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Dell Ups Workload-Specific Server Game With Cloudera In-Memory Appliance [1]

by [Tom Spring](#) [2] on October 14, 2014, 4:24 pm EDT

Dell beefed up its line-up of workload-specific servers Tuesday when it revealed its Dell In-Memory Appliance for Cloudera Enterprise aimed at corporate implementations of the open-source Hadoop big data technology.

The appliance is the latest from Dell as the company tries to move away from pushing commodity x86 servers to more complex converged-infrastructure solutions that virtualize multiple compute, networking and storage functions into a single server.

The Cloudera appliance, Dell said, will help customers capitalize on high-performance data analysis at near real-time speeds with new in-memory capabilities. In-memory computing accelerates the manipulation of stored data because information is kept in a computer's main random access memory (RAM) and not on a comparatively slow disk drive.

[Related: HP's Dual Hyper-Converged Strategy: StoreVirtual VSA, VMware EVO:Rail [3]

For Dell channel partners, the appliance strategy has been a welcome new addition to Dell's portfolio as it moves farther up the data center food chain to more lucrative solutions.

Aaron Cardenas, CEO and founder of Hermosa Beach, Calif.-based solution provider and Dell channel partner P1 Technologies, said Dell's workload-specific servers open up new opportunities for partners like himself to sell more lucrative and complex solutions.

"Whether it's Cloudera, storage or a Red Hat appliance, the farther we move up the stack the better it is for our margins," Cardenas said.

The Cloudera appliance is Dell's first in-memory appliance, but is one of many appliances revealed in June at the Dell User Forum where it took the wraps off a blizzard of new enterprise appliances in partnership with Nutanix for storage, Oracle for its Web-centric 12c database and Microsoft.

Dell has been shipping a Red Hat appliance for months now and began shipping its Oracle 12c several weeks ago in conjunction with Oracle OpenWorld. It has also begun shipping a VMware EVO:RAIL appliance in August that combines VMware compute, networking and storage in a hyper-converged infrastructure appliance.

Dell rival Hewlett-Packard also entered the hyper-converged ring on Tuesday, announcing [3] two new appliances. One is based on its own software-defined storage stack and the other on VMware's upcoming EVO:Rail software stack.

The Cloudera Enterprise appliance includes Dell server technology pre-integrated with the bundled Cloudera Enterprise application. The system is a small- to medium scale-out appliance and features the Dell PowerEdge R720XD server with the Apache Spark for real-time analytics on streaming data. Pricing for an eight-node system starts at \$160,000, 16 nodes at \$320,000 and small enterprise edition with 24 nodes starting at \$480,000 and scalable to 48 nodes.

Dell maintains the Cloudera appliance simplifies and speeds up otherwise complex Hadoop cluster deployments, letting IT managers gain critical business insights faster. For partners, appliances simplify a partner's engagement model with customers and at the same time allows them to sell their own service and support, hardware and software.

Dell is betting big on Hadoop. The market for Hadoop is expected to grow to \$50.2 billion by 2020, according to a recent IDC research report.

Dell is targeting the big data market with its Cloudera Hadoop appliance.

“Data is created and consumed at rates never before seen, and customers across all industries are struggling to ingest, store, analyze and build insights from it,” said Sam Greenblatt, vice president of Engineered Solutions and Technology, Enterprise Solutions Group at Dell, in a statement.

The Dell In-Memory Appliance for Cloudera Enterprise will begin shipping Wednesday.

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