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INDEPENDENCE INTEGRITY INSIGHT

PilotHouse Award Summary

For the first time Nemertes Research has asked IT decision-makers to rate their strategic partners for host servers for virtualization. The pool of 2,004 total participants rated 10 host-server providers.

What makes this project so different from any other research available? *The results are based 100% on the experiences of host servers for virtualization decision-makers.* Nemertes' staff determines the methodology, conducts the research and analyzes the findings, but we have no influence over how any given provider performs; that rests with their customers. In addition, no providers sponsor this research. (For detailed methodology, please see the complete report.) Because they represent the distilled experiences of current users of host servers, these results can help companies creating, reassessing, or refreshing a virtualization strategy.

IT practitioners rated their vendors on a 1- to 5-scale (5 is the highest score) in the following areas: technology (encompassing features, functionality, robustness, and performance); customer service and support (encompassing everything from sales support through end-of-life transitions); and value (bang for the buck, or how well price matches technology and support). For host servers for virtualization, Nemertes defines two classes of vendors: Market Leaders, who have hundreds or thousands of server customers and significant market share in terms of revenue and number of customers, and Market Challengers who have far fewer customers and much smaller market share.

Cisco wins the Market Challenger award for host servers for virtualization. Cisco led closest competitor Oracle in technology, customer service, and value.

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Award

CISCO

**Host Servers for
Virtualization Market
Challenger**

Why Cisco Won

Cisco's win over Oracle rests entirely on the blade servers it initially offered in its Unified Computing System (UCS) platform, as participants had not had any significant exposure to the rack-mount systems released at the end of 2009. Of course, they have had only slight exposure to the blade systems, but so far, the consensus is that the technology is solid. Cisco was able to take advantage of bumps in customer service around Oracle's Sun servers as Sun and Oracle wove their way through the merger dance last year.

As the newcomer on the field, Cisco's win is something of a surprise. Cisco's win is built on solid scores in all categories. Not only did Cisco lead fellow challenger Oracle/Sun in all categories, it also beat Market Leader IBM in technology, customer service, and value. Compared with the average of all scores for Market Challengers, Cisco led in both customer services and value.

Cisco's long record as the leader in the enterprise networking space has allowed it to apply its resources and its market presence to quickly become a credible vendor in this space.

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If, as IT professionals have a second year to work with the products and with Cisco support, execution on UCS specifically continue very strong, it will give Cisco a viable toehold for the future. It is clear that if it gains significant market share Cisco will be able to present a major challenge to IBM, HP, and Dell.

Servers for Virtualization: Cisco Scores vs. Average