

Are you spending your backup budget wisely?

In an increasingly connected world, being able to continuously access mission-critical data is a business necessity. Yet, organisations are often not managing their budgets as effectively as possible when it comes to backup and availability.



Trent Odgers, cloud and hosting manager for Africa at Veeam

It all starts with how the business goes about selecting a vendor to partner with. Too often, the decision is based on its previous needs as opposed to future hybrid strategies. While it is easy to stay with the status quo, it can become costly in the long-run. Given how quickly data is expanding thanks to the increasing points of entry into the organisation, backup must be viewed differently than in the past.

“A company must look beyond how it used to operate. Instead, it needs to embrace the always-on thinking required for the digital business environment. It is about ensuring that there is no gap in availability and protection that is often inevitable when moving from a traditional approach to the new one,” says Trent Odgers, Cloud and Hosting Manager, Africa at Veeam.

Part of this challenge is the incorrect assumption that all data is created equal.

“Companies must classify their data better to avoid the need of having to back up everything at all times. Instead, the focus should be on availability requirements that drive more intelligent decision-making. It is a case of examining what data must be backed up versus what data must be archived. In doing so, significant costs can be saved with this more targeted backup and archiving approach.”

Delivering value

Throughout all this, data must be leveraged to make it into the strategic asset a business needs in an always-on environment. Companies must work with a partner that is capable of defining an efficient and secure hybrid on-prem and cloud environment in order to benefit from efficiencies while remaining secure and compliant. It is important to ensure protection from malicious attacks, such as ransomware, to shape part of the security strategy.

“When hybrid strategies are viewed collectively, these elements provide a business with a better return on investment beyond just buying hardware or an appliance that manages backups. Irrespective of the model adopted, it is important for the company to continually test its environment and ensure it remains available at times of crisis. Data is a critical enabler for business today and it needs to be taken care of appropriately,” he says.

Pricing models

Many businesses have woken up to the potential of consumption-based models given the agility provided in the cloud.

So, whether an organisation is reliant on a public, private, hybrid, or even a multi-cloud environment, pricing models should reflect the consumption needs of clients. This has also seen the total cost of ownership evolving especially when it comes to data availability solutions.

“Many decision-makers want to leverage their existing investments such as either hardware being decommissioned or undergoing maintenance. However, vendors must become hardware agnostic for this to work, especially when it comes to cloud-based offerings. In other words, if a customer wants to migrate from storage vendor A to storage vendor B - can that be done? Traditionally, storage vendors do not integrate well with one another when it comes to data synchronisation, but utilising the right vendor, this process can easily be achieved and can also be offloaded to the cloud for long term retention.”

New environment

In many respects, the sophisticated availability solutions of today far exceed the capacity and features of the more traditional approach. This provides decision-makers with a more intelligent view of their data than what was possible before.

“Technologies are available that can extract more value from data. Think Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) that can deliver far better insights quicker than traditional solutions. These innovations require data that is not corrupted and is continuously available to work effectively. So, when it comes to budgeting, the organisation must remain vigilant that enough is spent on ensuring the integrity of the data,” says Odgers.

But when it is time to evaluate data availability solutions for a cloud-driven business environment, what must organisations consider?

“Much of this comes down to how best to integrate future growth with an existing strategy. Companies must discuss these issues with not only their security, infrastructure, and compliance teams, but also their application developers. As more workflows start moving into different cloud environments, application dependency becomes more important. This is where the full extent of the data ecosystem in the cloud comes into play.”

Driving all this is the need to ensure that vendors are agnostic and can deliver not only on current data backup and availability requirements but future growth as well. They must constantly innovate to help meet the evolving needs of the organisation as their data demands grow.

It is not about ripping and replacing everything, but being more cost-effective in maximising existing investments.

“The right vendor must be able to help build the migration strategy of an organisation using its current platform to that of a

cloud environment. It is all about seamlessly migrating the business without placing its data under unnecessary risk. Throughout all of this, decision-makers need to keep their fingers on the pulse around budgeting discussions. While reducing costs are always important, this must not come at the sacrifice of data availability,” he concludes

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