

## Search Appliances

Mostly everyone knows how to search the Internet and how to use the Edit - Find feature of their favorite applications, like Word or Outlook. Microsoft tried to make Search easier with the Windows Explorer Search feature built into the navigation toolbar featuring a friendly search dog (that even does cute tricks). It was the Google Desktop that raised the bar on Search for the normal Windows user with simple download and install by offering the unique capability of finding documents very quickly in almost any format including in email mailbox databases.

Most organizations share documents on file servers requiring a new type of service addressed by network search applications. Enter the search appliance which is a standalone, rack-mounted server dedicated to scanning, indexing and providing the search engine for an entire organization. The IT manager will no longer need to install software and tune the server performance. Google, Thunderstone and Black Tulip Systems offer this new Enterprise Search Appliance where a document can be found across the organizations intranet.

The integration of Enterprise Search Appliances transforms existing Office Document archives into powerful knowledge bases. Similar to the evolution of backup technology into hierarchical storage managed through a Storage Area Network (SAN), Enterprise Document Search appliances is centralizing the capability of managing documents where they live. Documents created on local computers and laptops may have never been backed up or copied to networked file servers. Email is now an important business communication tool and documents attached to email messages can be more relevant. With an extremely distributed set of potential document sources in a mobile environment, finding and managing this vital corporate asset is challenging.

No longer are each individual required to install software, run networked applications (thick clients) or search individually in each application or doing a one-at-a-time search each computer system. The search appliances are managed and used through simple browser based interfaces (thin clients). Even the extra processing time to find and index documents using the Google Desktop has been moved to the high-performance Enterprise Document Search appliance.

There is a bright future Enterprise Document Search system with the improvements in computing power, networking and system down-sizing. As an example, Black Tulip Systems ONEZEEK product line is being offered to the small business (SMB) and small office / home office (SOHO) in form factor similar to the low-cost router / firewalls used by broadband installations. These new Search Appliances will become as common as the network router, being an always on, solid state network service that makes finding any document as easy as finding a web site.