

Case Study: Network Security Company

This security company is focused on the problem of improving regulatory compliance as well as detecting and stopping information theft from data centers. By early 2004 they had conceived and delivered a proof-of-concept prototype, were looking for VC funding, and now needed to deliver their product to market. The company's VP of Engineering had the job of turning that prototype into a product, and he recognized early that his team would be stretched to create a new security application from scratch that was both robust and scalable.

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– VP of Engineering of a Network Security Company

As a start-up, engineering resources were valuable, so they looked into licensing several Linux product management software components. According to their engineering VP, “We knew that writing the software needed for the management plane would require significant manpower and time, and it was clear that developing that functionality was not core to our added value. What we wanted to focus on was our key Intellectual Property (IP), and quickly turn it into a robust, finished product. Our key development objective was to get our prototype to market, in order to quickly establish our market leadership, and do this with a small, core group of engineers.” By mid 2004 funding was lined up, and the clock was ticking for the development team to deliver.

The company engaged with Tall Maple Systems to evaluate their Samara™ product, and had a number of specific requirements for their Linux application development platform. These requirements included:

- A standard Cisco style Command Line Interface (CLI). Having a text based interface for system configuration, monitoring and maintenance was a key requirement, and the Cisco style is considered the standard implementation for IT management;
- SNMP and related support for Version 1 and 2, with an interface that would not require low level SNMP programming. They also needed the ability to easily expose variables and events, and automatically set traps without detailed knowledge of low level SNMP protocols;
- A Web based management interface for rapidly adding functionality and a graphical interface for controlling the appliance. Flexible templates were also desirable to quickly add new features as they were implemented in the product;
- Process Management infrastructure, including process monitoring, automatic event generation, diagnostic collection, restart generation, etc, for comprehensive control of the appliance while operating; and
- A single database that would provide a central, authoritative location for all for all configuration settings.

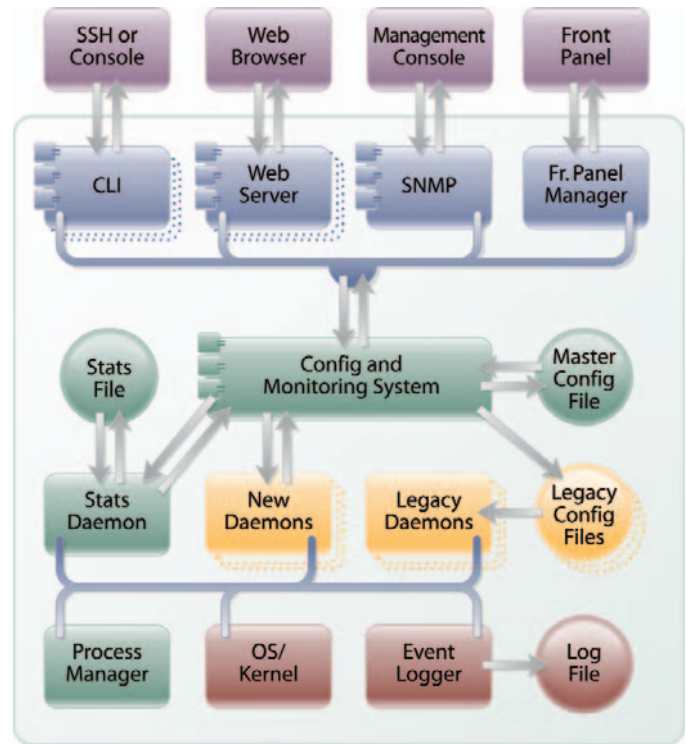
In addition to these requirements, the company was also able to leverage additional Samara™ functionality that proved particularly useful during the manufacturing process. This comprehensive functionality allowed them to rapidly take the application from development all the way through to a fully manufactured product, and included system configuration control, monitoring, and verification/checking to ensure a repeatable and efficient product production process.



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According to Greg Snyder, Tall Maple founder “We initially developed Samara to avoid reinventing the wheel when creating a Linux appliance. What we built was a comprehensive, modular development platform that would accelerate product development and speed up the Q/A cycle. We saw our value in allowing these complex appliance start-ups the ability to focus on creating and adding their own value-added IP, while our technology (Samara™) would provide a comprehensive solution with all the components, standard interfaces, and glue to deliver a manageable and reproducible product.”

By November of 2004 they began delivery of their product for feature and marketing feedback. According to the VP of Engineering, “We estimated that instead of having two or three software developers do all this, we were able to have one software developer integrate and build our IP into Tall Maple’s platform in far less time than a traditional start-up. At the end of the day, Samara™ reduced our time-to-market, and we were able to integrate and deliver our initial beta product in just about four months. We calculated that Tall Maple saved us at least six months of development and Q/A time, which was critical to delivering our first product and launching the company.”



Samara’s modular design and backplane allow for rapid customization and easy extension. Designers only need to provide their unique daemon or LKM, and Samara provides all the additional elements necessary for creating and manufacturing a shippable software or hardware Linux appliance.

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Together, this security start-up and Tall Maple Systems were successful in rapidly delivering their product to market. By providing a comprehensive development platform, Tall Maple allows IT appliance start-ups to streamline their software development process to focus on creating and building their own valuable IP, and quickly deliver a robust, reproducible, customer-driven solution.

To learn more about how Samara and Tall Maple Systems can help accelerate your product development today, call (408) 744-9624 or email us at info@tallmaple.com.

About Tall Maple Systems

Founded in 2002, Tall Maple Systems is a privately-held technology company that develops appliance management platform software for Linux-based Internet appliances. Today there are thousands of Internet appliances built on our award winning Samara technology in use at Fortune 500 organizations. For more information on our solutions, licensing options and pricing, please visit www.tallmaple.com or write to us at info@tallmaple.com.



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