



Dome9 security as a service now in GA; finds first cloud partner in GoGrid

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There is plenty of talk about security inhibitors, and the legacy products placed in cloud servers, addressing jittery customers' perceptions of cloud security. Now hosting provider **GoGrid**, which recently announced its new CEO, has partnered with security management provider **Dome9**, as the security company announced the general availability of its multi-platform security management service. The idea is to give Dome9 a reference point as it comes out of beta, and to give GoGrid's cloud platform another feature as it looks to mature into new areas of the market.

Dome9 value proposition

Dome9 is headquartered in Tel Aviv, Israel, and is backed by **Opus Capital**. It was co-founded by former **Check Point Software** executive Zohar Alon, Dome9 CEO, and Roy Feintuch, the company's CTO. In traditional settings, many security administrators are forced to keep ports and servers perpetually open in order to connect to and manage those machines – meaning fairly static policies that require a heavy manual intervention at the least, or a hefty price tag for a more intensive approach. The result is that most of today's cloud servers are left vulnerable to attack because their security has been too costly and cumbersome to implement and manage.

The Dome9 product offers a centralized security management platform with automated controls in a SaaS model. In essence, the product automates and centralizes cloud server security across hosting and cloud providers – leveraging the security built into every cloud server operating system or virtualization technology – with dynamic policy controls to automate security. The idea is to deploy consistent security policies across physical and virtualized servers, as well as across on-premises-based workloads and the public cloud. This service, termed Secure Access Lease technology, provides dynamically generated, time-based secure access to cloud servers. The product rests on the notion that reducing the amount of time your doors are open reduces the probability that when someone comes snooping around your cloud environment he or she will see an easy way in.

Features of Dome9

Dome9 offers a security control console that offers one-click security functions for \$20 per server per month, and is theoretically deployable in under a minute. With Secure Access Leasing, all administrative access on a cloud server is closed by default, and opened only when, for whom, and for as long as it is needed, based on policies. This automation eliminates the manual overhead of managing access, and closes the security gap that results from administrators forgetting to log back in and disable access.

The Dome9 agent now supports CentOS 6.0 and Ubuntu, covering all major versions of Linux and Windows operating systems, including CentOS/RHEL 5.x and 6.0, Debian 6, and Windows 2008 R2, 2008, 2003 R2 and 2003. The Dome9 agent can also be deployed on physical and virtualized infrastructure including **VMware**, **Citrix Xen**, kernel-based virtual machine (KVM), **Parallels** and **Microsoft's Hyper-V**. Dome9 auditing provides full, account-level visibility and logging of user activity. Advanced filters let administrators drill down to see when users have logged on to Dome9, changed security policies, sent secure access invitations and accessed cloud machines. Customers using Dome9 commercially can now enjoy metered, pay-as-you-go billing, so they pay only for what they use. This lets customers pay for the protection they use with a security and billing model that is as elastic as their cloud infrastructure.

Dome9 strategy

The company essentially has two routes to market – the direct enterprise route, and the service provider route, which typically starts as a reseller agreement – meaning GoGrid customers see the same price for the same product as they would directly, but on a GoGrid invoice. Because Dome9 is multi-platform, it centralizes security management across multiple cloud service providers (e.g., **Amazon Web Services EC2**, **Rackspace**, **Terremark**, **GoGrid**, etc.) enabling customers to apply consistent security architecture to multiple clouds. In addition, Dome9's security policy is portable, so as cloud servers are migrated or replicated within or across service providers, security is persistent.

That means however, that Dome9 has to have some kind of relationship, or at least, has written to the APIs of those stacks. And that's exactly what the company is now doing. By default, the service is agent based; however, in the case of AWS Dome9 is already part of the AWS partner program. The AWS partner program offers partners sales, technical marketing and alliance support, including client referrals, technical training and AWS support for press releases. More fundamentally, however, Dome9 Connect, its API-based integration module for cloud providers, can be used to manage AWS EC2 & VPC Security Groups, without deploying complex daemons, but by using API keys. The virtual groups can therefore be managed directly through the API connection. This adds an addition benefit to users in that while the agent typically controls security at an OS (or hypervisor) level, when connected through the API, administrators can control security at a deeper layer.

T1R take

Dome9 has been quick to jump on the cloud bandwagon with its security management-as-a-service concept. As with many tech vendors, there is a growing recognition that with the fluidity and elasticity of public cloud platforms, so too do legacy monitoring, network management and security products have to evolve in order to survive. Although Dome9 is a security product, similar in essence to an electronic gate, the price-point, policy-driven automation and SaaS model is right on target for hosting providers that need to address not only to security but cloud security questions from their SMB customers, particularly those that want to be self-managed, and feel as though they still have an essence of administrative control over their infrastructure – especially when it traverses clouds.

The Dome9 product is now preloaded on a GoGrid Partner Server image (PGSI), ready to deploy within GoGrid cloud services, with a price tag of \$20 per server – the same price that Dome9 sells for directly – a price tag that should appeal to the average hoster. No word yet, however, on whether the new security console will be made available as an iPhone application in the App Store – a place where GoGrid has been quick to give its customers a number of infrastructure management capabilities – i.e., with views into load balancers, images, IP address management and the like. As T1R has previously stated, the line separating how consumers chose to access their daily lifestyle applications, and how they access and manage their daily work, is becoming thinner and thinner.

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