

Grid Computing

Appro to Upgrade Cluster Engine

MILPITAS, CALIF.—Enterprise server maker Appro will roll out the second version of its cluster management offering in the latter half of this year, vendor officials tell *DWT*.

The Appro Cluster Engine (ACE) 2.0 will build on the foundation established with the first version of the product with additional features, according to John Lee, vice president of advanced technology solutions for Appro.

The most significant upgrade to ACE 2.0 will be the ability to perform checkpoints, Lee says. Using the checkpoint capability, clients can intermittently save the job that is being processed on their large cluster. "If you do not use checkpoint [and the] system crashes or you have a failure then you lose the amount of work you've done," Lee says.

The new checkpoint capability will allow the user to set the time in the processing when the job should be saved. For example, a user can

set a job to be saved after 25 percent of the work has been completed, Lee explains.

ACE 2.0 will also feature other minor additional enhancements, such as the ability to make it easier for clients to administer the cluster and provide a better experience for end-users, Lee says.

The newest version of ACE 2.0, which was developed internally by the Appro team of developers, will also include support for dynamic or adaptive routing. "It's like intelligent routing," Lee explains, adding that dynamic routing is a way to keep the network flowing and to avoid message traffic jams.

Appro will integrate the next-generation, 36-port switch silicon from semiconductor-based server and storage interconnect products provider Mellanox, when the product is released later this year, Lee says. Appro and Mellanox have a technology relationship, and the vendor deploys switch silicon from

Mellanox in its offerings, Lee adds.

To coincide with the software launch, Appro also plans a major hardware upgrade during the fourth quarter. Appro aims to switch to Intel's Nehalem processor line when the product debuts later this fall. The Nehalem line will feature a redesigned microarchitecture designed to offer end-users faster processing power for greater energy efficiency and lower power costs, according to Intel officials (*DWT*, Feb. 25).

Although Appro has had numerous discussions with Intel about the new processor, Appro hasn't tested Nehalem yet, according to vendor officials.

Appro also operates on processor maker Advanced Micro Devices' (AMD's) Barcelona quad-core processor, Lee says. "We're very technology neutral, so we support both," he adds.

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