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READER'S CHOICE AWARDS
2015

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What's Your Favorite Product?

Everyone has preferred hardware, software or services. *Redmond* readers weigh in with their picks in this year's Reader's Choice Awards.

By Jeffrey Schwartz

It should come as little surprise that the largest hardware and software providers surrounding the Microsoft ecosystem received the most votes in this year's annual Third-Party Reader's Choice Awards. And once again, Dell Inc. won the most awards, this time in 46 categories.

Dell's edge of course comes from the numerous software, security and hardware companies it has acquired in recent years. So who's nipping at Dell's heels? The strongest gainers this year were Hewlett-Packard Co. and VMware Inc., while strong showers Cisco Systems Inc. and SolarWinds Inc. also maintained last year's number of awards. Some strong players in more narrow segments are also coming at Dell—among them Kaseya, ManageEngine, Netwrix Corp., Goverlan, Acronis, Veeam Software, LANDesk, Flexera Software LLC, NetIQ Corp., Barracuda Networks Inc., Kaspersky Lab, Webtrends, IBM Corp., EMC Corp. (including its RSA Security division), NetApp, AppDynamics, Proofpoint and Lenovo Group Ltd.

These awards are decided by readers, not *Redmond* magazine, and are based on responses to our survey, fielded in late June to early July to our circulation database of 100,000 readers of which 1,056 participated. We include all known vendors in each category except for Microsoft (with a few exceptions) to get a sense of what "third-party" software, hardware and services were most favored for working with and in support of the core Microsoft platforms. The exceptions were in the browser, public cloud and tablet categories, where we wanted to see how Internet Explorer, Microsoft Azure and Surface stacked up these days.

Internet Explorer usage decreased from 26 percent last year to 23 percent this year, dropping it from Gold to Silver (third place), while Google Chrome maintained its 45 percent share, keeping its Platinum award. Taking the place of Internet Explorer this year is Mozilla Firefox with 27 percent, where it seems to have picked up the 3 points lost by Internet

Explorer. It'll be interesting to see if the new Microsoft Edge browser that shipped with Windows 10 helps the comapny gain ground next year.

Speaking of Windows 10, 22 percent said they'll upgrade within the first three months, 14 percent within six months and 18 percent in the first year. In all, if respondents act as planned, 63 percent will have upgraded a year from now. Larger enterprises are more likely, however, to stick with conventional wisdom and wait for the first major patches or service pack.

When we asked readers about their PC device preferences, the

Microsoft Surface was by far the most popular, though we also asked the same question without Microsoft as a choice, where Dell was the most preferred PC vendor followed by HP and Lenovo.

Using that same methodology, we asked readers their favorite Infrastructure-as-a-Service cloud provider. Microsoft came out on top with 29 percent of the votes for Azure while market leader Amazon Web Services Inc. (AWS) came in second with 23 percent. When the same question was asked without Microsoft as an option, AWS was by far the winner taking 32 percent of the vote and Google came in a distant second with 17 percent.

CATEGORY	Redmond READER'S CHOICE AWARDS 2015 PLATINUM	Redmond READER'S CHOICE AWARDS 2015 GOLD	Redmond READER'S CHOICE AWARDS 2015 SILVER	Redmond READER'S CHOICE AWARDS 2015 BRONZE
Infrastructure Management				
Network and Systems Management	SolarWinds Network Management Software	Cisco ONE for Access	Spiceworks Network Monitoring	IBM Tivoli NetView Performance Monitor
Applications Performance Management	SolarWinds Server & Applications Monitor	Dell Foglight/Foglight for Virtualization	VMware vFabric APM	IBM Tivoli Monitoring/ IBM Tivoli Composite
Systems Performance Management	VMware vCenter Operations Suite	SolarWinds Server & Application Monitor	Dell Foglight for Virtualization Enterprise Edition	**TIE:** Dell OpenManage Server Administrator / Hewlett Packard Operations Manager
General Network Monitoring Tool	SolarWinds Network Performance Monitor	Cisco Syslog Analyzer	Dell OpenManage Network Manager	IBM Tivoli Netview
Remote Monitoring and Management/IT Control Management	Dell PacketTrap	Kaseya	**TIE:** N-able by SolarWinds N-central / ManageEngine OpManager	AVG Managed Workplace
Mobile Device Management Provider	VMware (AirWatch)	Citrix	BlackBerry	Spiceworks
Bandwidth/Traffic Monitoring	SolarWinds NetFlow Traffic Analyzer	Ipswitch WhatsUpGold	Visualware MyConnection PC	**TIE:** ManageEngine OpManager / Network Instruments Observer
Web Usage Monitor	WebSense Web Filter & Security	Barracuda Web Filter	GFI WebMonitor	WebWatcher
Asset Management	Dell Asset Manager	HP Asset Manager	Symantec Asset Management Suite	BMC Remedy IT Asset Management
License Management	Dell KACE Software License Management Solution	Symantec Asset Management Suite	IBM Tivoli License Compliance Manager	**TIE:** BMC Remedy IT Asset Management / CA IT Asset Manager
SQL Tool	Dell Toad	Netwrix Auditor	SolarWinds Database Performance Analyzer	Red Gate DBA Bundle
SharePoint Tools/Services	Netwrix Auditor for SharePoint	WebTrends for SharePoint	Dell Migration Suite for SharePoint	Dell Change Auditor for SharePoint
Software Distribution	Dell Desktop Authority	Symantec Deployment Solution	Goverlan Remote Administration	Acronis Snap Deploy
Software Packaging	Dell ChangeBASE	Flexera Installshield AdminStudio	Scalable Smart Packager	Viewfinity Systems Management
Imaging Software	Acronis True Image	Symantec Ghost	Symantec Client Management Suite	Paragon Hard Disk Manager
Migration Tool	VMware vMotion	VMware Converter	Dell Migration Manager for Active Directory	Dell Migration Suite for Exchange
Disk Defragmentation and Drive Monitoring Tool	Acronis Disk Director Suite	Netwrix Disk Space monitor	WiseCleaner Wise Care 365	O&O Software Defrag

Remote Client Management and Troubleshooting Solution	Goverlan Suite	LogMeIn Pro	Symantec Client Management Suite	Dell Desktop Authority Remote Support Center
Network Automation/Batch Processing Tool	HP Network Automation	Goverlan Renote Administration Suite	N-Able by SolarWinds N-Central	Kaseya Virtual System Administrator (VSA)
Scripting Tool	Goverlan WMIX	Dell PowerGUI	VMware VI Toolkit for Windows	HP Scripting Tools for Windows PowerShell
Patch Management	Dell KACE K1000 Management Appliance	Solar Winds Patch Manager	LANDesk Software Patch Management	IBM Tivoli Endpoint Manager for Patch Management
Application-Conflict Testing Tool	Dell Desktop Authority	HP QC Enterprise	Flexera InstallShield AdminStudio	Scalable WinInstall

Security and Compliance

Compliance Tool	Netwrix Auditor	Dell Change Auditor	SolarWinds Log & Event Manager (LEM)	Dell In Trust
Group Policy Manager	Netwrix Auditor	Dell Active Administrator	Symantec Control Compliance Suite	NetIQ Group Policy Administrator
Security Auditor	Netwrix Auditor	Dell Security Explorer	Symantec Control Compliance Suite	McAfree Security Information and Event Management
Hardware-Based Firewall	Cisco ASA 5500 Series	Dell SonicWall Next Generation Firewall series	Palo Alto Networks PA Series	Cisco PIX series
Software-Based Firewall	Symantec Endpoint Protection	Kapersky Internet Security	Citrix NetScaler with Application Firewall	Palo Alto Networks VM series
Intrusion Detection System	Symantec Sygate Enterprise Protection	Cisco IOS Firewall Intrusion Detection System	McAfee Network Security Platform	FireEye CM Series
Intrusion Prevention System	Cisco Next Generation IPS	CheckPoint Advanced Threat Prevention	Sophos Unified Threat Management (UTM)	Barracuda Web Application Firewall
Smart Card/Biometric/ Two-Factor Authentication	Dell Defender	RSA Secure ID	SafeNet Authentication	Dell Digital Persona Suite
Spam/Content Filters	Dell SonicWall Email Security	Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall	Kaspersky Anti-Virus Protection	Symantec Mail Security for Exchange
Client Anti-Malware	Symantec Endpoint Protection	Kaspersky Anti-Virus	McAfee Total Protection	AVG Anti Virus Business Edition
User Activity Monitoring	GFI WebMonitor	ObserveIT Enterprise	SpectorSoft 360	Proofpoint Enterprise Governance
Active Directory Provisioning/ Administration	Dell Spotlight on Active Directory Pack	Netwrix Auditor	TIE: ManageEngine AD Manager Plus / NetIQ Directory and Resource Administrator	Web Active Directory People Provision
Identity Access/SSO Software	Dell Cloud Access Manager	RSA Identity and Access Management Suite	VMware Identity Manager	IBM Tivoli Identity & Access Manager

Storage and Business Continuity

Backup Software	Dell AppAssure	Veeam Ability Suite	Symantec Backup Exec	Acronis Backup
Storage Management Software	Veeam Availability Suite	Dell Foglight for Storage Management	TIE: NetApp OnCommand / Dell OpenManage Server Administrator Storage	Hewlett Packard Storage Essentials
Clustering/Failover	VMware vSphere Fault Tolerance	Symantec Cluster Server	StarWind Failover Cluster for Windows Server	Symantec Global Cluster Manager
ADC/Load Balancers	Citrix NetScaler	F5 Big IP	Barracuda Load Balancer	Riverbed SteelApp (formerly Stingray)

Certification and Training

Exam Prep Vendor	CBT Nuggets	Kaplan IT Learning	Cisco Press	Sybex
Online, Disk or Instructor-Led Training	CBT Nuggets	Global Knowledge	Pluralsight	Cisco Press
Microsoft Certification-Based Boot Camp	Global Knowledge	CBT Planet	TIE: Certification Camps / Real MCSE Bootcamp	Mountainview Systems

Virtualization

Preferred Hypervisor for Existing Infrastructure ⊞	VMware vSphere	Microsoft Hyper-V	Citrix Xen	KVM
Preferred Hypervisor for New Infrastructure ⊞	VMware vSphere	Microsoft Hyper-V	Citrix Xen	KVM
Application Virtualization	VMware ThinApp	Citrix XenApp	Dell Wyse vWorkspace	Liquidware Labs Flex-App for Profile Utility
Virtual Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery	VMware vCenter Site Recovery Manager	Dell AppAssure	Acronis DR Service (formerly nScaled)	Acronis True Image Echo
Virtual Management/ Optimization	Veeam Management Pack for VMware	Dell vFoglight	SolarWinds Virtualization Manager	Veeam Management Pack for Hyper-V
Storage Virtualization and Management	EMC VPLEX	NetApp-V Series Systems	NetApp Data ONTAP 8	Riverbed SteellStore
Virtualization Training Vendor	Global Knowledge	NetCom Learning	Intense School	LiveAmmo
Virtual Server	VMware vSphere	VMware ESXi	Citrix XenServer	Red Hat Enterprise Virtualization
Virtual Server Add-Ons	Veeam Availability Suite	Dell AppAssure Replay Hyper-V	SolarWinds Virtualization Manager	Acronis Backup & Recovery Advanced Server Virtual Edition
Virtual PC	VMware Workstation	Citrix Xen Desktop	Dell Wyse Workstation	Parallels Virtuozzo
VDI Solution	VMware View	Citrix Xen Desktop	Dell Wyse vWorkspace	Hewlett Packard Converged System for Hosted Desktop

Cloud Services

Managed Services/Hosting Providers	Rackspace	GoDaddy	CenturyLink	Dimension Data
Identity and Access Management as a Service Provider	VMware (TriCipher) MyOneLogin	McAfee Cloud Identity Manager	Symantec O3	Okta
Cloud Management Tool	VMware vCloud Automation Center/ vCloud Director	Dell Cloud Manager	Citrix CloudPortal Business Manager	TIE: Cisco Intercloud / EMC Cloud Automation Center / HP Cloud Service Automation
Cloud Storage Service	Amazon Web Services S3	Dropbox	Google Cloud Storage	Citrix ShareFile
E-Mail Hosting Provider	Rackspace	Hewlett-Packard	AT&T	AppRiver
Universal Communications Hosting provider	Rackspace	AT&T	Verizon	Dimension Data
SaaS-Based Application Provider	Google	Dell Boomi	Salesforce.com	Oracle
PaaS Provider ⊞	Microsoft	Amazon Web Services	Dell Boomi	Google
Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) Provider ⊞	Microsoft	Amazon Web Services	Dell	Google
SaaS-Based Application Performance Management Provider	AppDynamics	BMC	Dynatrace (formerly Compuware)	CA
SharePoint Cloud/Hosting Provider	Amazon Web Services	SharePoint 360	Rackspace	Network Solutions

Hardware

Server Manufacturer	Dell	Hewlett-Packard	Cisco	Lenovo (including IBM's former x86 business)
Storage Hardware Provider	Dell	EMC	Hewlett Packard	NetApp
Thin Client Device	Dell Wyse	Hewlett Packard Client Virtualization	Google Chromebook	NComputing
Windows PC Vendor	Dell	Hewlett Packard	Lenovo	Asus
Windows Tablet Provider	Microsoft (Surface line)	Dell	TIE: HP / Lenovo	Samsung
Web Browser ⊞	Google Chrome	Internet Explorer	Mozilla Firefox	Apple Safari

⊞ (Microsoft included in this category)