

# Shunra Takes the Guesswork Out of WAN Application Deployment

## Event

On August 12, 2009 Shunra introduced version 6.0 of Shunra's WAN emulation technology, Virtual Enterprise (VE). Shunra VE is a combination appliance/software solution that emulates production level network traffic in pre-deployment lab environments to determine how the traffic patterns will impact performance of applications deployed over the WAN. This is a proactive solution that helps enterprise customers resolve potential latency problems before applications are deployed; saving both time and money.

Highlights from this release include:

- The addition of packet capture abilities
- WAN bandwidth recording and playback
- Expanded support for third party product integration
- Expanded support for VE Profile for HP LoadRunner 9.5
- Multi-user testing
- VLAN switching, trunking and routing

Shunra VE is available immediately.

## Context

Not all that long ago the WAN was the poor cousin to the LAN. Users on the WAN had to suffer performance degradation as a matter of course. Factors such as datacenter consolidation, globalization and mergers and acquisitions have helped move the WAN out of the dark and into the light. The WAN has become a vital part of the corporate IT infrastructure. Consequently, when an enterprise is looking to either roll out new applications that will be traveling over the WAN or consolidate datacenters, performance degradation is no longer acceptable. The need for speed over the WAN is so real that it fueled the growth of an entire set of appliances devoted to the task of application acceleration over the WAN, WAN Optimization Controllers (WOCs).

While WOCs can improve application performance over the WAN post deployment, a more proactive approach and one that could save the company both time and money is to better understand application behavior over the WAN prior to deployment. One way to do that is to perform pre-deployment testing using WAN emulation technology. One of the biggest challenges IT departments face when rolling out new application deployments is trying to understand how that application will perform over the WAN. Understanding WAN bandwidth requirements is no easy task. There are many variables that can come into play. It requires a coordinated effort across IT departments to gather and analyze the data.

One of Shunra's goals with this release was to both increase visibility into what is going on in the network as well as provide ways to improve cross group collaboration. The addition of packet capture allows customers to capture business transactions over the LAN without

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purchasing a separate packet capture product and then further analyze that traffic either with Shunra's VE Analyzer or a third-party product such as OPNET's Ace. The new WAN record and playback features were added to more accurately capture WAN traffic patterns at various times of the day or over certain periods of time. This will ensure that customers get a more complete picture of their WAN traffic patterns and how different applications and times of day might impact performance and can apply them to their testing scenario.

Other improvements are targeted at making the solution available to a wider IT audience. Instead of the solution being limited to one user, the software can now accommodate 10 users on a single appliance. At the same time, VLAN switching, trunking and routing support means only taking up a single port and eliminating the need for re-cabling.

Network monitoring often requires integrating data from multiple vendors' products. Shunra provides integration with third-party products through APIs as well as having key partnerships with vendors such as HP and OPNET. Shunra's VE is integrated on HP's LoadRunner and is HP certified.

## Key Ramifications

This new version of Shunra's flagship product was largely generated in response to customer requests. Shunra is seeing more of a demand for cross team collaboration and integration with third-party products. Customers are looking for greater visibility into the traffic over their networks. The reasons for these changes and where Shunra feels they can add the most value include datacenter consolidation/relocation/virtualization and mobile application rollout.

Datacenter consolidation means that more sites will be accessing business critical applications and services over the WAN. It becomes even more critical that network traffic patterns and application behaviors are better understood, so that if application performance does not look acceptable in pre-deployment testing, something can be done before the application hits the network. A major advantage of taking this proactive approach is that there are a greater number of options available to resolve the issues such as tuning the application design or considering the addition of a WOC. These options can be examined and tested to see which solution provides the best long and short term benefits and make it a proactive and not reactive approach. The new packet capture and WAN record and playback features build even more realistic testing scenarios and help companies see potential problems even before they reach critical mass.

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Along with the WAN, the mobile network is next in line for integration into the extended corporate communication environment. As it does, pre-deployment testing of mobile based application will become increasingly critical or companies risk mobile applications falling short of their goals.

## EMA Perspective

Deployment of applications is always a challenge; the WAN adds yet another level of complexity to the equation. With IT projects under a microscope, coming in on time and within budget go a long way to keeping the corporate bean counters at bay. However, one of the biggest challenges Shunra faces is getting companies to spend the money to do their pre-deployment testing before they get burned. Once these types of tools are in place, it is often so obvious in retrospect just how significant pre-deployment testing is to the success of new deployments. Focusing on testing first saves time and money in post deployment

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troubleshooting later. The knowledge gained in pre-deployment testing can not only avoid problems, but go a long way to pinpoint problems later.

Shunra needs to make itself heard and explain to customers how much time and money they can save doing pre-deployment testing. Testing is not a sexy topic. It does not garner the cache of cloud computing and virtualization. Yet how else do you understand the ramifications of these IT trends without testing various scenarios first? No two IT environments are the same. Mergers and acquisitions are commonplace. That means consolidation of IT resources and datacenters. Datacenter consolidation has been a trend for several years now and is still happening. The WAN is as important as the LAN, because it is all about the network. The network has become the axis upon which the modern corporation is built.

Now more than ever pre-deployment testing must become part of the corporate IT process. IT personnel and tools must work together to share the knowledge and analyze the data. With that information in hands of all the various constituencies, everyone can work together and leverage that information to make more informed decisions not only regarding new application deployments, but network performance issues in general. It takes the guesswork out of resolving performance issues and that means achieving higher levels of operational efficiency, and who does not want that?

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## About EMA

Founded in 1996, Enterprise Management Associates (EMA) is a leading industry analyst firm that specializes in going “beyond the surface” to provide deep insight across the full spectrum of IT management technologies. EMA analysts leverage a unique combination of practical experience, insight into industry best practices, and in-depth knowledge of current and planned vendor solutions to help its clients achieve their goals. Learn more about EMA research, analysis, and consulting services for enterprise IT professionals and IT vendors at [www.enterprisemanagement.com](http://www.enterprisemanagement.com) or follow EMA on Twitter ([http://twitter.com/ema\\_research](http://twitter.com/ema_research)).

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