

New X1 Enterprise Search Suite Extends Federated Search

by **Paula J. Hane**

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Last week, at

Enterprise

Search Summit

West in San Jose

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(**www.enterprisearchsummit.com/west**), X1

Technologies, Inc. (**www.x1.com**) introduced the next

iteration of its products that are designed to help

enterprises deal with the problems of too many data

solutions, too many interfaces, and information scattered

in too many locations. The new X1 Enterprise Search

Suite v6 provides a suite of products designed to

seamlessly integrate critical business systems by

providing secure, unified access to personal desktop

content and IT-managed content throughout the

enterprise. X1 says it is the only pure play search vendor

with a rich desktop client that can bridge the gap

between the desktop and the enterprise and that is platform and enterprise search engine agnostic. The new X1

Enterprise Search Suite v6 provides upgrades to X1's server and client products and new prepackaged Content

Connectors, which provide search federation with third-party enterprise products.

X1 provides a single interface for secure business search, allowing users to find, preview, and act on structured and unstructured information of any type in any location. X1 solutions reportedly can be deployed quickly and easily, and they seamlessly fit into the existing technology infrastructure. The company's president and COO, John Waller, said the product suite might be simple to deploy and use, but it is "powerful enough to satisfy both end users and the concerns and requirements of the largest enterprises." X1 solutions can be deployed on the desktop and then expanded throughout the enterprise and are designed to deliver the scalability, performance, and security required by large organizations.

In June 2006, X1 started offering its desktop search solution free to users (see the NewsBreak at

<http://newsbreaks.infotoday.com/nbReader.asp?ArticleId=16049>). The company felt pressured at the time by the availability of other free desktop search products (Copernic, Google, etc.) and thought this would be a good way to get its product in the door. Many companies did opt to pay for the premium customer support, tools, services, and application connectors. By the end of 2006, IBM and Yahoo! had teamed up to offer a free search tool, the IBM OmniFind Yahoo! Edition. In early 2007, after reassessing its decision and the marketplace, X1 started to make some key changes in its business and by June 2007 had started to charge \$50 per seat for the desktop client. "Our customers said it was so good that we should charge for it," explained Christopher Walton, senior director of marketing. By August 2007, a completely new leadership team had come on board to provide "more hands-on management."

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Since these changes, X1 has signed some key OEM partners that have licensed and are using the products in their own labeled offerings. The X1 site has had more than 40,000 new customers sign up and pay for the client just in the last half year. And the company has signed some 60 new customers for enterprise license solutions. Walton said X1 is doing very well with large enterprise customers, especially in these markets: legal, financial services, government, high tech, and oil and gas. And, he promised, "We're going to be more vocal and public in the marketplace."

The X1 Suite offers a query and refine model—not just a simple results list. It provides for full fidelity preview of results and lets users take postsearch actions. Federated search usually has limitations on the actions users can take on search results because results are usually action-bound by their underlying object type. With this version, X1 said it has solved this limitation by implementing a "virtual object" model. It defined five standard actions that can be applied to any federated result set: Open, Print, Send by Email, Add to ZIP, and Drag and Drop. This enables content from one repository to be used with another.

"X1 provides a single, easy-to-use entry point to all information," said Sue Feldman, IDC's vice president for search and digital marketplace technologies. "IDC data shows that knowledge workers spend an inordinate amount of time hunting for information—their files, their emails, the data they need to get work done. Pulling all of these sources into one highly functional interface can turn that wasted time into productive time. That's millions of dollars of productivity gained."

The records and compliance manager of a large technology services provider said,

"X1's combination of enterprise search across large data stores, a great user interface, and the ability to find local information that's actionable were real differentiators for us. Also important was integration of email and other types of content, whether it be local or enterprise-driven." He said that his company looked at the free desktop search tools from Google and Microsoft but opted to pay for the X1 solution. By providing a consistent way to instruct staff to locate information and, if ever needed, guaranteeing consistency for legal compliance purposes, the tool "pays for itself." Employees can now find an important item in 5 seconds or less.

The X1 Enterprise Search Suite includes the following components:

- X1 Professional Client (previously known as the X1 Enterprise Client): This provides the unifying user experience for the suite, presenting a single interface to find, preview, and act on information of any type, in any location.
- X1 Enterprise Server: This provides a secure and highly scalable indexing and federation engine for network-based content sources and IT-managed applications and repositories. Through its embedded Federation Engine, the server can combine results from its own cluster of distributed indexes with results from foreign indexes to deliver a single integrated set of results.
- X1 Content Connectors: These are prepackaged software modules that extend the reach of the suite, providing access to and the ability to take action on content stored within enterprise data sources and applications.

The currently available X1 Content Connectors securely integrate with popular enterprise systems, including the following:

Messaging and Email Management Systems

- Microsoft Outlook and Exchange
- Lotus Notes and Domino
- Mozilla Thunderbird
- Centralized PST Archives
- Symantec Enterprise Vault (support for this has just been updated and enhanced)

- Meridio eDRM

Enterprise Repositories

- Network File Servers
- Relational Databases from vendors such as Oracle, IBM, Microsoft, and MySQL
- Microsoft SharePoint
- Interwoven WorkSite

Enterprise Search Engines

- Autonomy IDOL and K2
- FAST ESP
- Oracle SES
- IBM OmniFind

Internet Technologies

- Yahoo! Web Search
- RSS/Atom Feeds
- Web Services

Software development kits (SDKs) are available to customize the platform for specific needs. Learn more about X1 Enterprise Search Solutions and test the X1 Professional Client at www.x1.com/ESS.

X1 Technologies, founded in 2003, is headquartered in Pasadena, Calif., and is an operating company of Idealab (www.idealab.com), a company that creates and operates pioneering technology companies.

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