

A10 Networks launches two lines of network-based application acceleration products

Steve Steinke, Analyst
Networks & Media
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Event Summary

- A10 Networks' AX series of DCCAs, which it describes as secure application acceleration switches, are designed to improve Web-based application performance with N + 1 scalability and high availability.
- With the EX series of WTOs, characterized as secure WAN management appliances, A10 aims to provide WAN optimization, application visibility, firewall load balancing and intrusion protection, with assured scalability and reliability.
- For the EX, identity information from an IDSentrie enables the ability to identify usernames, in addition to corresponding IP addresses. For the AX, IDSentrie can identify usernames for setting priorities when denial-of-service attacks limit resources.

The 451 Take

It takes guts to roll out new products in market sectors as heavily populated as the datacenter communications accelerator (DCCA) and WAN traffic optimizer (WTO) sectors. Quite possibly, the acquisition opportunities in these spaces have peaked, though we don't believe they have stopped altogether. With three interrelated product lines, A10 has a foundation that could support an extended existence as a private entity or as a public company.

Details

A10 Networks' two new product lines are the AX series and the EX series. The AX series is described by A10 as an application acceleration switch, but we would describe it as a DCCA. It has features comparable to some market-leading products, such as a scripting language for customizing and adding capabilities, and application security that can protect the network from denial-of-service attacks and detect protocol anomalies. A10 claims its pricing is substantially below that of comparable competitors.

The EX series products are called Secure WAN Managers, though we think they could be better characterized as WTOs. Like WTOs, they perform protocol optimization, compression and quality of service. Unlike other WTOs, they include an intrusion protection system and firewall load balancing. They also include IDsentrie integration that enables visibility and reporting on user IDs, not just on IP or MAC addresses.

Competitive Landscape

For the AX series, A10 identifies its principal competitors as **F5 Networks** and **Citrix**. We would add **Zeus Technology, Crescendo Networks, Juniper, Cisco, Array Networks, Radware, Stampede Technologies, Foundry Networks** and **Nortel**. **Akamai** and **Netli** offer services closely resembling DCCA functionality.

For the EX series, A10 says **Packeteer**, F5 and Citrix are the closest rivals. Other network-visibility vendors include **Ipanema Technologies** and **Exinda Networks**. **Converged Access** has a similar product. A10 claims it won't face direct competition from the other WTO vendors: **Riverbed Technology, Juniper, Silver Peak Systems, Certeon, Blue Coat Systems, Expand Networks** and Cisco.

IDsentrie competes with the IAM suite vendors – **Oracle, Sun Microsystems, CA Inc, IBM, HP, BMC Software, Novell, EMC/RSA** and **Microsoft** – as well as with the identity-based access gateway makers – **Caymas Systems, Trusted Network Technologies, Applied Identity, Identity Engines, Nevis Networks** and ConSentry Networks.

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