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▶ # 5 Steps to Go Beyond Efficient Data Protection

As IT organizations enter the next phase of cloud adoption, they face a litany of new challenges, not the least of which is the need to modernize data management strategies. Legacy tools simply cannot deliver the efficiency and flexibility IT organizations require in a heterogeneous, multi-cloud environment. Fortunately, IT organizations that choose the right data management platform can achieve efficiencies across both data protection and cloud management efforts.

Phase one of cloud adoption focused on getting data and applications into the cloud easily and cheaply. With that well underway, IT organizations are looking at the next phase of adoption: the "operationalization" phase. This phase entails implementing a strategy for moving remaining workloads to the cloud and making cloud resources operational for mainstream use cases. An integral part of both is ensuring that data can be recovered when and where it's needed, and that necessitates a holistic data management platform.

▶ EFFICIENT DATA PROTECTION

Only a holistic platform can adequately address data management and protection needs that span both the data center and a multi-cloud environment. With data and workloads running in more than one location, IT organizations must truly be able to "set it and forget it." They do not have the resources to oversee or manually manage backup, archive and recovery processes. These processes must be automated from end-to-end, and across multiple cloud platforms. IT organizations should look for a holistic data management solution that can orchestrate complex end-to-end processes with both pre-built and custom workflow automation engines.

Some integrated data management platforms also provide a variety of technologies for efficiently moving data from one environment to another. Instead of choosing between array-based replication, virtual machine replication, host-based block-level replication and WAN-optimized deduplication, IT organizations prefer to have all of these technologies available so they can use which ever one makes the most sense for the specific workload.

Unfortunately, many providers force their customers to choose a one-size-fits-all approach to getting data offsite, resulting in compromises that can lead to increased costs or risk. To avoid this, IT organizations should look for a solution that works across array-based replication, virtual machine replication, host-based block-level replication and WAN-optimized deduplication technologies in a single, deeply integrated software package.

Some comprehensive data management platforms also converge data protection functions. Backup, archive and recovery are all defined via a common infrastructure through which tasks are performed using a single, efficient policy across the entire IT environment. This eliminates the need for multiple backup and archive solutions for email, cloud and on-premises data stores. Additionally, if the solution can extend data access to end-users, it can dramatically reduce the day-to-day IT workload of running recoveries or creating data copies. IT organizations should select a solution that implements policies consistently and efficiently, regardless of where data resides.

Automation and convergence enable IT organizations to achieve efficiencies across a number of operational and administrative tasks. For example, IT organizations reduce reporting hours by over 60% when performed using a software solution that integrates all data protection and data management functions into a single platform. Backup administration hours are reduced by 50%. IT organizations also report reductions in the time required to complete operational tasks. Offsite copy time is reduced by 45%, and full backup time is reduced by 42%.[1]

Cloud on Your Terms: Avoid Vendor Lock in and Take Control of Your Data

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EFFICIENT CLOUD MANAGEMENT

The need for efficient management goes beyond data protection. When choosing a data management platform, IT organizations should also consider how the solution enables the efficient management of cloud resources. Some solutions enable IT organizations to extend the value of their cloud investments with highly advanced cloud orchestration, provisioning and management capabilities. To this end, IT organizations should look for a data management platform with the following:

1 Deep roots in the cloud. Some data management providers reluctantly came to the cloud in order to keep up with the competition. Look for a provider that has long recognized the value of the cloud and made early efforts to integrate across cloud storage platforms.

2 Cloud orchestration and provisioning capabilities. These should be designed to streamline the management of cloud infrastructure for key use cases like disaster recovery, and test and development.

3 Self-service management tools. Customizable, web-based self-service management tools enable end users to manage their own cloud resources while allowing admins to implement policy-centric controls on the size and amount of resources that can be consumed at any given time.

4 Native cloud capabilities. The platform should support numerous cloud storage platforms natively today, as well as all major cloud compute platforms (Azure, Amazon Web Services, OpenStack, VMware, etc.). This should give you confidence in the provider's road map for future cloud support.

5 A single management console for multiple cloud environments. Deep integration into major cloud compute and storage platforms enable some platform providers to "normalize" disparate cloud management processes and technologies.

As IT organizations push mainstream applications into the cloud, they need to ensure the maximum value is realized from their cloud strategy. That means leveraging the cloud's economics, getting smart about managing cloud resources, increasing developer productivity and accelerating application delivery. A data management platform should allow you to achieve these goals while efficiently delivering data protection.

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To learn more about how Commvault delivers cloud-enabled data protection, visit **comvault.com/cloud**.

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