

Elastic infrastructure is key to meeting current and future data storage demand

 By [Eran Brown](#)

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Events that accelerate the generation of data are often viewed in isolation, but the reality is that they are all part of the same evolution.



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From databases to collaboration, Business Intelligence (BI) to virtualisation, Big Data to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning, all of these areas relate to digital transformation.

The challenge today is the pace at which data is being generated and the need to analyse data in real time, which requires a new approach to storage. Here, elasticity is critical to meeting the data storage needs of enterprises today and catering for growth and changes in the future.

More data, more storage and the effects on your IT budget

On average, the amount of data stored by a business 10 years ago was less than a quarter of what it is today. This is exacerbated by the speed of data growth, which is accelerating rapidly as businesses evolve their models and leverage new technology solutions to revolutionise customer experiences.

Digital transformation means we can measure more. However, due to the fact that more data is being generated which will ultimately need to be analysed, organisations need a storage solution that can enable instant scaling, has enough capacity and the performance to enable the data to be analysed. But obtaining this advanced infrastructure for storage and analytics could devour much of an IT budget if it is not done in a responsible way.

Stretch, flex, expand and contract – the key to elastic scalability

Digital transformation is driving the exponential growth in enterprise data storage. However, traditional data storage is no longer the 'safe bet' when it comes to ensuring agility, manageability, performance, availability and elastic scalability.

In order to leverage technologies like AI and the Internet of Things (IoT), data infrastructure needs to scale rapidly in terms of both capacity and performance. Many businesses assume this means that they need the cloud.

However, this is not necessarily the case. Large enterprises already have economies making the cloud more expensive for them before we even consider the cost of migrating to the cloud or the cost of migrating out of the cloud. An intelligent solution is required to develop flexibility within the existing infrastructure, creating a cloud-like environment with the agility and elasticity that have become essential.

The procurement problem

Businesses need to create a cloud-like infrastructure, but often they attempt to do this using the old-fashioned procurement model that has become obsolete in an agile world. If it takes a business three to six months to procure more storage capacity or performance, they cannot keep up. Business units and customers expect Capacity On Demand (COD), however, often the barrier to agility is the drawn-out procurement cycle.

A consumption-based model delivers COD to customers. It enables a pay as you go model to be adopted and flips the old procurement process on its head. Capacity is there, waiting to be used, but the business only pays for what it currently consumes and can scale up or out as and when required. Much like the cloud, but without the cost premium, security challenges or vendor lock-in of the cloud, COD creates elasticity and agility that delivers instant access and increases value by lowering cost and increasing performance. It can also be delivered as either a CapEx or OpEx model depending on the business needs.

Data storage for the future

New business requirements are always fulfilled by new technology. If a business is still using old technology and old procurement methods, they are at risk of falling behind and losing their competitive edge.

Sourcing technology, including storage, in a more elastic manner to become cloud-like means enterprises can avoid the premiums associated with the cloud and can leverage existing investment.

This, in turn, relieves the pressure on the IT budget, enabling organisations to gain more competitive advantage and drive increased customer value thereby significantly improving the Customer Experience (CX).

Futureproofing data storage

There are two things that need to be considered when it comes to futureproofing data storage. One is how enterprises can build a cloud-like experience without the potential pitfalls and premiums of moving into the cloud.

Secondly, the realisation that the decreasing cost of traditional storage media is always offset by data growth.

In fact, a 20% reduction in storage media costs will easily be overridden by the 40% or more predicted increase in data.

Most businesses are data-dependent, this coupled with the fact that data is increasing at double the rate that storage costs are decreasing, simply obtaining more and more capacity is not a feasible or cost-effective solution. The key to data storage today and in the future is elasticity, which requires intelligent data storage solutions that allow a new approach to the procurement process.

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