

Managing Microsoft® Environments with CA Systems Management Technology

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Executive Summary

Challenge

The constant flow of messages through your organization via email, voice, text and faxes has become so vital in today's business world that the health, availability and performance of your communications environment is a key concern.

With the advent of Microsoft® Exchange Server 2007, email has grown into Unified Messaging. As a result, any system downtime or performance degradation in the underlying services will negatively impact everything from your customers' experience to the bottom line. To avoid these problems and "manage with less," you need automated monitoring tools and advanced reporting capabilities to operate this critical application in a cost-efficient and effective manner.

Opportunity

CA has aligned its management capabilities with Microsoft's view of Unified Messaging, so that you monitor and manage your vital communications with the same tools you use to manage your infrastructure. CA NSM with CA Unicenter® Management for Microsoft Exchange enable you to continuously monitor Microsoft® Active Directory® (Active Directory) and Exchange services. With CA, you are armed with a management platform that ensures your messaging environment is healthy, available, and operating at peak performance. Real-time event alerts let you address problems before they impact your customers, while historical data reporting enables a more proactive management approach to both day-to-day operations and planning for future growth.

Benefits

CA NSM consolidates infrastructure management for Active Directory and Exchange through a centralized management command center. The Management Command Center (MCC) gives you visibility across all your platforms — including UNIX, Linux and mainframes that can be affected by Windows and Active Directory components. The combined capabilities of CA NSM and CA Unicenter Management for Microsoft Exchange reduce the complexities and the costs of deploying and managing your Unified Messaging environment.

You can seamlessly integrate with other CA and third-party solutions through CA common product architecture and shared Management Database (MDB). These powerful capabilities support the Enterprise IT Management (EITM) vision to Unify and Simplify™ IT management enterprise-wide.

SECTION 1: CHALLENGE

New Complexity in the Messaging Environment

Microsoft software has become part of the fundamental fabric of most businesses and, with the launch of Exchange Server 2007, it has become even more so. No longer simply email, you have now entered the age of “Unified Messaging.” This includes voice mail, and fax routing to Exchange mailboxes — and requires control over mailbox, calendar and various speech functions, including speech recognition and, soon, Voice over IP (VoIP).

More than ever, your organization depends on Exchange to keep information flowing quickly and easily to whoever needs it, wherever they are. A rogue server can cause degradation in performance that has a far-reaching and negative impact on customers, end users and even your company’s fiscal well being.

Your overriding challenge is to protect the health and availability of the messaging infrastructure. This requires the ability to discover, monitor and manage the underlying key services, especially Active Directory. Unfortunately, with most IT dollars going to “keeping the lights on,” limited resources are available to manage this increasingly complex environment.

The complexity begins with the expanded services in Exchange Server 2007, and is compounded by an exponential growth in the numbers of employees, partners and customers who depend on this critical application. Newer messaging technologies — wireless access, rich media and instant messaging, to mention a few — create new performance demands that require you to monitor and manage even more devices with the same, or lower budget.

Above all, you need integrated monitoring and management technologies that you can use proactively to prevent problems — not just react once a problem surfaces. This requires the ability to monitor and manage from a centralized console the entire environment and all of its complexities, whether or not they are Windows-based. You want capabilities such as:

- Proactive monitoring and management of key components with hierarchical views of the entire infrastructure and the domain topology
- Enterprise-wide performance and historical reporting for Active Directory and Exchange
- Intelligent alerts that use an extensive Knowledge Base to recommend corrective action

SECTION 2: OPPORTUNITY

CA Technologies Help You Conquer Complexity

To enable you to monitor and manage the health, availability and performance of your entire messaging infrastructure, CA continues to align its management technologies with Microsoft. CA NSM and CA Unicenter Management for Microsoft Exchange enable you to take a proactive stance, detecting and correcting performance degradation and other problems before they turn into down time.

CA NSM Manages Microsoft Active Directory

Many IT professionals have discovered that, because Microsoft Active Directory is such a robust service, it continues to run even when it has been poorly configured. Over time, these configuration errors can cause serious performance degradation in Active Directory-supported applications. CA NSM addresses this challenge through two key components: Active Directory Explorer and the Knowledge Base for Active Directory.

ACTIVE DIRECTORY EXPLORER CA NSM Active Directory Explorer simplifies your ability to monitor the topology, configuration and health of the infrastructure. You can view the Active Directory domain topology and deployment of essential components and services. This tool also gathers enterprise-wide statistical records in the context of the Active Directory topology and provides statistical reports to support essential service levels. You can schedule automated diagnostic monitoring scripts on key health metrics to detect and resolve performance problems proactively. With MCC you can observe a Business Process View (BPV) of your entire Active Directory infrastructure, showing the hierarchy of services as they relate to your critical business services.

KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR ACTIVE DIRECTORY The Active Directory Knowledge Base is extensible and delivers troubleshooting and diagnostic information in the context of Active Directory events. It facilitates the discovery of potential root causes and provides possible resolution instructions. Out of the box, you can monitor key performance indicators with more than 250 predefined and categorized event IDs.

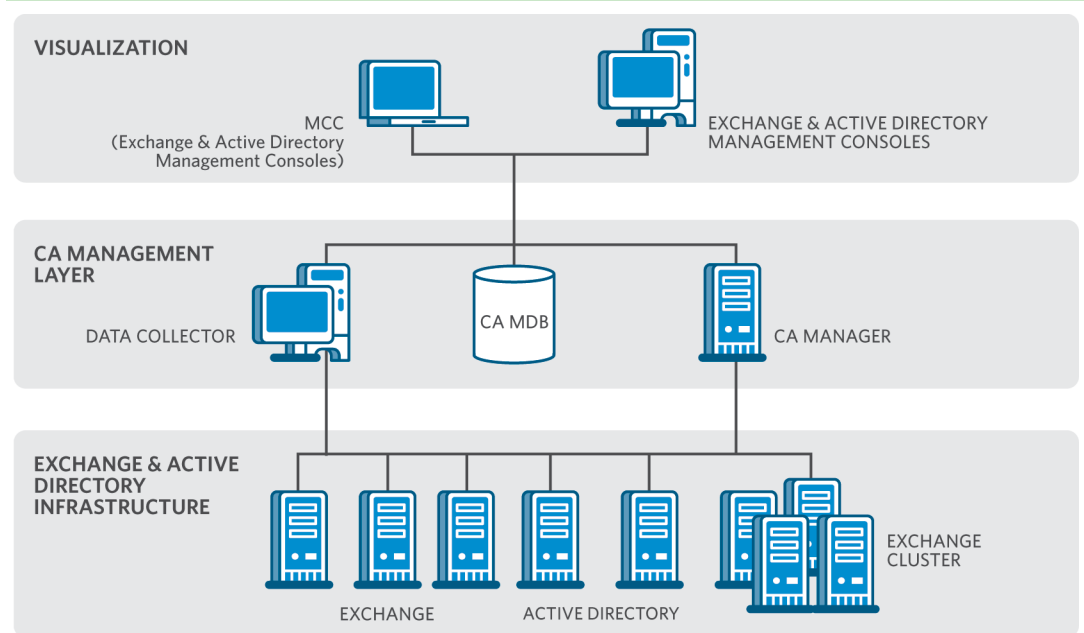
How Active Directory Management Works

CA NSM begins monitoring the Active Directory services immediately after installation. Active Directory Enterprise Manager creates and maintains all Active Directory objects and monitors key components in real time. It tests proactively for performance issues in Domain Name Services, replication and configuration. The information collected by the Active Directory agents is analyzed and stored centrally in the MDB. Both historical and real-time reports are available on key performance indicators including utilization and performance metrics, configuration information and event frequency.

FIGURE A

The top layer shows the user interfaces through the MCC or the Active Directory and Exchange Management Consoles; the management components Data Collector and CA Manager process the Information collected from the managed nodes in the Exchange Server and Active Directory Infrastructure. All the collected data is stored in the CA MDB.

CA MANAGEMENT ARCHITECTURE FOR ACTIVE DIRECTORY AND EXCHANGE SERVER



Managing The Exchange Environment

Maintaining the health and availability of Exchange Server goes well beyond monitoring a distributed application. Because it is dependent on so many other infrastructure components and services — the underlying server hardware, Active Directory, Domain Name Service (DNS) and Simple Mail Transport Protocol (SMTP) — successful management of Exchange Server means that you must also identify and monitor all its reliant components. CA Unicenter Management for Microsoft Exchange helps you do this by providing comprehensive monitoring coverage of the entire Exchange Server infrastructure.

How CA Unicenter Management for Microsoft Exchange Works

You can achieve quick time to value with CA Unicenter Management for Microsoft Exchange because it automatically and continuously discovers all critical infrastructure and configuration objects, using familiar terms such as Services, Disks, Storage groups and Connectors. It also suggests monitoring templates that fit most scenarios.

Historical performance reports help your administrators plan for future growth. You can examine these reports and identify trends not apparent through real-time monitoring. With a clear understanding of any abnormal usage, you can quickly identify and resolve performance problems before they impact end users. CA Unicenter Management for Microsoft Exchange helps IT meet Service Level Agreements and keep Exchange running 24 x 7 by applying management best practices to the performance of key Exchange Server components.

SECTION 3: BENEFITS

The Benefits of Simplicity

CA NSM and CA Unicenter Management for Microsoft Exchange help you to proactively discover, monitor and manage the health and availability of your Exchange and Active Directory environments. When deployed together, these technologies support centralized configuration deployment, which significantly simplifies the management process. Once a policy is defined, it can be efficiently rolled out to one or more Exchange Servers, with a minimum of configuration errors.

CA Unicenter Management for Microsoft Exchange provides a global view of your Exchange Server and Active Directory services, and provides Knowledge Base articles related to any issues that it detects in your environment. By automating routine tasks and proactively detecting, analyzing and resolving problems, it reduces the MTTR that could affect your critical business services, saving valuable time and resources.

IT BENEFITS:

- Simplifies complexity by managing and monitoring the entire Unified Messaging environment
- Improves service-level management by giving administrators a view of the entire Active Directory and Exchange Server infrastructure and the individual components
- Supports decision-making by combining comprehensive reporting with analytical tools to help you understand usage patterns, performance parameters and other important metrics that lay the foundations for capacity planning

- Maximizes IT resources by automating repetitive tasks, which helps you reduce support costs and allocate resources to more strategic initiatives through the use of the Knowledge Base

ENTERPRISE BENEFITS:

- Contributes to productivity by helping you proactively prevent downtime events that hinder enterprise communications by reducing the MTTR
- Uses the Knowledge Base to help you control the total cost of ownership by optimizing the environment and automating administrative tasks
- Provides support through historical and performance data reporting to help you comply with legal, regulatory and internal policies

SECTION 4: CONCLUSIONS

CA NSM and CA Unicenter Management for Microsoft Exchange share the CA common product architecture and MDB foundation. This means that you can seamlessly integrate with other CA and third-party solutions and achieve the CA Enterprise IT Management (EITM) vision to Unify and Simplify IT management enterprise-wide.

The alignment of CA technologies with Microsoft's Unified Messaging environment provides the management and monitoring capabilities that you need to ensure availability, performance and the overall health your communications environment. From platform independence and centralized control to historical data reporting and automated network and device discovery, you'll have the technologies that you need for success. Your IT resources can be deployed more effectively, while enhancing service-level management, decision making and customer satisfaction. The enterprise gains through benefits realized in productivity, total cost of ownership and compliance.

To learn more about the CA NSM and CA Unicenter Management for Microsoft Exchange architectures and technical approaches, visit www.ca.com.

CA (NSD: CA), one of the world's leading independent, enterprise management software companies, unifies and simplifies complex information technology (IT) management across the enterprise for greater business results. With our Enterprise IT Management vision, solutions and expertise, we help customers effectively govern, manage and secure IT.

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