

IS YOUR STORAGE READY FOR THE BIG LEAGUE?

This follows up on our recently released “Is your business ready to move the storage goalposts?” article and continues the metaphor of the footballing landscape.

Global data storage requirements are growing. Fact! How a business selects a storage vendor that meets the companies needs both today and into the future is a hotly debated topic in many boardrooms throughout the world. Typically, businesses assess the proposed solution based on several key criteria including, – total cost of ownership, performance, technology fit, functionality, and reliability. But despite this analytical approach, most will continue to buy the same technology from the same vendor and supplier as they know it works and so the cycle continues. - But is this the right approach?

This series of articles (more to follow) will demonstrate how the data storage industry is undergoing a massive shake up. For instance, at least one manufacturer now offers total transparency, provides a fantastic ROI and incorporates future proof performance a business needs delivering next generation storage requirements.



WE WANT THE BEST

In a football team the manager has a budget to buy new players and sell others. This means 9 times out of 10 a manager must carefully balance his team and obtain the best player he can. This is the same as buying storage, you want the best storage you can buy for your budget that delivers the IOPS and all the capacity a business could want.

WHAT IF – The storage system out of the box delivers 1M – 2M IOPS and all you pay for is the storage you use? For example, you need 300TB? OK, here's 1M IOPS. Or need 500TB? OK, here's 1M IOPS. Doesn't that make buying storage easy?

SCALE TO WIN

Any football team must have enough talented players to cover the length and breadth of the pitch to win! Typically, however, in the data storage world, assessing the business needs is more problematic. Indeed, buying storage is often a bit like poking your finger in the air and guessing. The net result is that a business will end up over provisioning their requirement and then become encumbered with the resultant increased costs. Then, having used all this available capacity, they purchase another disk tray and add it to the storage pool! The cycle continues until the storage solution runs out of capacity.

WHAT IF – The storage solution enabled you to use, for instance, 200TB and then in a year's time you discover a need for another 200TB? Wouldn't it be great if you could seamlessly upgrade with no downtime, no waiting whilst, at the same time, delivering all the IOPS you need?

GROWING YOUR STORAGE

Like a team it takes time and money to reach the top of the league table and then staying there. It's a constant juggling act as players become injured, no longer fit in with the team or retire. Similarly, a business cannot predict easily its storage requirements. We can read and listen to vendors touting the storage explosion, but for any business scaling up it is a significant challenge. There are many potential obstacles to consider including staffing, business demands, solutions and services as well as managing the backend IT systems. Many businesses have at least 200TB's of data, but they cannot tell you how much they will need over 5 years due to the constant changes in the market.

WHAT IF – The storage solution scales from 100TB to 4PB seamlessly with zero downtime and little intervention on behalf of the storage admin?

WE CAN'T AFFORD THAT

Football players are expensive and sometimes a manager can't afford the player he wants and therefore settles for a compromise. How many times has a business had to purchase a storage solution that will do the job and yet they yearned for that extra functionality and didn't get it?

WHAT IF – The storage had a flexible consumption model that allows a business to grow in per TB increments up or down in a moment's notice and pay for it as an OPEX expense?



STORAGE FOR EVERY TYPE OF DATA

In a team the manager picks players based on their specialist skills, each player knows their position on the pitch and the manager positions his players in a formation 4-4-2, 4-2-3-1 or 4-3-3 etc with the intention of winning. Similarly, in the same way, a business wants to win and often buys a storage array to perform a specialist skill i.e. delivering IOPS. Invariably, it then buys another storage array for another purpose such as to store multi-terabytes of data and so on.

WHAT IF – The storage array could handle all data types i.e. VM workloads, file/print, backup, file/block, deliver storage to multiple applications and yet deliver the QoS for each requirement?

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

In any football team you have a collection of highly skilled players that every week need to perform for their club.

Whereas a storage solution needs to perform 24x7x365 continually delivering performance day or night. This is assuming it delivers on the vendor's SLA commitment (service level agreement), normally 99.999% (five nines) or 5.26 minutes of unplanned downtime per year. For many years' manufacturers strove to achieve these levels and did.

Today however, there are storage vendors offering 99.9999% (six nines) uptime or 31.56 seconds of unplanned downtime per year. This is due to multiple components within the storage system having built-in redundancy.

WHAT IF – The storage system could deliver **99.99999%** (seven nines) or 3.16 seconds of unplanned downtime per year, this is a **1000%** improvement over 6x9's! If a football player could perform like this there would be no second team required!

LOAN

Sometimes a club will send a player out on loan to sell them or receive an income as they don't quite fit in to the current team. Normally buying storage is a little more difficult due to several different parameters i.e. amount of disk space, network connectivity, functionality and so on.

WHAT IF – Wouldn't it be nice if you could have the storage solution delivered installed and running within 2-4 weeks, tested and operational with everything you desired in order for you to validate the solution at **NO CHARGE?**

PEAK PERFORMANCE

The trouble with any football club is physical fitness and therefore the players attend training 2-3 times a week. Data Storage is no different, over time the storage starts to fill up with 'bloatware' and that slows down the performance. This is called unstructured data and trying to identify this information is a huge headache for many IT managers. Moreover, once it's been identified where do you store it?



WHAT IF – The storage solution could automatically perform optimally throughout the products lifecycle and you don't need to worry about the data?

STORAGE CONSOLIDATION

A football team needs to constantly add and remove players to maintain a balance of midfield, strikers, defenders etc. Unlike football players, storage data is far harder to control and over time this causes data sprawl resulting in a business needing to procure more storage systems to keep up. Often, storage systems bought many years ago are continuing to run as no one wants to switch them off through fear of losing valuable information. This causes business to have many legacy storage systems that should have been retired years ago but are still running.

WHAT IF – The storage solution could perform, consolidate and manage all that information from a single place allowing you to finally power those systems off without fear of losing information, leading to 10:1 reduction in both floor tiles and network port costs?

DECISION TIME

A manager's decision to identify and buy a player isn't easy and takes many months of planning in order to secure the services of the one targeted. Storage is no different. Many things need to be considered including price, performance, support, and management.

WHAT IF – Wouldn't it be great if the storage solution could deliver everything you could think of and be delivered, installed and running in >1 month?



BUSINESS AGILITY AND CONTINUITY

A team needs to ensure it has enough players in the event of an injury. Similarly, data is a valuable asset and as such we go to great lengths to ensure it is protected using such things as, backup, replication, second copies, cloud etc.

WHAT IF – Wouldn't it be great if the storage could deliver unprecedented data protection out of the box?

COST PER TB

A consideration for any team is the wage bill and this is always a balance. Buying data storage is no different, we have all heard the phrase "we provide the lowest cost per TB". Normally this refers to tape or optical.

WHAT IF – The storage could provide a 125% ROI over 3 years whilst providing the fastest way to store and protect multiple petabytes of data, with the highest availability at the lowest possible TCO?

Summary

This second follow up article makes some surprising statements and profound claims about the performance, reliability and scalability of the storage we are referring to. We'd be delighted to tell you more and so, rather than continually buying a storage solution with limitations why not call us on **01256 331614** or email us solutions@fortunadata.com to find out more - It might be the best decision you ever made and the step change your business is looking for.

Thanks for reading

Ray

PS – The next article reveals the kind of storage a business needs in this data rich world.