

REPORT REPRINT

Galileo explores new horizons with enhanced performance remediation

HENRY BALTAZAR

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Infrastructure performance and storage management specialist Galileo Performance Explorer, a product division of ATS Group, has extended its capabilities and ease of use with a new proactive dashboard and expanded hardware support.

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Galileo Performance Explorer, a product division of ATS Group, is looking to expand beyond its traditional base of IBM infrastructure customers with the latest update of its SaaS infrastructure performance management (IPM) platform. Its latest release includes a cloud-based dashboard that uses analytics to locate potential performance and capacity issues as well as an enterprise dashboard with asset and resource management.

THE 451 TAKE

Like most prudent small vendors, Galileo focused on the IBM customer base it knew best for its first release, and so far it has been able to close more than 100 deals with a high retention rate. With its latest release and the updates expected to follow in 2016, Galileo will be able to cover a larger portion of the enterprise market. While IPM and storage performance management in particular have not been major areas for M&A or venture funding in recent years as environments have grown more complex due to extended virtualization, software-defined datacenters and hybrid cloud, the need to quickly aggregate, correlate and analyze data from VMs, application servers and storage arrays will soon arrive. With IT administration teams now struggling to manage rapidly growing data sets and workloads, tools such as the SaaS-based Galileo Performance Explorer should be appealing to organizations struggling with this burden.

CONTEXT

ATS Group's Galileo Performance Explorer unit currently has a headcount of 19 employees, including 12 fulltime developers and five salespeople. It is seeking additional funding to accelerate its product development and hardware interoperability support. Galileo's long-term goal continues to be a potential acquisition.

Galileo Performance Explorer has more than 140 customers, including large enterprises such as Prudential, Unisys, Colgate-Palmolive, Humana and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, as well as federal, state and local government organizations. The vendor claims an average deal size of \$49,000 for annual subscriptions, which should exceed \$75,000 this year.

STRATEGY

Galileo is still developing its go-to-market strategy but recently took a few steps forward with the signing of a distribution deal with Info X, which will give it access to Info X's 2,000 storage VARs, VMware resellers and integrator partners. It has also launched its Discovery Partner Program for attracting channel partners, which has no annual volume or certification requirements to participate. Galileo notes that partners leveraging its SaaS platform will be able to become trusted advisers for their clients since the management tools will help them align virtualization, compute and storage resources to their clients' business objectives.

PRODUCTS

The new Enterprise and Analytics Dashboards are the most important features added to Galileo Performance Explorer. The Enterprise Dashboard provides a detailed summary of all of the assets in an environment, including key storage metrics such as total usable capacity, virtual storage capacity and performance statistics such as average IOPS and throughput per volume. On the server side, the Enterprise Dashboard can quickly provide information on which operating systems are deployed and the memory, network, CPU and disk utilization of the servers in the environment. In an upcoming release, the Enterprise Dashboard will include tagging capabilities that will allow customers to create a more granular view of specific workloads and should help larger organizations more easily divide management responsibilities across the infrastructure.

The Analytics Dashboard monitors 15-20 different analytic thresholds across server, storage and SAN elements, and locates anomalies based on the field experience of Galileo's experts. The dashboard will leverage analytics to warn customers of potential issues, and thresholds can be changed to ignore noncritical issues or expected performance spikes, which could occur with cyclical events such as end-of-quarter reporting for accounting systems. The next enhancement to the Analytics Dashboard will be correlation between the server, storage and SAN elements to provide end-to-end monitoring and analytics.

Support for Brocade SAN agents was added in December 2015, which allows Galileo to gather metrics on Fibre-Channel directors, switches and Inter-Switch Links – this should be a welcome addition for large enterprises with Fibre-Channel environments. Additionally, support for NetApp 7 modes systems was recently introduced, with clustered Data ONTAP support planned in the future. HPE, 3PAR, HDS and EMC arrays are expected to be the next platforms added to the support matrix. The vendor notes that its ability to analyze workloads will also be leveraged in cloud migrations to ensure that cloud provider capacity and performance resources are utilized efficiently. Galileo deploys an Infobright database running on solid-state storage as its back-end repository. It boasts that it can achieve 40:1 compression ratios with this database, which is important since it allows it to retain all of the data it gathers to help ensure accuracy on trends without skewing results. The high-speed database also allows customers to pull up performance charts nearly instantaneously. The database currently resides at a hosted facility, and the Galileo team will likely create additional instances in locations where compliance is more stringent.

COMPETITION

The storage performance management space continues to be driven mostly by leading hardware providers such as IBM (with Spectrum Control), NetApp (OnCommand) and EMC (ViPR SRM). Players in this sector have leveraged M&A in the past to bolster their product lines, including NetApp's acquisitions of SAN management specialist Onaro in 2008 and storage and virtualization management firm Akorri Networks in 2011. To maintain account control, incumbents could heavily discount or give away their storage management tools. Contenders in this arena have had some success gaining traction since customers often want to use a third party to get a second opinion on the reliability, performance and efficiency of their infrastructure.

While the major array suppliers still have a hold on the storage management market, a few interesting startups are emerging such as performance modeling and validation specialists Load DynamiX, Komprise and Datagres. Virtual Instruments is another challenger in the storage and virtualization management fray, though it has taken a step back recently and laid off half of its employees last November. Galileo believes its SaaS-based approach will allow it to provide end-to-end management capabilities comparable to Virtual Instruments at a lower price point, and without the need for on-premises hardware such as SAN taps.

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

Galileo Performance Explorer has been deployed at Fortune 500-class customers, which is good validation for a small player. Its SaaS model allows for rapid deployments, which should reduce its barrier to entry relative to on-premises offerings, and could open up opportunities with enterprise and service-provider customers.

WEAKNESSES

The vendor has a limited market presence and currently has some gaps in its storage hardware support.

OPPORTUNITIES

With data growth outpacing budget increases, organizations need to be able to do more with fewer resources, and tools like Galileo Performance Explorer could help with optimization and troubleshooting.

THREATS

Storage performance monitoring and management offerings do not have a wide customer base and storage array incumbents could offer heavy discounts for their products to avoid competition.