



“VIRTUALIZATION CAN NOT ONLY MASK COMPLEXITY, IT CAN ALSO HELP SIMPLIFY THE STORAGE ENVIRONMENT BY HIDING TECHNOLOGY CHANGE FROM END USERS,” SAYS HU YOSHIDA OF HITACHI DATA SYSTEMS.

business issues. Industry associations such as the SNIA aid the vendor community by translating these needs into technical requirements that can be served with best practices, industry standards, and education.”

### **SQUEEZED FROM ALL SIDES**

Even if there were no other storage challenges, the sheer growth of the volumes of data stored by the average company would be enough to give any business or IT professional pause. In less than a decade, businesses that once stored “only” megabytes of data are routinely managing terabytes and even petabytes.

From every angle, the need to maintain data

increases the pressure on budget-constrained IT departments and companies. Capacity growth continues unchecked, with organizations processing increasingly greater numbers of transactions that need to be saved and stored for near- and long-term periods. New compliance requirements, such as the Section 404 requirement of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, demand that IT professionals protect an increasing volume of data; moreover, they must be able to provide “timely” access to specific files and applications – even e-mail messages. Yet a commensurate expansion in storage headcount is not within the budget of most organizations, creating a backlog of requests and long working hours for operators and administrators.

Storage vendors are on the case. Solutions range from vendor to vendor, but the common

thread is a desire to use technology to streamline storage tasks, automate routine processes, and reduce complexity.

### **PROTECT THE DATA**

For Hitachi Data Systems Corp., in Santa Clara, Calif., virtualization is the key to supporting organizations’ storage infrastructure simplification strategies. As defined by the SNIA, “virtualization” occurs when one or more back-end services or functions are integrated with additional front-end functionality. The goal is to provide useful abstractions that hide complexity or add new functionality. HDS’s virtualization enables users to access its storage as well as selected third-party storage devices through a single interface. The virtualization resides in the Hitachi TagmaStore



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“AS A COLLECTIVE VOICE, USERS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO QUANTITATIVELY DEFINE MARKET SEGMENT NEEDS AND HELP VENDORS MORE RAPIDLY UNDERSTAND THE MARKET BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES,” SAYS THE SNIA’S ADAMS.

Universal Storage Platform’s control unit, enabling customers to manage their storage devices with the same software functionality and commands that they use with the HDS products.

“Virtualization can not only mask complexity, it can also help simplify the storage environment by hiding technology change from end users,” says Hu Yoshida, chief technology officer for HDS. “The technology changes every 18 months, but the capitalization rate for most companies is either three or five years. So we see virtualization as an important ROI opportunity – where companies can use virtualization to map new functionality across depreciating storage assets to reduce their operation expenses going forward.”

With the pressures of Sarbanes-Oxley

heating up, Yoshida says that companies need a broader view of what comprises an appropriate storage strategy. “The prime requirement of Section 404 is to protect the data,” he says. “That means that customers must be more sophisticated about meeting their storage requirements, considering not just capacity but the whole ROI picture. Can you satisfy your internal and external auditors? Do you have safe multi-tenancy, where different systems and applications are prevented from overwriting the other’s data? And when you protect the data, are you able to ensure its integrity during its retention period? Can you reduce your costs by seamlessly moving less active data to different tiers of storage?”

Yoshida points out that modular storage provides a reduction in capital costs, but it lacks the advanced functionality and the

horsepower to provide data protection features such as mirroring, replication, and migration without affecting performance. The virtualization offered in the TagmaStore Universal Storage Platform can map high-end functionality across existing modular storage as well as move data to the appropriate storage tier. This enables customers to optimally match applications to storage attributes and cost-effectively meet the data protection requirements of Sarbanes-Oxley. “Making sure all of these issues are covered requires a longer-term view about storage,” he says.

### CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

As technology vendors explore innovative new storage products, customers are beginning

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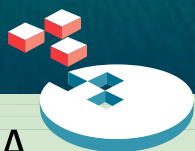
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October 24-27, 2005 – Orlando, FL USA  
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Enterprise ILM Information Solutions  
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to find their voice as a community.

Leading the way in helping users get what they need is the SNIA End User Council (EUC), a group of more than 100 member companies worldwide. Formed in late 2003, the EUC was created “to aggregate and amplify the voices of the end users and give them a connection point with the decision-makers in SNIA,” says Laurence Whittaker, chairman of the SNIA EUC, who is also a supervisor of enterprise storage management at Toronto-based Hudson's Bay Company, Canada's largest department store retailer. The EUC's goal is to provide a direct voice into the storage networking industry, creating a forum for shared communication that benefits both customers and technology developers. Customers also share information within the council.

The EUC facilitates this exchange via monthly conference calls and semi-annual meetings at the Storage Networking World conference. In both venues, the EUC hosts presentations by industry leaders, conducts focus groups for the SNIA's technical work groups and forums, and hosts open discussions on a variety of topics and storage management issues. “Much of the discussion not only helps define the EUC objectives and priorities, but provides direct input and feedback to the industry via SNIA,” says Whittaker.

## LEAD, FOLLOW, OR GET OUT OF THE WAY

A founding member of the SNIA EUC is Norman Owens, a business technologist with Carlson Companies, one of the largest privately held companies in the U.S. The company, headquartered in Minneapolis, is a global leader in the hospitality, marketing, and business and leisure travel industries, with brands such as Radisson Hotels & Resorts, T.G.I. Friday's, and Carlson Wagonlit Travel. Its centralized technology group, which provides IT services throughout the Carlson enterprise, experienced a 300% growth in storage volumes within the last year.

Getting involved in the EUC is helping Carlson become a leader in employing effective storage practices. “In the EUC you meet the top tier of storage end users,” says Owens. “These people have the greatest motivation to create solutions. And I find that the people who are doing the most innovation are also the most anxious to share information and best practices about what works for them.”

Owens appreciates the accelerated training he has received through the EUC, as well as the opportunity to discuss the issues of using one vendor's storage technology versus blending the products of multiple vendors in one storage environment. “These discussions give users a finer distinction, better focus on our challenges,” he says. “And I like hearing about best practices from other users, rather than just from vendors. We are all in the same boat with storage. The information we share helps us all to do our jobs better.”

In addition, the group's influence seems to be expanding within the storage vendor community. “Within SNIA, we are getting calls from many groups and committees, asking for end users who can review technology specifications, provide feedback on strategies, and participate in their discussions,” he says. In fact, the group's perspective is in such demand that the EUC needs more members to field requests for participation in the SNIA work groups and conferences. “The vendors are starting to hear us now. We no longer have to insist on being included.”

## WEB DIRECTORY

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