

CA Recovery Management 12.5 Enables Efficiency

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Abstract: CA steps up its game with new efficiency-focused features in the products that make up its CA Recovery Management suite—CA ARCserve Backup, CA XOssoft Replication, and CA XOssoft High Availability—and attractive bundling and channel programs.

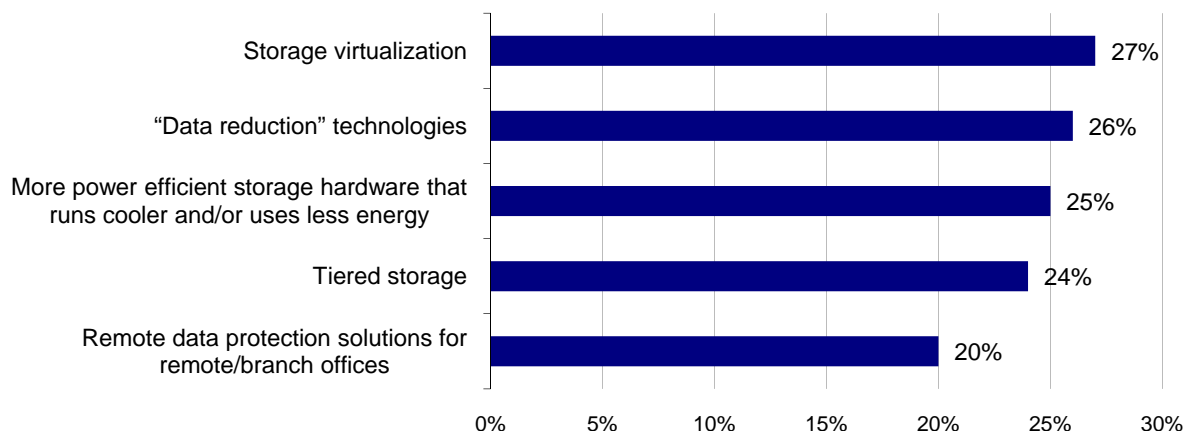
Overview

Today, Benjamin Franklin’s remark that, “in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes” could be revised to include “death, taxes, and data growth.” Data growth is responsible for much of the investment IT makes in its infrastructure to store, manage, transport, and back up data. Ever-increasing data growth was a catalyst for the tape-to-disk transition the data protection market experienced a few years ago to solve the backup window challenge. And, now that disk has secured its place as a backup target, data growth is compelling organizations, once again, to examine ways to optimize capacity, especially since ESG research respondents cited data protection as the application that will be most responsible for storage growth over the next 24 months.¹

At the same time, the gloomy economic picture is forcing many companies to spend more cautiously or to invest in technologies and solutions that provide rapid and unarguable ROI. IT initiatives tied to delivering greater efficiency and cost reduction are less likely to be impacted by budget constraints. ESG research revealed that data reduction technologies, including data deduplication, were near the top of respondents’ top priorities over the next 24 months (see Figure 1).²

FIGURE 1. MOST IMPORTANT STORAGE-RELATED INITIATIVES OVER THE NEXT 24 MONTHS

**What do you believe will be the most important storage-related initiatives undertaken by your organization over the next 24 months?
(Percent of respondents, N=504, multiple responses accepted)**



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, 2008

¹ Source: ESG Research Report, *Enterprise Storage Systems Survey*, November 2008.

² Ibid.

It's not just hype. Deduplication can have a major impact on the capacity of data stored, which, in turn, can deliver significant economic benefits. Why? Data deduplication examines data, identifies redundant segments, and then eliminates that redundancy. After an initial backup, subsequent backup data is reviewed. If the data is unique, then it's stored. If the data has been seen before, only a pointer to the unique data is stored, which takes up significantly less space than storing duplicate data.

Deduplication tops the list of enhancements for CA ARCserve Backup 12.5. CA introduced block-level deduplication as a basic feature of the software. This and several other enhancements to CA Recovery Management 12.5 deliver efficiency and promote cost savings.

Analysis

CA Recovery Management consists of CA ARCserve Backup, CA XOssoft Replication, and CA XOssoft High Availability. The combination of these solutions allows organizations to safeguard data stored on diverse physical and virtual server environments, both locally and in remote offices, and to enable on-premise operational recovery and disaster recovery, as well as automated failover and failback from standby systems.

In its 12.5 release, CA Recovery Management includes new features and capabilities to appeal to an even wider array of environments. CA ARCserve Backup r12.5 now includes native deduplication as a no-cost feature. Its use of block-level, variable-length "chunks" and ability to deduplicate across backup sets improves the likelihood of finding redundancy. Since deduplication in CA ARCserve Backup occurs at the media server, the deduplication processing load happens at a point in the data path that can be optimized for it, alleviating the processing burden at the application servers. Because CA ARCserve Backup is content-aware, the performance impact of the deduplication process is minimized by selectively and intelligently deduplicating data. If CA ARCserve knows it's seen the data before, it skips the hash and compare step in the deduplication process. Through integration with CA XOssoft, deduplicated data is replicated between either ROBO or DR sites with the central data center, optimizing network bandwidth.

CA also improved capabilities with virtual machine backup. CA ARCserve Backup now supports both VMware and Microsoft hypervisors with full integration with VMware Consolidated Backup (VCB) via its user interface. Other enhancements include:

- Combining the benefits of VM-level backup and single-pass file-level recovery—without having to stage a full VM recovery in order to get to specific items
- Reducing backup space requirements with mixed full image-level backup and incremental/differential backup
- Automating discovery of VMs
- Deduplicating data, which can have a dramatic effect on VM backup due to the amazing amount of duplicate data collected for backup

Efficiency-minded enhancements include:

- Integrated SRM capabilities that help track and report on physical and virtual servers to not only help save on hardware costs by storing data more efficiently, but also by making IT operations more efficient in managing the overall environment
- A Business Intelligence Dashboard with high-quality graphics that report on backup and SRM information in CA ARCserve and replication information from CA XOssoft to help reduce operational issues and simplify administration
- Ability to verify the recoverability of backed up data (including deduplicated backups) as part of a tested DR strategy

The company enhanced CA XOssoft 12.5 with support for:

- Microsoft SharePoint 2007, complementing other popular applications
- UNIX and Linux in addition to Windows, with additional enhancements for Windows System State protection and Windows Registry synchronization
- Microsoft Hyper-V, as well as enhancements in VMware such as vCenter high availability
- 64-bit environments
- French, German, Italian, Spanish, Brazilian, Portuguese, Chinese (simplified and traditional), and Japanese, in addition to its English version

Moreover, CA provides high availability for XOssoft Control Services to ensure continuous application access and manageability, as well as automated DR testing as a standard component (not an option), allowing organizations to proactively verify the recoverability of replicated data without incurring an additional cost.

The Bottom Line

CA's stiffest competition is Symantec, with its Backup Exec product. With this release, CA has an opportunity to leapfrog Symantec on features—at least until Backup Exec responds with its next release. Deduplication—especially deduplication offered at no charge—and the enhancements for VM-level backup with single-pass file-level recovery are two key points of differentiation today.

CA Recovery Management's value asset is the CA XOssoft technology and the integration between the two products. Its replication and HA capabilities provide an added layer of protection for physical and virtual environments. In addition to the previously mentioned capability of WAN-optimized backup for ROBOs, the combination of technologies also eliminates the backup window by performing CA ARCserve backup of the replica server. Also noteworthy, just a few months ago, CA introduced its XOssoft-“cloud” combo called CA Instant Recovery On Demand, created by working with a DR data center partner to provide a cost-effective and easy-to-implement business continuity and disaster recovery managed and hosted service offering.

CA created special pricing for the ARCserve-XOssoft bundle and channel programs to promote the solutions in concert. Timed with the 12.5 release, CA is offering an “X-tra Value Pack” that ships replication along with CA ARCserve Backup to provide an additional level of protection at no additional cost. In addition to the already attractive suite pricing, CA is including two free copies of CA XOssoft Replication and one year of maintenance—a move that could cement its hold on its existing customers and gain new ones.