **New Boundary Technologies** and **Symantec/Altiris**, are less focused on power management.

1E's technology has proved popular with large corporates – NightWatchman is installed on 2.5 million PCs – but it has a lower presence among SMEs, where Verdiem and Faronics may fare better. 1E's new console, and new focus on ease of use, will help address this.

Equally importantly, 1E plans to make much greater use of the channels. It hopes to recruit a large number of resellers, and an agreement with a distributor is imminent. Easier configuration makes this more practical.

Technical differentiation between the vendor's products will, we believe, be less important in the coming year than an effective sales and marketing presence, especially across the US. However, buyers will still want ease of use, reliability and good analytics. As the technology spreads across SMEs, any strengths or weaknesses will be amplified in the market.

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