

2013 Integrations Review



BEST IN CLASS:
Integrations 2013

BDNA

BDNA: If anyone has ever tried to cleanse raw inventory data to build a picture of what is actually installed out there for a managed estate, this product solves all that. Data is brought in whatever format and normalised to identify a standard naming convention, but that is not all. That data then has market intelligence appended to provide the most comprehensive definition for hardware and software.

BDNA. It is a concept so simple but offers so much value, especially in an IT Service Management environment.

Of the other products reviewed, these areas were of particular note:

Specialized Service Management Suites – Best in Class for Integrations – ServiceNow

As well as offering a range of connectors and detailed integration guidance, they provide workbooks to help focus pre-deployment across the board, so not just physical users but categories and the additional functions that go to build up a service management platform. Other tools assessed: – Cherwell, Easy Vista and ManageEngine

Systems Management Toolsets – Best in Class for Integrations – Absolute Software

Their comprehensive approach to a full range of endpoint management with a subtle interface makes it a powerful suite in its market area. Other tools assessed: LANDesk and Matrix42

ITSM Value Added Tools – Best in Class for Integrations – BDNA

It is a concept so simple but offers so much value, especially in an IT Service Management environment. Other tools assessed: Bomgar, Nexthink



Review by Ros Satar

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INTRODUCTION

It is all too easy, when looking at ITSM tools, to focus on perhaps the bread and butter functionality that we have all come to know, love and sometimes stumble over in implementation.

Sometimes it seems a secondary concern as to how the information gets there in the first place. As easy as it sounds, and to be honest as easy as it is for the more straightforward commercial engagement, my experiences with some managed service implementations were a different story.

Rigid, unyielding client security policies matched with equally rigid developed methods to load the data, it made the whole affair at times uncomfortable for all. There had to be easier ways.

Of course there are, and not only that but as products sets integrate with more and more third parties, as well as looking for ways themselves to innovate and manoeuvre in the market place, so we find ourselves looking across the wide base of integrations into and out of ITSM tools.

Where once it seemed to be the playground of development teams to come up with imaginative ways to squirt records from one system to another, again especially in large and complex projects, the use of real-time web services makes it easy for tools be less the “king of the castle” and more the glue that holds everything together.

What is perhaps more liberating, for want of a better word, is the range of products that presented themselves for this review.

From niche products that offer very succinct areas of integration to complement the service management function to the more established tool bases that recognise that increasingly they are becoming but one cog in an IT service chain – we take a look at an extensive range of tools and their integration points within IT Service Management.

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MARKET POSITIONING & APPROACH

For the purposes of this review, vendors were classified based on their primary market focus, and product capabilities.

TARGET MARKET SIZE

Vendor	Small	Medium	Large
Absolute Software		✓	✓
BDNA			✓
Bomgar	✓	✓	✓
Cherwell		✓	✓
EasyVista		✓	✓
LANDesk		✓	✓
ManageEngine	✓	✓	
Matrix42	✓	✓	✓
Nexthink			✓
ServiceNow			✓

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MARKET POSITIONING & APPROACH (Cont.)

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Vendor	Specialist ITSM Functions	Discovery Own Tool/Third Party Integration	Event Management & Monitoring Own Tool/Third Party Integration	Web Services	Niche
Absolute Software	Y	Own/Integration	Own	Y	N
BDNA	N	Integration	N	N	Data as a Service
Bomgar	N	N	N	N	Secure remote support
Cherwell	Y	Own/Integration	Integration	Y	N
EasyVista	Y	Own/Integration	None demonstrated/Listed	Y	N
LANDesk	Y	Own/Integration	Own/Integration	Y	N
ManageEngine	Y	Own/Limited Integration	Own	Y	N
Matrix42	Y	Own/Integration	Own	Y	N
Nexthink	N	Integration	Integration	N	Real-time End-user Analytics
ServiceNow	Y	Own/Integration	Integration	Y	N

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COMPETITIVE OVERVIEW

Vendor	Elevator Pitch	Strengths	Weaknesses
 TRACK. MANAGE. SECURE.	A restful and subtle interface with an inclusive service management solution that wraps around a comprehensive endpoint management solution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They offer a comprehensive set of connectors out of the box to a number of sources • An element of true CMDB federation exists by way of their mapping in real time with wizard driven interfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While they offer a range of innovative integrations for additional support – the current take-up tends to be slow for their market
 	If anyone has ever tried to cleanse raw inventory data to build a picture of what is actually installed out there for a managed estate, this product solves all that. Data is brought in whatever format and normalised to identify a standard naming convention, but that is not all. That data then has market intelligence appended to provide the most comprehensive definition for hardware and software.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BDNA has tapped into Data-as-a-Service and the concept is fiendishly simple – take in data, clean it, classify it to a sensible taxonomy hierarchy and pump it back into ITSM • They have extended their reach to Purchase Orders to begin to integrate procurement into a single record of consistently referenced data • Their catalogue is free to browse online at www.technopedia.com 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sounds too good to be true and that is their biggest challenge – this is something that really works for the medium to large organisations who have the insight to make the investment but may be out of reach of small organisations
	A niche product that complements ITSM tools with a completely self-contained remote support offering that negates a lot of the issues around security and access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialises in remote support • Completely self-contained within their own supplied orange box • A wide range of integrations to some of the biggest ITSM vendors to complement service management end to end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It can be difficult to change the mentality of organisations as to why they would need/benefit from an additionally integrated remote support tool, rather than looking for other alternatives.
	A key understanding of what is required and the ability to provide innovation across the whole organisation – Cherwell show they understand what organisations need and are ready to supply connectors to a wide variety of additional sources of information. A comprehensive solution throughout.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on their experience – Cherwell cover pretty much everything required in typical deployments – the 80/20 rule – which gets clients running very rapidly but also ticks all the boxes in terms of what is offered versus what is generally required. • Recognise areas to offer clients in terms of integration points using elements such as Twitter and RSS. • Provide web services inbound bound and a very comprehensive range of connectors to external sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perhaps missing a trick now in terms of integrating with task management and resource management tools (such as linking with Outlook calendars and tasks for technicians).

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COMPETITIVE OVERVIEW (Cont.)

Vendor	Elevator Pitch	Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>easyvista™ Manage the Future of IT™</p>	<p>A concise interface where simplicity is in the detail. A good application of best practice based on their commercial experience to take a lot of the pain away from pre-deployment set-up and a recognition that brokering service to and from other third parties needs to also be simplified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose built interfaces to import data and interact with third party integrations • Use of standard protocols to take away the need for programming capabilities for integration • Can integrate to third party search engines including those of third party vendors within the product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their constraints are really tempered by the maturity levels of their customers – but they get around this by offering email integration where perhaps inbound and outbound web service based integration is more advanced. This is maybe indicative of the upper-mid-market segment that they are comfortable in currently.
<p>LANDesk® SOFTWARE</p>	<p>A solid product from a vendor whose roots start in system management and it adds a dimension to what they can offer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong event management background • Understand that the deployment phase needs structure and the range of materials and consultancy they offer is comprehensive • Encompass BYOD with integration and include some neat new innovations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LANDesk have put some much needed focus into their service management, and it is at least on a par with almost all the main players but is not as innovative as some of the other approaches they take.
<p>ManageEngine ServiceDesk Plus</p>	<p>An entry-level ITSM solution with additional features such as Project Management and web services and a range of supporting tools available from the same stable of products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers a range of products within their suite to manage across an organisation • Nice touch in providing project capability within the ServiceDesk Plus Change function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misses automation in some key areas (CMDB) and not able to view a graphical representation of the process workflow • Some integrations rely on purchasing the other proprietary products as opposed to integrating with products organisations may have already.
<p>MATRIX42</p>	<p>Extensively focussed on Workplace management with Service Management wrapped around that capability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus rooted in workplace management, and have invested heavily in their linkage with Airwatch Mobile Device Management and then have built their Service Management around that • When added to their capabilities to integrate with other ITSM and Asset tools – can position themselves well as an IT services broker – an area that seems to lend itself to smaller operators in the market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong European presence but maybe as a European Technology vendor, they lack that presence to make them more global business partners with some of the larger ITSM vendors that they could partner with to leverage their MDM capabilities.

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COMPETITIVE OVERVIEW (Cont.)

Vendor	Elevator Pitch	Strengths	Weaknesses
 <p>change your perspective</p>	<p>A niche product that takes a very different view of management and, when integrated into ITSM, can provide a real-time analytical interface into process for proactive, rather than reactive resolution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers a completely different view of information within an enterprise • Everything is displayed in real-time and with the integration options to key ITSM tools, the combination really lends itself to large organisations or to those running complex transition projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It takes a huge leap of faith to make a financial commitment to cover this level of end-to-end management and analytical capability – Probably not for the very small organisations.
	<p>With a solid base of ITSM processes and an extensive range of partnerships – ServiceNow covers all the bases as to drive organisations towards a single source of truth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They recognise that pre-deployment can almost be a project and provide a comprehensive workbook to focus on the data to bring across • Very extensive range of integration points through an ever growing partner base 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reliance on information imparted through their admittedly extensive wiki – although it has been tidied up and the Books function is a lot more comprehensive, it does create a “hands-off” impression when it comes to actually helping people find out more information.

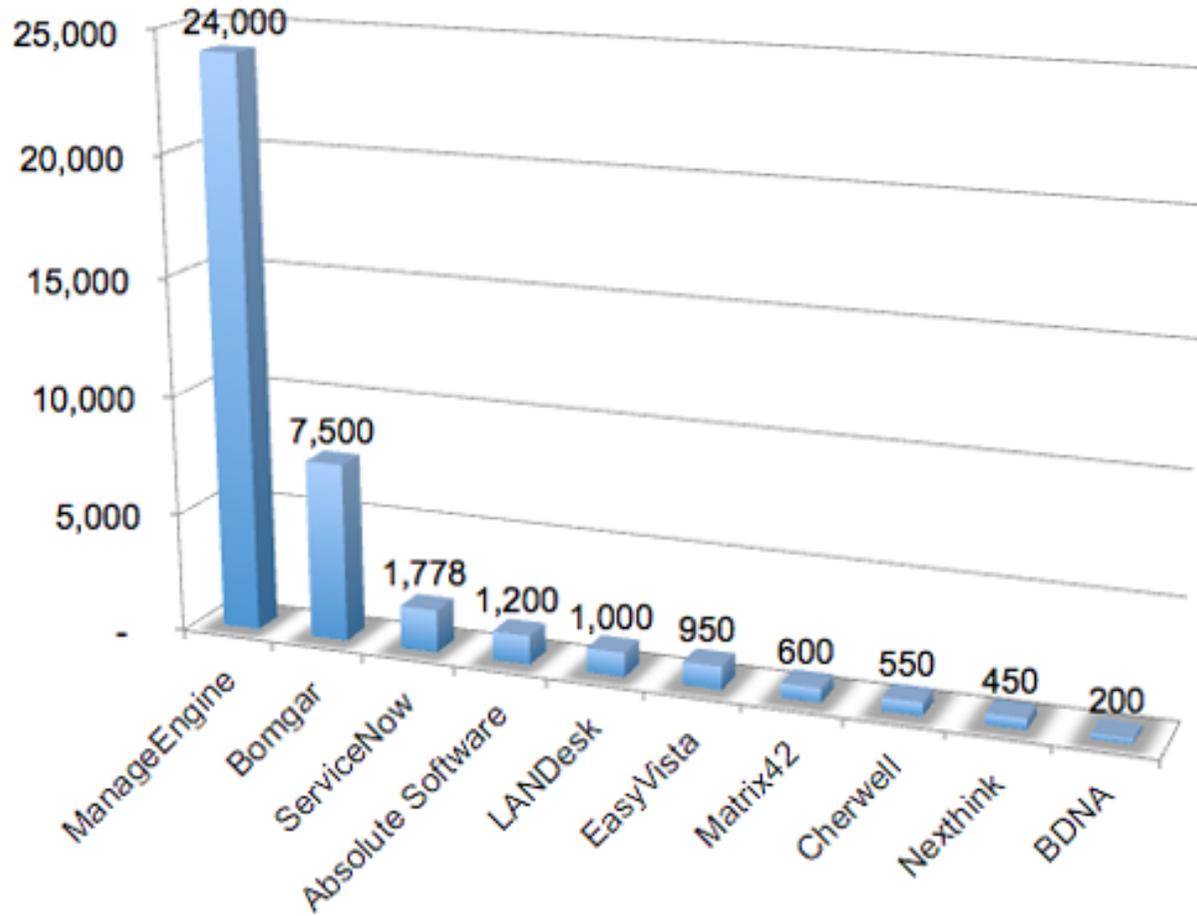
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CUSTOMERS

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Integrations Group Test - Number of Customers



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ANALYSIS

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Vendor	Functionality	Competitive Differentiators	Analysis
	<p>A subtle interface for a service management solution which has been wrapped around a comprehensive endpoint management system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They offer a number of integrated functions within the tool including Remote Control and Chat functions • They have focussed a lot of attention on a comprehensive Mobile Device Management strategy across Android and iOS • They recognise that everyone has tools and to avoid “swivel-chair management” – they provide connectors to any third party data source. 	<p>Absolute brought themselves into the Service Management market to complement their already established endpoint management toolset – to give themselves the complete package. They are in a great position to give some of the more established names in this market segment a real run for their money.</p>
	<p>Data normalisation wrapped up as a service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BDNA normalizes data across multiple vendors and feel very confident to be able to offer SLAs on the level of data accuracy and completeness • BDNA employ a team to curate and add Market Intelligence to that normalized data • They have now applied those same algorithms to Purchase Orders in either structured or unstructured fields – so now information can be tracked from acquisition to retirement. 	<p>BDNA have tapped into a way to collect, clean, normalize and propagate data in a quick and seamless way that adds immediate value to any kind of service management environment where accurate data is vital.</p>
	<p>A secure appliance-based solution for remote access which integrates to key ITSM solutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bomgar offer arguably the most uniquely secured remote support solution with their Bomgar box– a centralised, security hardened server that never passes data or system access through a third party. It handles standard authentication (e.g. Active Directory), and they offer a number of access controls out of the box, plus extensive audit trails and video recordings of sessions. • Their remote support capability extends to almost any device imaginable – desktops, laptops, servers, smartphones and tablets. They work across Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, Android and Blackberry systems and devices. • They are scalable and typically supply their solutions from small to large environments, enabling collaboration within teams and across external partnerships as offer the ability to remotely support a device from initiated chat support. 	<p>Another niche product with a great concept behind it – when large organisations have complex supplier relationships, Bomgar supply a security hardened orange box and integrate with some of the key players in the ITSM industry to provide solidly auditable remote support capability.</p>

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ANALYSIS (Cont.)

Vendor	Functionality	Competitive Differentiators	Analysis
	Comprehensive and established service management tool which provides flexibility to bring together IT and business processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service automation and innovation through actionable features – a nice touch in particular is being able to create a new incident from an incoming Twitter feed, and exploring using RSS feeds for travelling technicians. • Mobile applications (iPad/iPhone) for IT users utilising location services but also recognise that this has a business use as well – allowing service business managers to visit locations making the integration more of a proactive tool • Continued ease of use, through effective development of wizards to handle all the integrations. 	Cherwell continues to impress with their pragmatic view of IT Service Management, but could be letting easy integration wins pass them by where other competitors are providing value.
	Integrated service management and some good areas of value add integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EasyVista encompass their best practices in with their NEOTM platform which removes the need for delving into databases – everything is via easy to navigate interfaces • They have a comprehensive list of both inbound and outbound web services to allow them to be the “glue” in the middle of maybe larger, more complex support environments, resulting in real-time data exchanges between systems. • They do understand where their market pitch is, and allow for the fact that less mature environments may require more “traditional” email-style integrations for customers with perhaps older systems to integrate with 	Ticks the boxes in terms of providing clean interfaces to integrate data and understand that the value they can add as an intermediary in complex support environments.
	A good understanding of what the market needs and a good sense of position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LANDesk’s core expertise is rooted in systems management and as such they can provide Total User Management – covering systems management, security management, asset and service management, seamlessly integrated together through a process driven workflow platform. • They provide self-service capability accessible to users via desktops and mobile devices • They provide a two-way integration between Microsoft Outlook and the service desk to track task assignments 	Another vendor coming from a different management background with service management wrapped around it, means they have a solid platform for integration.

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ANALYSIS (Cont.)

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Vendor	Functionality	Competitive Differentiators	Analysis
	A basic service management solution with some reasonable integration capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a reasonable level of additional integration (for example web services) • Have developed a suite of products to complement the ServiceDesk Plus product set • Have added Project Management tracking capability 	A good entry level service management solution, and while many other vendors include asset management tooling, their integration in this area perhaps lags behind other vendors.
	Builds on an established workplace management platform with service management, and throwing a lot of focus on mobile device management built in to that function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matrix 42 offer integration around the management of physical, virtual and mobile devices • Matrix 42 offer their Service Catalogue and Service Desk free with their management product set • They offer integration out-of-the-box with products that are recognised as commonly in place on customers (e.g. SCCM, Active Directory etc.) and also integrate with a number of integrated Service Management suits (ServiceNow, Remedy, Axios among others) 	They take the interesting route of offering their service management free with their workplace management product set – which focuses on putting the power in the hands of the end-user.
	A real-time view of end-user topology allowing for more proactive problem determination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nexthink provide End-User IT Analytics – the tool analyses data from all the endpoints and extrapolates information from that perspective to identify trouble spots • The analysis is in real-time – patterns and any anomalies detected are constantly being evaluated. • They turn the end-user and endpoint data into a level of intelligence and insight to sit alongside IT Service Management and offer a level of integration with known vendors to complement them in a number of areas 	This power in this tool is the real-time correlation and analysis purely built up from an end-point perspective – and their continuing partnership with some of the biggest names in the ITSM industry should ensure that proactive assessment becomes a norm, but might put it out of reach of the smaller organisations.
	Comprehensive Service Management tool with extensive integration capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ServiceNow offers not just an extensive range of ITSM capabilities but some non-ITSM but complementary areas (Project & Program Management, Governance Risk Compliance). • They are able to call upon a wide range of customers as reference customers, as they have a wide partner base for implementations and integrations • They have scored highly in the Gartner ITSSM MQ (20th August 2013) for the Berlin Release. 	As well as offering a full range of integration functions as well as their own tooling for asset management, ServiceNow had project management within their tool and partner with companies like Bomgar for remote support. They can resort to pointing at their wiki which feels at times like a slightly “hands-off” approach – even if it has been curated recently.

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Deep Dive

Further details for each vendor can be found by using the links below:

- [Absolute Software](#)
- [BDNA](#)
- [Bomgar](#)
- [Cherwell](#)
- [EasyVista](#)
- [LANDesk](#)
- [ManageEngine](#)
- [Matrix42](#)
- [Nexthink](#)
- [ServiceNow](#)

DISCLAIMER, SCOPE & LIMITATIONS

The information contained in this review is based on sources and information believed to be accurate as of the time it was created. Therefore, the completeness and current accuracy of the information provided cannot be guaranteed. Readers should therefore use the contents of this review as a general guideline, and not as the ultimate source of truth.

Similarly, this review is not based on rigorous and exhaustive technical study. The ITSM Review recommends that readers complete a thorough live evaluation before investing in technology.

This is a paid review, that is, the vendors included in this review paid to participate in exchange for all results and analysis being published free of charge, without registration.

For further information, please read the 'Group Tests' section, on our [Disclosure page](#).

FULL REVIEW ONLINE AT

<http://www.theitsmreview.com/2013/11/integrations-2013-group-test-the-results/>

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