

Far from its roots in academia mapping the Internet, Lumeta wins big at the DoD

Analyst: Steve Steinke

Despite the hostile environment for IT spending in 2009, **Lumeta's** revenue grew 28% year over year and its bookings increased 128%, according to the company. It capped the year off with an enterprise-wide license from the **US Department of Defense**. The company's goals for 2010 include doubling the number of clients, becoming profitable and launching new separately saleable modules that run on IPsonar, its core discovery product. Perhaps the most interesting possible deployment of IPsonar now is 'leak discovery,' where unauthorized connectivity between discovered networks can be detected in **real time** in order to prevent security breaches.

The 451 take

It took several years, but the ideas and effort of Lumeta's staff seem to be on the verge of financial and intellectual success. When the company began, mapping the Internet not only seemed like a hard project, it also seemed like a service that no one was likely to pay for. But with a healthy injection of adaptation and working with key customers, all the factors seem to be coming together. It's surprising to find a 60-employee company supplying as large and complex a customer account as the DoD.

Lumeta was spun off from **Bell Labs** in 1998 along with some patented techniques for mapping the nodes of the Internet. It has raised an undisclosed amount of funding from several VC firms, including **Draper Fisher Jurvetson**, **Draper Fisher Jurvetson Gotham Ventures**, **New Venture Partners**, **RBC Technology Ventures** and **Wachovia Strategic Ventures**.

Given its roots in the narrow, not-too-obviously-in-demand realm of mapping the Internet, Lumeta has expanded the role of discovery in uncommon directions. Network discovery now means discovering unknown as well as known networks and identifying the perimeter of those networks. An obvious focus area is to host discovery, which includes discovering the entire connected IP address space, rather than just network devices. Finally, IPsonar can perform device fingerprinting, identifying device attributes for both network and host devices.

Lumeta has always had strong relationships with the DoD, but its recent contract with the agency may well assure the survival of the company for years if it chooses to remain independent. Each DoD network will install IPsonar in order to discover leaks where sensitive information could be lost.

Competition

The large management platform vendors – **Hewlett-Packard, IBM, BMC** and **CA Inc** – perform discovery, but often not to the depth and granularity of IPsonar. The less costly network management tools from **SolarWinds, Ipswitch** and **Quest Software** (via the acquired **PacketTrap Networks**) generally have fewer features than the platforms from HP, IBM, BMC and CA. The open source Nmap project offers downloads running on most types of Linux, Unix and Windows.

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