EMA Radar™ for Advanced Performance Analytics (APA) Use Cases: Q4 2012

AccelOps Profile

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ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES® (EMA™) Radar Report

December 2012

AccelOps Profile

Introduction

EMA has watched AccelOps evolve since its founding in 2007 with heightened interest as it combines two key technologies in a unique way, analytics and service modeling, which are both central to this report. AccelOps is also the clear leader in this research in integrated security (SIEM) with cross-domain, service-aware monitoring and analytics. Moreover, AccelOps is one of the most cost-effective options among the 22 vendors surveyed here and is strongly successful and cost-effective in mid-tier and smaller businesses, as well as some enterprises and service providers. In multiple interviews with AccelOps deployments, it has lived up to its promise of "changing the narrative around infrastructure monitoring." However, AccelOps was penalized in functionality because of the EMA Radar's more application-centric approach, and because it was also measured on the same scale as much more costly enterprise suites. For AccelOps' core mid-tier customers seeking to optimize infrastructure and security performance for business outcomes, AccelOps should be viewed as an A+ option.

Award: Best Integrated Security

AccelOps has a centralized monitoring and analytic foundation that draws in balanced fashion to support SOC and NOC requirements. This has placed it squarely ahead of all the other 21 vendors in this APA Radar for integrated security analytics. Moreover, AccelOps' powerful cross-domain capabilities for discovering and modeling infrastructure and application-to-infrastructure interdependencies resonates well across both use cases, so that the impacts of changes are readily captured and applied to both SIEM and service performance issues.

Use-case Perspectives

Change Impact and Capacity Optimization – Value Leader

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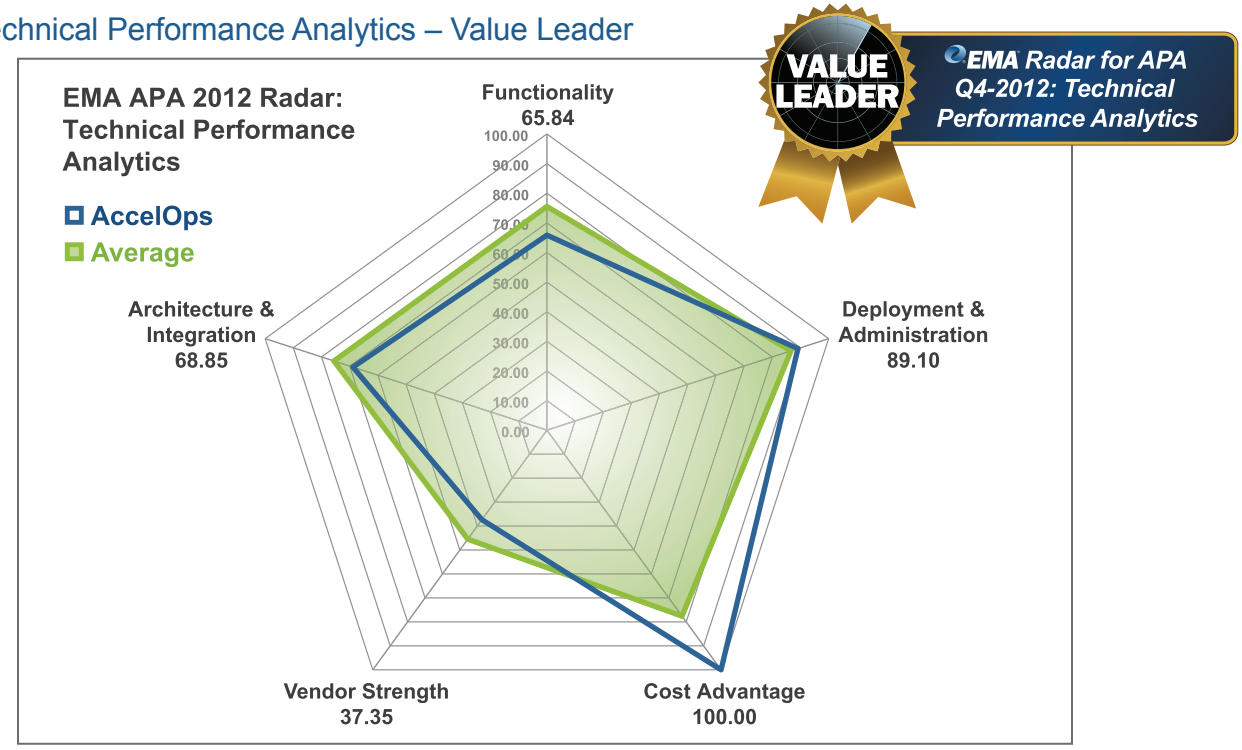
As EMA has stated in a prior evaluation: "AccelOps offers *the* most automated performance-centric application-dependency mapping solution in the industry. EMA has confirmed its accuracy and relevance for both performance and security monitoring through numerous customer interviews. AccelOps combines this with a compelling capability to link applications together in a business service and set policies around that service in container-like fashion." This makes AccelOps particularly strong in automating change impact insights as they may affect performance and business outcomes, as well as in locating and targeting the right component for further diagnostics and remediation. AccelOps is not primarily an APM vendor, so its strengths lie across the infrastructure, as well as in application-to-infrastructure interdependencies, versus application-to-application interdependencies, which was viewed as a limitation in this EMA Radar. AccelOps also has its own, embedded CMDB, optimized for performance and change impact. Its analytics for capacity planning and optimization similarly draw from this strong foundation where AccelOps analytics deliver both real-time predictive and longer-term trending values. Finally, AccelOps integrates with automated actions such as run book, configuration routines and service desk workflows to support active, change-related remediation.

Technical Performance Analytics – Value Leader



AccelOps can support a wide range of triage and diagnostics including cross-domain application-to-infrastructure issues, triage across virtualized systems, visibility into branch office and QoS issues, and diagnostics within network, systems, database, storage, end device and mobile environments. AccelOps can assimilate SNMP and ping sweeps to include SSH, Telnet, SOAP, syslogs, network flow, WMI, Microsoft RPC, Cisco SDEE, Checkpoint LEA, JDBC, JMX, HTTP and ARP tables, among other sources, so that security, infrastructure and service issues can be understood in context with each other. Recently AccelOps has enhanced its support for Cisco Unified Computing Systems (UCS), Oracle databases, Microsoft SQL servers, custom JDBC and JMX requirements. AccelOps achieved a Value Leader position through its combination of quick time to value and efficient deployment, as well as targeted analytic strengths.

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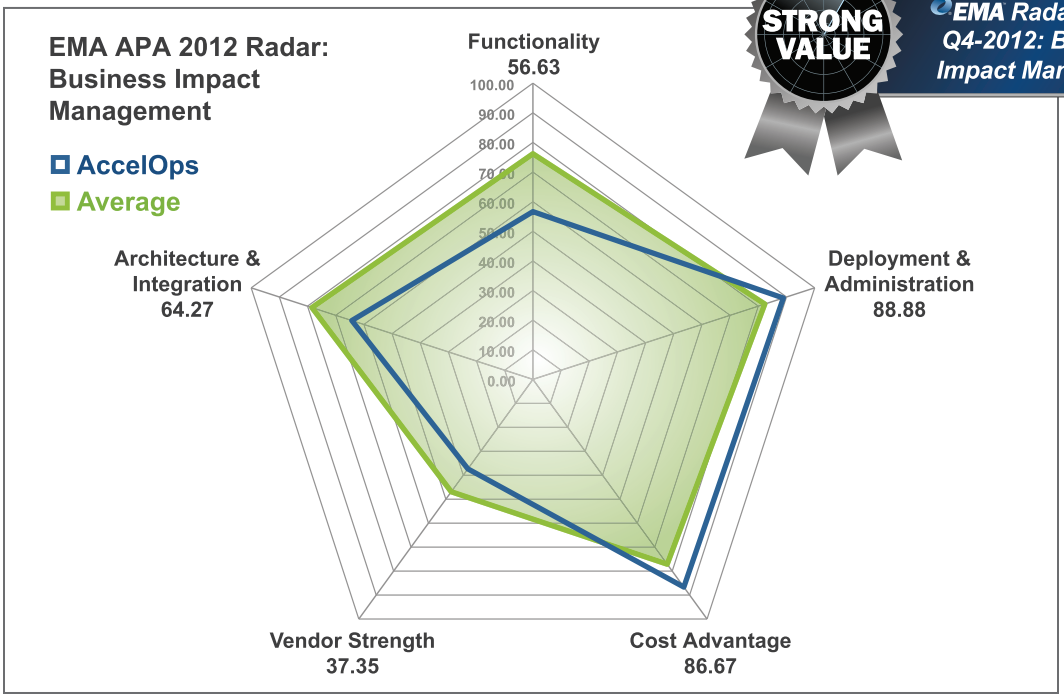
Business Impact Management – Strong Value



AccelOps' support for business impact resides in large part from its ability to model and support services in context with the broader infrastructure, including changes and capacity issues. However, AccelOps can also deliver insights into end user productivity, business process impact, application utilization, chargeback and abandonment rates. Its integration with Selenium provides end-user, experience-oriented synthetic testing that helps to extend its other analytic capabilities. However, the vendor has focused its business impact analysis primarily at IT versus business stakeholders, and its current limitations for in-depth transactional insights also impacted its position for business impact management.

Deployment, Administration and Services

AccelOps offers high levels of automation in deployment and has delivered ROI value in mid-tier enterprise environments in as little as one to two weeks. AccelOps' versatility in supporting cloud dynamics put it at the very top of all 22 vendors for being "cloud-ready," and it was also at the head of the pack in time-to-deploy.

Relevant automation includes self-configuration, auto-adjustments, auto-population and self-learning. AccelOps can discover and assimilate core IT infrastructure and application environmental interdependencies in as little as a day. As an ESX Virtual Appliance, it can automate scaling requirements as well by adding VMs – what AccelOps calls its "scale-out architecture." And core overall administration for full AccelOps ongoing support is between 25%–50% of a full-time employee.

Basic services include on-line, business hours and 24x7 support with 15–30 minute response. The company has only minimal need for on-site support given its capabilities for remote-control diagnostics, downloading fixes and upgrading remotely for its virtual appliance. Its strategic professional service offerings target performance and SLA/SLM.

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Cost Advantage

AccelOps came in as overall *the* most cost-effective offering among the 22 vendors, albeit optimized more at the mid-tier enterprise level than larger environments. Maintenance is 15–18%.

Architecture and Integration

AccelOps can scale to between 10,000 and 20,000 managed devices, although the most in deployment currently is at between 5,000 and 10,000. On the other hand, it can assimilate between one million and ten million KPIs within five minutes and is currently doing so in actual deployments. Moreover, it can take in data in real time and create extremely granular real-time diagnostic narratives for events and other metrics.

AccelOps can support all domains except application-to-application components and application-to-middleware integration issues. AccelOps also does not take in third-party management sources, but does all its own data collection – which can be viewed either a strength or a limitation depending on the customer environment.

AccelOps considerable leadership in discovering and modeling application-to-infrastructure and infrastructure-to-infrastructure interdependencies, as well as its highly automated, change-impact-optimize CMDB is both distinctive and impressive.

Functionality

AccelOps supports a wide range of application and business services including Web applications, Web 2.0, custom-developed applications, pre-packaged third-party applications, industry-specific applications, VoIP and rich media. Its strengths in security (SIEM) have already been highlighted.

AccelOps' real-time analytic engine along with its back-end trending are "attribute independent" – and so extensible to any metric, data or event with the same power and intensity. AccelOps supports real-time operational predictive as well as historical trending and analytics.

For visualization, the AccelOps dashboard gets high marks for "good tabs, good search options and good presentation." It can support all IT domains except development, mobile and desktop, and cross domain roles such as infrastructure management, architect, change management, executive IT and of course security. AccelOps can also provide support for business stakeholders concerned with internal and external business service performance.

Vendor Strength

AccelOps is growing quickly – according to the vendor in the triple digits – but still remains a small company. It is optimized for mid-tier and mid-tier enterprise environments where it can promote its holistic capabilities. Channels are important for AccelOps growth, as more than 50% of its sales are currently occurring through channels, and it has signed more than 50 channel partners around the globe.

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Strengths and Limitations

Strengths

- AccelOps is optimized for unified, cohesive analytics across IT infrastructure domains with solid application awareness, as well as fully integrated support for security (SIEM).
- AccelOps is arguably the single most cost-effective solution among the 22 APA vendors surveyed, especially for mid-tier and mid-tier enterprise environments, with low initial costs and extremely high levels of automated discovery, modeling, self-learning, and auto-scaling for larger environments.
- AccelOps has one of the single most efficient application dependency mapping solutions in the industry, bar none, optimized for performance. It also has its own change-impact-oriented embedded CMDB.
- AccelOps offers much improved support for visualization and reporting across a wide variety of IT and non-IT roles.

Limitations

- AccelOps remains a small company and is still building capabilities in strategic professional services.
- AccelOps does not currently assimilate or integrate actively with most third-party management solutions, although it does provide basic service desk integrations.
- AccelOps does not manage application-to-application and application-to-application component interdependencies.

Customer Quotes

- *"We saw that AccelOps could allow us to consolidate our toolsets and move away from various siloed tools across IT. Everyone got tired of logging into a million different interfaces before they could even get started with their day."*
- *"We were looking for a solution that would allow us to function more effectively as a team. Compliance also had a role in it, as we needed something to support our security requirements."*
- *"This breadth of function is allowing some toolset consolidation as well. We really don't have to look to another tool. The alerting is extremely granular and I like the ability to archive events. And the ability to schedule reports is good – we didn't have that before."*
- *"We depend on AccelOps' capabilities for autodiscovery to make sure that we know what the assets are in our data center with100% accuracy."*

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