

Game Changer: Unlocking Employee Access to Information

A RECENT STUDY REVEALS THAT SOARING DATA VOLUMES, PROLIFERATING SILOS, AND GROWING DEMAND FOR INSTANT ACCESS HAVE PRODUCED HEADACHES FOR IT AND ENTERPRISE EMPLOYEES ALIKE. A SINGLE DATA REPOSITORY AND SELF-SERVICE ACCESS PUTS FORWARD-THINKING COMPANIES ONE STEP CLOSER TO SOLVING THAT DILEMMA.

In a now distant past, most companies complained that they had too little information about customers, products, and markets. Today they're drowning in it.

In fact, "the 'digital universe'—the total of all digital data created (and replicated)—will reach 4ZB in 2013, almost 50 percent more than 2012 volumes, and nearly a quadrupling of 2010 volumes," according to analysts at IDC, in Framingham, Mass. "ZB" stands for zettabyte, and each one is roughly equal to a billion terabytes. Meanwhile, thanks to hugely popular new technologies like virtualization, cloud computing, mobility, and social media, businesses are storing all that data across the enterprise in more places and on more devices than ever before.

For users and data managers alike, the end results are surging data volumes and proliferating content repositories that make accessing and analyzing data maddeningly complicated. In fact, in a recent survey of enterprise IT executives conducted by IDG Research Services, 42 percent of those polled say that securely accessing information from outside the office on any device is extremely or very challenging, and 59 percent say the same of locating information swiftly across multiple siloes. Not to mention, respondents say their IT organizations are spending too much time managing, securing, backing up, and archiving that data.

It's a giant problem impacting almost every corner of a typical enterprise, and it will take a game-changing approach to fix. Only a consolidated, end-to-end data management platform that provides self-serve access to data while simplifying back-end administration can conquer it.

» THE PROBLEM WITH ACCESS AND ANALYSIS

Other results from the IDG survey underscore the key reasons

accessing and administering data have become so trying.

Budgetary pressure, not surprisingly, was among the biggest, according to 53 percent of respondents. But an equal number of those polled identify increased use of smartphones and tablets as a significant issue. "The IT administrator doesn't have the ability to dig down into what's on or inside some of the mobile devices," observes Robert Amatruda, IDC's research director for data protection and recovery. "It really adds to the complexity of the whole management layer."

It also makes securing data harder, notes John Levins, CIO of Levins & Associates, an investment banker and investment advisory firm in Manchester, N.H., that represents the securities industry, investment companies, and high net worth individuals. Such clients often exchange highly sensitive information with their investment managers, and the mobile form factors they increasingly use to view that data can be difficult to protect. "We have to be very careful," Levins says. "Data privacy is an important issue with state and federal regulators."

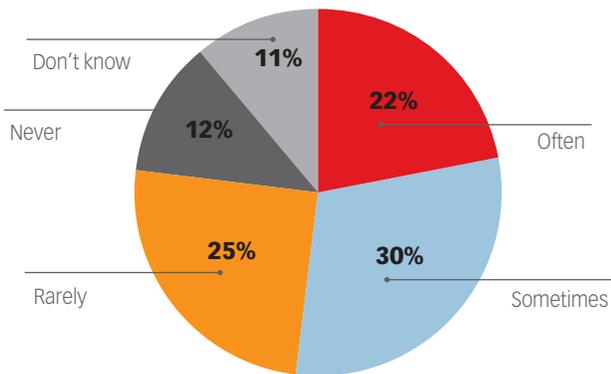
Cloud computing—and especially consumer-grade cloud storage systems like Dropbox—are a similar source of anxiety for data managers. Many end users find such solutions easier to use than company-provided options for storing, accessing, and sharing information, but IT managers have trouble administering and securing them. In fact, some 52 percent of respondents to the IDG survey say employees at their company often or sometimes deposit files in cloud storage solutions; and 54 percent



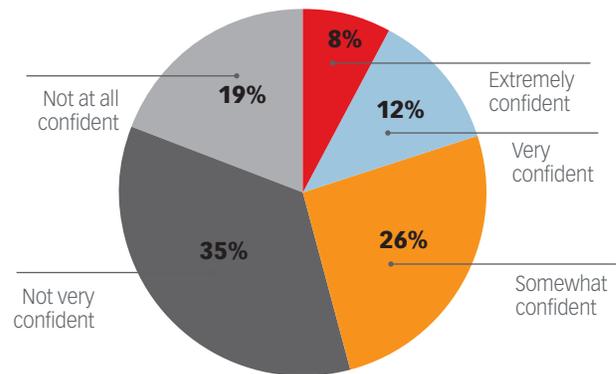
¹ Frank Gens, "IDC Predictions 2013: Competing on the 3rd Platform," November 2012.



Frequency with Which End Users Are Utilizing Consumer Cloud Storage and File Sharing Sites



Level of Confidence in the Security of Information Shared via Consumer Cloud Storage and File Sharing Sites



SOURCE: IDG RESEARCH SERVICES, "2013 MARKET PULSE RESEARCH: IMPACT OF DATA SILOES AND THE DEMAND FOR ANYTIME, ANYWHERE INFORMATION ACCESS."

say they're either not very or not at all confident that those files are secure. And with good reason, according to Peter Helander, principal and CEO of Heartland Business Systems, a systems integrator based in Little Chute, Wis. "The IT department ends up losing control of that information," he observes.

Cloud storage systems also contribute to another information management challenge: mushrooming data siloes. "It's a perennial problem," notes Greg White, senior manager for product marketing at CommVault Systems Inc., a data management software maker headquartered in Oceanport, N.J. "Businesses encounter a need or an opportunity, so they go out and find a quick point solution to meet that need. Over time they acquire all these discrete applications with their own back-end storage and data." The inevitable consequences are increased administrative overhead and decreased ability to archive, find, and access corporate information on a self-serve basis, according to the IDG survey.

Too bad, then, that locating information has never been more important, thanks to constantly growing regulatory and e-discovery requirements. In fact, 43 percent of participants in the IDG poll cite continually multiplying and changing compliance mandates as a data management issue. John Ragsdale is one of them. Ragsdale is CIO of BerylHealth, a health care services provider in Bedford, Texas, that supports 12 million patients a year. "We're regulated by HIPAA and we also process credit cards for our customers, so we fall under the PCI compliance world as

well," he notes. Both directives impose strict data privacy requirements. "It's very challenging," Ragsdale says.

» THE ACCESS PROBLEM

Indeed, the complexities of modern data management leave many IT managers struggling to meet their most basic responsibilities. A full 44 percent of respondents to the IDG survey rate their ability to provide timely and secure self-serve access to information as fair or poor. To make matters worse, when employees can't find data on their own, IT ends up finding it for them. As a result, 80 percent of organizations polled by IDG say they spend moderate or substantial amounts of time responding to end-user data retrieval requests. That's valuable time they can't get back.

What's more, the mounting demands of data management don't affect the IT department alone. Employees who can't quickly obtain information wherever and whenever they need it are both less productive and less satisfied. "The expectation level has really changed pretty dramatically around access to data," IDC's Amatruda says. Moreover, decisions based on incomplete information tend to be bad ones. "It's kind of like the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing," Helander notes. It's also a problem afflicting 54 percent of participants in the IDG research.

» AN ALL-INCLUSIVE SOLUTION

To cure their data-related headaches, businesses need data



Top Risks Presented by Information Silos



SOURCE: IDG RESEARCH SERVICES, "2013 MARKET PULSE RESEARCH: IMPACT OF DATA SILOS AND THE DEMAND FOR ANYTIME, ANYWHERE INFORMATION ACCESS."

management software with truly comprehensive functionality. "Data management needs to include backup, replication, snapshotting, long-term retention, [and] archiving, and it should be doing that with an open mind towards cloud, disk, and tape," says Jason Buffington, a senior analyst at Milford, Mass.-based analyst firm Enterprise Strategy Group Inc. Advanced compliance and e-discovery features are critical as well. "Users should be able to quickly and flexibly search, classify, select, retrieve, and place holds on all of the company's information," CommVault's White asserts.

To remain continuously productive, users also need rapid access to that information anytime, anywhere, and from any device—including notebooks, tablets, smartphones, or Web-enabled devices. That access should be on an intuitive, self-serve

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basis too. Indeed, a whopping 87 percent of IDG survey respondents indicate they'd be interested in a solution capable of meeting that standard. "Data should always be securely available on the device and at the location of your choice, without help from IT," White says.

Employees should always have multiple routes to their data as well, he adds. "As an end user I may want to go to an application like Microsoft Outlook to get to archived email or I may want to retrieve my data through a mobile app," White notes. An effective data management solution will support those and other options.

Above all, though, businesses seeking relief from data management pains need solutions capable of supporting all of their files, applications, databases, messaging systems, and end points—both local and remote—through a single platform

equipped with a unified, enterprise-wide virtual content repository. "Only a single platform can provide simple, universal self-serve access through one console to all of the information and functions that users and IT managers need to do their jobs," White says. "That's the feature that really changes the entire information access and management game."

According to Amatruda, most data managers these days share that sentiment. "The folks we talk to are not really turned on by point solutions or piece parts," he says. "They're looking for something that's a little bit more holistic to administer and use." The IDG survey offers further confirmation: 74 percent of participants in that study say they'd be interested in an all-inclusive, single-platform data management solution.

» STRATEGIC CONTRIBUTORS

Perhaps that's because few data managers have trouble appreciating the significant benefits a single-platform data management solution can provide, which begin with higher end-user productivity and organizational agility. "People who have the flexibility to securely access information on an office PC or a home PC or a phone or a tablet get more done more quickly," White says. What's more, providing that access on a self-serve basis liberates IT managers from data retrieval chores. "It's going to save a lot of time and cycles," Amatruda notes.

By simplifying administration and stretching storage capacity,

single-platform data management solutions save money too. "A single pool of data is a lot easier to manage than a bunch of separate systems, and more cost-effective too," White notes. Better yet, he continues, a consolidated pool of data enables employees to make better, more informed decisions. "They have a more complete picture of what's going on." And since they're querying a virtual repository rather than production systems, gaining those insights doesn't weaken application performance.

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Unified data stores also make coping with regulatory requirements and e-discovery requests dramatically simpler. "All of your information is in one place, so you can much more easily search, protect, and archive it as needed," White observes. No wonder 45 percent of respondents to the IDG survey label complete and efficient regulatory compliance and e-discovery as appealing advantages of using comprehensive data management software, and 44 percent say the same of reduced data loss and leakage.

Perhaps best of all from a technology executive's standpoint, by enabling end users to get more done and business managers to make smarter decisions, single-platform data management solutions help IT departments burnish their reputation in the C-suite and beyond. "Peers on the business side of the house will see them as strategic contributors rather than tactical 'file finders,'" White says.

And rightly so. In the years ahead, the most successful companies will be those with the kind of end-to-end control over information that only a comprehensive, single-platform data management system can provide. "The future of IT is about turning a ton of data into information to fuel and grow your business," Heartland Business Systems' Helander says. Organizations that deploy unified data management systems—revolutionizing the way users access and analyze data and simplifying back-end administration—will be the first ones to arrive there.

COMMVAULT® SIMPANA® 10: AN EXPONENTIAL LEAP FORWARD

Businesses seeking a comprehensive solution to their data management woes need look no further than CommVault and its revolutionary Simpana® 10 data management software platform.

Built from the ground up on a single code base, Simpana 10 software empowers companies to locate, analyze, replicate, protect, and archive data via a single console, resulting in reduced complexity and lower infrastructure costs.

Simpana-protected data lives in a single, enterprise-wide virtual pool, called the ContentStore, so users can quickly and comprehensively assemble needed information without sifting through multiple data siloes. Meanwhile, intuitive search features and broad support for notebooks, tablets, smartphones, and Web-enabled devices give employees instant, secure self-serve access to that information anytime and anywhere.

To ensure peak scalability and efficiency, Simpana 10 features advanced auto-protection capabilities like the IntelliSnap® feature, which provides speedy snapshot-based backup and recovery services, as well as sophisticated deduplication technology capable of reducing storage footprints by as much as 50 percent and backup-related network traffic by as much as 90 percent.

We believe it all adds up to an exponential leap forward in data management that has placed CommVault in the Leaders quadrant of analyst firm Gartner Inc.'s 2012 Magic Quadrant for enterprise backup and recovery software. The hunt for a game-changing answer to today's information access and management challenges begins with CommVault Simpana 10.

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