

Wombat Burrows On via New Platform

INCLINE VILLAGE, Nev.—Direct feed vendor Wombat Financial Software is taking a major step forward in its effort to provide an independent, low-latency market data platform to meet the demands of electronic trading.

Toward that end, Wombat will launch its next-generation market data platform this week, signaling a move away from its product dependence upon Tibco Software's Rendezvous (RV) messaging middleware, officials tell DWT. Wombat has been working to develop its own transport layer since last year, and enlisted start-up developer 29West almost a year ago (DWT, June 7, 2004).

The revamped offering comes at a time when user firms are searching for direct feed alternatives to high-latency, consolidated feed platforms such as the Reuters' TIB, ciServer, Triarch and Reuters Market Data System (RMDS) deployments. Reuters acknowledges this market shift and is working on a direct feed capability for RMDS (DWT, June 7, 2004). In general, Wombat's offerings are seen as more complementary to Reuters wares than directly competitive, say Wombat officials.

High-latency puts users firms at a competitive disadvantage because of the low-latency demands of highly competitive algorithmic trading, program trading, best execution, automated market making, basket-trading and various types of arbitrage-based electronic trading, say Wombat officials. To meet those high-speed needs, Wombat has traditionally offered exchange feed handler products and application program interfaces (APIs).

The new as yet unnamed platform is mostly a new packaging of what Wombat has already brought to market, officials say. Approximately 90 percent of the Wombat platform has been previously available as discrete offerings, says Danny Moore, chief operating officer

(COO) for Wombat. However, one of the new core components is the Wombat Transport layer, which is based upon the Latency Busters Messaging (LBM) software developed by 29West. Wombat's flagship offering, the MDRV market data distribution platform, has an internal latency of 1 to 3 milliseconds (ms) and it runs on RV.

For the moment, the majority of Wombat's customers have RV-based market data distribution infrastructures, Moore says. The new LBM core—also with a 1-to-3 ms latency—represents the future. "Before LBM, we were tied to RV," Moore says.

The LBM offering will facilitate high-speed messaging traffic, and has been designed for market data distribution, say 29West officials. The LBM architecture sidesteps the server and daemon bottlenecks to improve throughput and performance, 29West officials say. The software runs in the Sun Microsystems Solaris, Microsoft Windows and Linux environments.

Other components of the new Wombat platform include generic APIs such as: the Middleware Agnostic Messaging API, or Mama; the Platform Agnostic Publishing API, or Papa; and Middleware Agnostic Market Data API, or Mamda. The Mama and Papa APIs allow for layers of abstraction above the messaging middleware and provide a level of independence from the ticker plant and application layers, officials say.

Beyond RV, Wombat supports several middleware layers such as Brisbane, Australia-based Mantara Software's Elvin messaging infrastructure for networked communications applications and Tibco's SmartSockets, which Tibco acquired from Talarian for \$115 million in 2002 (Trading Technology Week, Jan. 14, 2002).

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