APC Brings InfraStruxure Solution to IBM Portable Data Center

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Businesses can now order IBM’s Portable Modular Data Center integrated with APC by Schneider Electric’s InfraStruxure power and cooling architecture. IBM announced in December that its portable data center solution is generally available. A number of other OEMs, including Sun, Dell, HP and SGI, also offer containerized data centers.

APC by Schneider Electric is bringing its InfraStruxure power and cooling architecture to IBM’s containerized data center.

APC announced Jan. 11 that through an expanded partnership, IBM’s PMDC (Portable Modular Data Center) can be ordered with the InfraStruxure products already integrated. The APC offering includes everything from racks and power supplies to cooling systems.

APC’s modular and scalable offering fits well with what IBM is doing with the PMDC, according to APC CTO Jim Simonelli.

"APC’s footprint in IBM’s modular data center offerings demonstrates the adaptability of our solutions to meet customer demands in a variety of business applications,” Simonelli said in a statement.

IBM in 2008 joined a growing number of vendors in offering complete and portable data centers that could be housed in standard shipping containers. While the idea of portable data centers is not new, the idea got renewed life in 2006, when Sun Microsystems introduced its Project Blackbox.

Click here to see some of the portable data centers available.

A number of OEMs later joined in, including Hewlett-Packard, Dell, SGI and IBM. One of the last announcements Verari Systems made before it began shutting down in December was the sale of a containerized data center that included technologies from it and Cisco Systems.

Most of these data centers-in-a-box are fitted into standard 20- or 40-foot containers, though IBM and several other vendors say they will customize their offerings.

Officials with several vendors said last year there was growing in using containerized data centers, though analysts said any demand in the market—which is still a small one—was tempered by the global recession.

That could change as the economy improves, according to IDC, which said that between 50 and 75 were sold in 2008. That number could grow to 300 to 350 by 2013, according to IDC.
The containers are used to help Web 2.0 companies and hosting facilities quickly scale their compute capabilities, while giving enterprises an option for such needs as temporary computing power and disaster recovery. The self-contained data centers include everything from the servers and networking to storage, power and cooling.

IBM's announced its PMDC in 2008 and spent the next year offering it in test and some production environments. The company made the containerized data center generally available in December 2009.

IBM and APC have been working together since 2006, when IBM named APC as a physical infrastructure provider for its SMDC (Scalable Modular Data Center), and later as a key player in its HDZ (High Density Zone) solution.