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Netezza touts energy efficient appliance

Data warehousing appliance specialist [Netezza](#) has this week become the latest hardware specialist to talk up the energy efficiency of its products, claiming it outperforms software-based alternatives deployed on generic servers.



The company claims that a single rack of [Netezza Performance Servers](#) supporting 5.5 terabytes of data requires only 4,180W and 12,000 BTU/Hour. In contrast, a blade-based traditional system supporting five terabytes of data requires two racks, over 13,000W and more than 46,000 BTU/Hour, according to Netezza. Phil Francisco, director of product marketing at Netezza, said that the company's appliances had been specifically architected to cut energy consumption based on technology typically found in telecoms switches and other devices requiring high performance but a low power footprint.

Francisco explained that the appliance is divided up into separate processing units, known as [Snippet Processing Units](#) (SPUs), which each have their own disk drive, CPU, memory and field programmable gate array, and only require up to 30 watts of power. This allows the appliance to break down any query made to that data warehouse into subsets that can be run in parallel by multiple units. As a result responses are faster and made using a lower energy footprint, he argued, with an array running at full capacity requiring only 4KW. "The architecture basically takes the processing horsepower and positions it right by the disk drive," he said. "It dramatically reduces power demands."

Jim Baum, President and COO at Netezza, said that as a result of the appliance's energy efficiency mobile phone giant Orange had recently

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managed to move from Orange has moved from using 27 server cabinets to just nine.

"The dollar savings you make through greater energy efficiency are nice," he said. "But for many firms the real issue here is that they are simply finding it unfeasible to increase the performance of their datacentre because they can't get the power and cooling in."

Netezza's approach also raises interesting questions about whether the energy efficiency of some dedicated appliances may provide them with an advantage over the more flexible blade server-based approach to datacentre infrastructure that has been in the ascendancy for so long.

Posted by James Murray on November 24, 2006 | [Permalink](#) |

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