

ON THE SPOT

THE STORAGE CONUNDRUM CONTINUES – TOO MUCH DATA, AND TOO LITTLE SPACE, OR NOT?

storage

words by **SAMANTHA PERRY**



Storage has always been a problem in the ICT space, with end-users using it up almost as soon as it is installed. Too much data and too little space, they used to say. Now the word on the street is that there's still too much data, and too much under-utilised disk space. In this month's *On the Spot* feature, we asked the local storage guys one easy question: Storage, storage everywhere – how do you manage, maintain and get optimal usage out of it?

■ Studies show that data growth is estimated at 30 percent CAGR (compound annual growth rate) commercially, while IT budgets are flat or declining. Undetected, the problems of storage inefficiencies are huge. Frequently, 70 percent or more of available storage is unused and wasted, caused in part by the estimated 271 storage management point products used in an attempt to manage storage, none of which are interoperable among themselves or across servers. Training is required to develop the right skills and it is critical to install the right tools to understand and resolve the issues. Users that have done so have dramatically reduced expenses. **Manfred Gramlich, Sun Microsystems storage practice lead**

(Top) Manfred Gramlich, Sun Microsystems; (right) Sagaran Naidoo, CA; (bottom left) Adrian Hollier, Comztek; (bottom right) Derek Street, SecureData



■ Getting optimal benefit from anything as complex as the storage assets and infrastructure of an organisation requires a sound strategy that revolves around best practices, risk mitigation, and efficiency. This is fundamental in driving down costs, protecting priceless information, and meeting the compliance challenge brought on by governance and regulation.

The compliance challenge is, in turn, largely the cause of data storage growing at astronomical levels, leading to fears that we will soon not have enough storage capacity to store all the data that has been generated, and not yet disposed of. Consequently, in designing and implementing this storage management strategy, organisations need to start making firm decisions, especially around their archiving and records management policies. A decision to implement a policy that will archive only business-related information, and store it for only as long as it needs to be stored, will address both





Andre Hurter,
Drive Control
Corporation

the compliance challenge and the data storage issue.

Sagaran Naidoo, business technologist at CA

■ Management of storage is becoming increasingly problematic for organisations. Most have little idea of how much data they own and assigning storage quotas to each user is a manual, time-consuming process; yet without quotas it is impossible to prevent users from cramming up the space with personal material that is not compressed, such as movies, music and pictures. To combat these problems, organisations should ensure they have a system in place that automates storage management and can set quotas for each department. It should compress data, which drastically reduces the storage needed and restricts users from misusing the infrastructure. Their systems should also issue alerts when space is running low and be able to generate complete reporting, giving organisations good visibility into their storage requirements.

Derek Street, product manager at SecureData

■ The data growth epidemic is further fuelled by the need

to store data, be it to meet legislative requirements or just the standard hoarding instincts that are part of human nature. Fortunately, data management vendors are finding ways to combat this by integrating different data management solutions. A good example of this is the integration of archiving and data protection. By moving less frequently used data to a lower tier storage solution, production data is reduced, which means less backup storage is required. Scarce admin resources are also optimised, as storage management effort is reduced. If implemented properly, the savings can, in the long run, be substantial.

Andre Hurter, manager: storage software products at Drive Control Corporation

■ Effective storage management begins with picking the correct management product for a heterogeneous storage environment. As it is increasingly difficult to accurately plan for storage growth, implementing a flexible, centralised storage solution is often more profitable. This enables a company to manage storage across arrays and to move storage to where it is required. For effective storage maintenance, it is important to obtain an understanding of what is going to be stored and for how long. This knowledge will ensure that only business-critical information is stored. With such management and maintenance, a company will be empowered to obtain optimal usage out of its storage solution. **Adrian Hollier, Comstek Symantec availability channel manager B**