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New Storage Buying Criteria for Shared IT Infrastructure



NEW BUYING CRITERIA

Every new investment you make represents an opportunity to position your company for the future. The decisions you make now can set the foundation for a Flexible IT architecture, enabling you to efficiently deliver more IT services that drive business impact.

Today's virtualization, cloud-based IT services, cost containment, and green IT initiatives require storage that is more adaptable than ever before. The key is asking the right questions in your RFPs and requiring vendors to provide measurable proof that they can deliver on these new IT realities.

Our RFP template reflects key purchasing criteria to help you make the best storage decisions for your business. Working together, these criteria enable a shared virtual infrastructure and the Flexible IT foundation you need to remain competitive. Even if your company isn't ready to implement a fully shared infrastructure, or you're only looking to buy for a specific project or application, these new buying criteria give you the knowledge you need to build an architecture that can seamlessly move from supporting today's most demanding applications to powering tomorrow's IT as a service delivery model.

Solutions that deliver on these essential points will provide the flexibility, efficiency and future-ready foundation required to help your business go further, faster.

Scale Up and Scale Out

Your storage infrastructure has to be able to scale on the fly as your business grows and your data increases. Today's storage architecture should deliver extreme efficiency that increases with scale and remains flexible no matter how big you get. The ability to scale instantly in multiple dimensions: performance, capacity, and operationally, is essential to meeting your business demands.

Storage Efficiency

Storage efficiency isn't just a single feature, it's an approach to building and managing a storage architecture, and it requires solutions with a combination of capabilities that maximize your operational, organizational, and business efficiency. Highly efficient solutions enable you to store the most data for the lowest cost; significantly reduce data center space requirements and power and cooling costs; and complete tasks in less time with less people.

Intelligent Caching

Buying lots of fast solid-state storage isn't always the best way to increase performance. Storage systems that utilize sophisticated, intelligent caching can give you faster performance at a lower cost. A highly optimized approach to caching helps eliminate the need for separate HDD and SSD storage tiers. Smart solutions with intelligent caching built-in will help your business reduce both capital and operating expenses.

Unified Architecture

Constant change is the nature of business. A flexible architecture that supports many applications, diverse workloads, and changing requirements is a must. This architecture must support multiple protocols, including NFS, CIFS, iSCSI, Fibre Channel and FCoE, ensures you have a flexible foundation to meet any need. But multi-protocol is just one aspect of a standardized architecture. A unified set of tools and processes greatly reduces complexity and drives down costs. One architecture should allow you to leverage your current infrastructure for current and future workloads as you move towards this goal.

Integrated Data Protection

As your business grows, risk increases and data protection needs to be completely integrated into any architecture. It's not only important how a solution delivers data protection, but how it automates this key capability. True integrated data protection enables administrators to "set it and forget it" so that critical business information is safeguarded no matter what happens or how large you scale.

Non-Stop Operations

Keeping your business running 24x7 without disruption is essential. Behind the scenes, IT departments that can perform necessary functions with speed and ease can respond faster to business demands. Capacity and performance expansion, load balancing, testing, upgrades, and all other IT tasks should be quick, seamless, and completely transparent to users.

Secure Multi-Tenancy

With virtualization, multiple tenants now sit on the same physical infrastructure, requiring new ways to address security and administrative issues. You need solutions that provide secure, end-to-end, multi-tenancy across applications and data so you can reap all the benefits and advantages of a shared infrastructure.

Service Automation and Analytics

As IT departments move from supporting terabytes to petabytes, automation becomes more and more critical. You need to reduce the time it takes to perform routine administrative tasks—even as your infrastructure grows—and you need to manage more terabytes without adding more staff. Improved processes and solutions should enable IT to manage it all with the push of a button.

Setting the bar high and making purchasing decisions based on these criteria will enable you to build a Flexible IT organization that is aligned to and accelerates the business, driving measurable value with speed and efficiency. Flexible IT keeps pace with the speed of changing business requirements, moving IT from a cost center to a strategic business function and enabling your business to better serve your customers.



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