

Symantec Releases Version 10.0 of its Control Compliance Suite

Abstract

The management of IT security, risk and compliance places multiple demands on today's highly complex, distributed or regulated enterprise. Technology companies that seek to relieve these burdens by streamlining management often face a dilemma: Should they invest in tools for high-level strategy management? Or should they focus on better integration at the level of operations? With the release of Control Compliance Suite version 10.0, Symantec has achieved a noteworthy balance by delivering new capability at both ends of this spectrum. CCS version 10.0 capitalizes on Symantec's opportunity as a leading vendor of operational management technologies, delivering new capabilities for vulnerability assessment, data consolidation, visualization and analytics that suggest where Symantec could take this platform for IT risk and compliance program management in the future.

Background and Context

Today's enterprise faces a number of challenges in managing IT risk and compliance on a number of fronts:

- **Demands on security management continue to escalate:** "Threats are becoming more difficult to manage" was the issue most frequently identified as a top security concern in a Q1 2010 ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES® (EMA™) survey of IT security professionals. Dealing with the increasing sophistication of threats is compounded by the demands of security management in a complex IT environment.
- **The expanding total impact of compliance:** Regulatory requirements continue to evolve, with significant impact on IT. Frequent assessments take a toll, often requiring enterprises to report to multiple entities. Internally, businesses must make the most relevant compliance information available to a wide range of diverse constituencies, from executives who need to keep a finger on the daily pulse of the business, to individuals and groups responsible for compliance in technical operations.
- **The growing cost of management:** Meeting all these requirements has threatened to become overwhelming for many, particularly for the largest, most complex, widely distributed or heavily regulated enterprises. Control objectives often overlap between security, compliance and business risk management. Multiple bodies of guidance, standards and frameworks require organizations to rationalize their requirements as much as possible. Where assessments must be done manually, they add to this total cost by demanding the time and expertise of personnel. Often, these are professionals who would otherwise be supporting more strategically valuable priorities.

These factors have led many enterprises to evaluate solutions for streamlining the management of these challenges, leveraging automation wherever possible.

As a preferred supplier of security and IT management products and services for many global enterprises, Symantec is in a strong position to deliver on this opportunity. Many organizations have adopted the company's Control Compliance Suite (CCS)—an integrated set of tools for defining and rationalizing policies and standards, monitoring procedural controls, and simplifying reporting—to improve the consistency and automation of many IT risk management and compliance tasks. As management requirements continue to grow and evolve in these areas, the breadth of the challenge always leaves room for new capability in this product set.

Introducing Symantec Control Compliance Suite Version 10.0

With the release of Version 10.0, the Symantec Control Compliance Suite expands its ability to help enterprises optimize the management of their complex IT risk and compliance challenges:

Data Collection and Presentation

CCS Version 10.0 introduces new capabilities for collecting IT risk and compliance information, and presenting it in more flexible and effective ways:

- **Centralized Evidence Collection and Management:** CCS version 10.0 introduces new techniques for collecting and normalizing data from multiple external sources, mapping it to policies and regulations, and triggering reporting or the further evaluation of collected data. This information can be leveraged in the CCS Content Studio, which enables the detailed mapping of third-party controls to CCS-managed policies and standards.
- **Dynamic Web-based Dashboards:** New capabilities for data visualization enable CCS version 10.0 to meet a wider range of requirements for managing IT security, risk management and compliance information. The introduction of Web-based delivery makes the design as well as the printing and exporting of dashboard information easier and more flexible. Users can define their own panels and visualizations of key performance indicators (KPIs), leverage multiple analytic techniques, and crosslink page views for more detailed information.

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Expanded Integration with Risk Controls

When EMA first examined the consolidation of IT risk and compliance management under the banner of IT Governance¹, the centralized integration of a wide range of operational management technologies was expected from vendors serving these priorities. What was *not* expected was a single monolithic system that would absorb the many moving parts of IT risk management. Rather, what was anticipated were tools that would bring together meaningful aspects of multiple technologies, such as reporting, consolidated policy management, and coordination across silos of technology and culture within IT².

As a leading vendor of security, compliance and IT management systems in multiple domains, Symantec has recognized this opportunity with the Control Compliance Suite. In version 10.0, CCS has expanded its integration with primary risk controls to embrace technologies both old and new:

- **Integration with Data Loss Prevention:** With its acquisition of Vontu, a leading provider of Data Loss Prevention (DLP) technologies for managing risk to sensitive information, it is not surprising—and indeed, has been fully expected—that Symantec would broaden the incorporation of DLP into the Control Compliance Suite. This integration has been broadened in CCS version 10.0 to manage sensitive content according to CCS insight into technical controls and relevant policies, and to coordinate reporting on sensitive information management with CCS capability.
- **CCS Vulnerability Manager:** The roots of the Control Compliance Suite go back to Symantec's acquisition of BindView, whose name was well known in the market of vulnerability assessment tools based on knowledge of asset inventory. With CCS version 10.0, Symantec not only returns to these roots but expands on them through the introduction of a wide range of vulnerability assessment techniques, including “agentless” scans, fourth generation spidering for Web vulnerabilities, assessment of dynamic Web content, and database scanning.

¹ *Governance, Risk, Compliance and Beyond: The Emergence of Strategic IT Risk Management*, EMA Research Report, August 2007, <http://www.enterprisemanagement.com/research/asset.php?id=571>

² This is not unlike trends toward “federation” EMA has seen in the evolution of another strategic effort to centralize and rationalize IT management, the Configuration Management Database (CMDB) / Configuration Management System (CMS). See *Making Your CMDB System Deployment Count: Who is Winning the Battle to Show Value and Why?* EMA Research Report, April 2009, <http://www.enterprisemanagement.com/research/asset.php?id=1261>

EMA Perspective

As a leading vendor of both security and IT operations management technology, Symantec has long been in a position to capitalize on the consolidation of IT risk and compliance management, particularly for the most complex, distributed, or regulated enterprises. Nevertheless, the company has faced competitive challenges in this realm, most recently in the acquisition of Archer Technologies by EMC. Among the issues confronting all competitors is the dilemma of whether to invest in pushing “up the stack” to satisfy high-level requirements (rationalization of multiple policy and compliance objectives, consolidated executive dashboards), or “going deep” through low-level integration with operational management tools. This dilemma has been an issue for every contender in this space. It was evident when Archer, with its broad capability across multiple areas of focus, felt compelled to acquire Brabeion to help it address the need for more direct integration with operational IT management technologies.

Symantec has the advantage of having many widely adopted security and risk management technologies in its portfolio. This makes the integration of these technologies a natural for the Control Compliance Suite and a differentiator for the company.

With the release of version 10.0 of the Control Compliance Suite, Symantec has achieved a noteworthy balance by delivering new capability on both sides of this dilemma. The new flexible dashboarding available in version 10 of Symantec’s Control Compliance Suite to create customizable views for specific customers will broaden the appeal of the suite for strategists, while the expansion of centralized evidence collection from external sources broadens the flexibility of integration with controls at the operational level.

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The expansion of vulnerability assessment is a particularly intriguing aspect of this latest version, as it represents a significant area of security management where Symantec has not historically led. Under the covers of this expansion is an approach to vulnerability assessment that should be watched closely for what it may suggest about where Symantec takes this technology in the future. It should also be followed for its synergy with protection for Web vulnerabilities gained with the company’s acquisition of Mi5 last year.

In following the evolution of products such as the Symantec Control Compliance Suite, EMA sees trends that could lead to the rise of provocative approaches to IT risk management. The increasing capability and flexibility of data visualization in this class of technology suggests, for example, the rise of Business Intelligence specific to security and compliance. The measurement of IT risk remains a nascent field still in its early stages, but it cannot advance without the ability to make sense of a wide range of information from multiple sources. The continued evolution of tools such as the Control Compliance Suite clearly point in this direction, and should be watched for where they may lead technologies that reduce the burdens of compliance and enable greater insight and consistency in risk management for the enterprise.

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 or follow EMA on Twitter (http://twitter.com/ema_research).

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