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Storage modernization is required to meet today's challenges

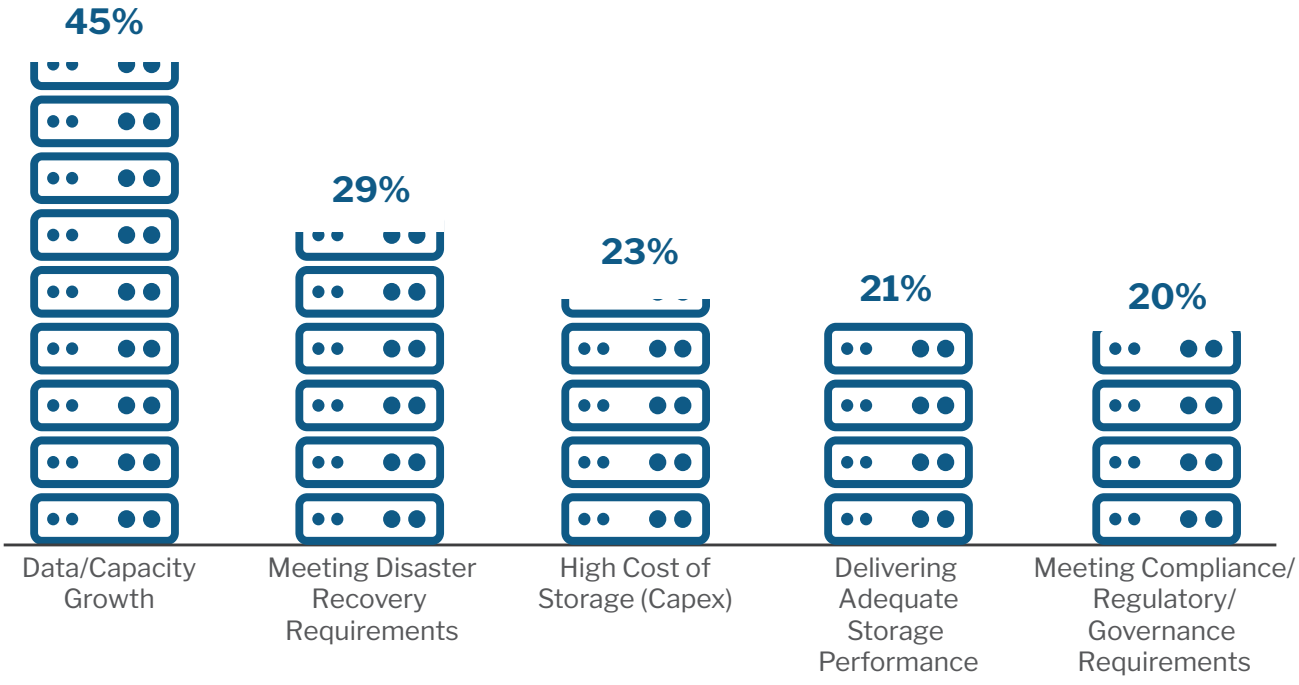
The 451 Take

Organizations of all sizes are contending with rapid data growth, and this compounds a host of other storage-related challenges. For many companies, this includes meeting disaster recovery and regulatory requirements, high capex costs and the ability to deliver adequate performance to match the needs of demanding applications and business stakeholders. Midsized organizations and enterprises not only have to address these prominent storage challenges, but they must do so while keeping a careful eye on spending since storage budgets are increasing at less than half the pace of data growth. It will be important to have storage systems with rich feature sets that can allow businesses to adapt to match data growth while providing accessibility, consistency and resiliency.

Top Five Storage Pain Points

Source: Voice of the Enterprise: Storage, Budgets and Outlook 2019

Q. What are your organization's top pain points from a storage perspective? (Select up to 3.) (n=600)



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Business Impact

DATA CAPACITY AND GROWTH IS THE TOP PAIN POINT AND WILL CONTINUE TO GET WORSE. Large enterprises are entering the multi-petabyte range for data under management. The median amount of data stored for organizations in the 250–999 headcount range is currently at 275TB, which is already a significant burden. Over the previous year, organizations saw a 21% increase of their data under management, on average. This problem will only get worse because organizations are expecting a 23% increase, on average, of data under management in the coming year.

DISASTER RECOVERY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY REQUIREMENTS ARE A TOP PAIN POINT. This places a premium on data protection technologies such as snapshots, clones, replication and DR orchestration/assessment. Data growth necessitates good data management and protection practices and amplifies the need for effective DR/BC tools. Backup and disaster recovery capabilities are in high demand, and they are some of the highest requested features end users want to have integrated with their current infrastructure platforms. However, the need to use DR/BC products can also be minimized by using a storage system with proven reliability and resiliency, as well as the ability to be upgraded in a non-disruptive manner.

PERFORMANCE CONTINUES TO BE A MAJOR ISSUE. Organizations need granular quality of service performance control to take advantage of the high-performance flash in their hybrid and AFA systems. A fast array without performance control will not be able to provide consistency across multiple workloads, which is a major challenge for infrastructure teams. A number of key technologies are emerging to boost the performance, including NVMe flash drives and storage-class memory, and while it is tempting to purchase the latest and greatest today, the price premium for these cutting-edge technologies will reduce with time as they become mainstream.

Looking Ahead

The growth of storage budgets is being outpaced by capacity growth, and this problem will persist for the foreseeable future. While more than half of organizations have projected a budget increase for 2019, the expected increase was just 11% on average, while data is expected to grow at a 25% rate over the next 12 months. We can expect this dynamic to continue and likely worsen, making it essential for organizations to capitalize on value for money, leveraging enhanced management tools to ensure performance keeps pace with the needs of the business.

To assist end users in countering the aforementioned challenges, storage modernization is imperative. This includes drawing on new intelligent management, monitoring and automation tools to enhance storage hardware investments. By using automation and intelligent management, users can reduce the burden of manually accomplishing routine tasks while also becoming aware of and resolving incidents faster.

Aside from automation, there is also the need for raw performance. AFA adoption is approaching mainstream levels, especially in larger organizations: 48% of organizations have AFAs in use. Initially, many organizations, especially smaller businesses, were wary of flash adoption, citing price concerns. However, flash has become readily available. Transactional workloads such as databases are some of the greatest drivers for AFA and NMVe adoption. As more enterprises aim to make use of their stored data to generate value through analytics and machine learning strategies, workloads like database will be foundational elements, tying the need for storage performance to the ability to effectively generate business value.

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