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IBM Provides Strategic Alternative to Purchasing Yet another Disk Controller

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Mid-market customers looking to purchase more storage have new options from IBM. Instead of simply adding another controller with disk, they can take advantage of IBM's new SAN Volume Controller to improve performance, increase average disk utilization, and increase overall data uptime. By purchasing the SAN Volume Controller and FAStT technology in combination, customers get the best value for technology. Additionally, the products are positioned for easier adoption of virtualization technology as they evolve their storage environment over time.

Building Smarter not Just Bigger Infrastructure

Most mid-market businesses struggle with ever-increasing storage needs as much as large enterprises do. The traditional response has been to purchase another controller offering the best price/performance available at the time. Additionally, mid-market companies rarely have an IT staff with storage specialization. This means that solutions have to be easy to install and manage. While storage area networks (SANs) have many benefits, they have required expertise and time to install correctly. They also require more management as a great deal of change is done physically by the administrator and is not completely automated. With the combination of IBM's FAStT storage family and the SAN Volume Controller, customers can get the benefits of the latest technology as well as affordable disk space in a package that will solve immediate business problems and allow them to plan for future growth at the same time.

More Cost-Effective Use of Resource and Data

With the IBM SAN Volume Controller and FAStT solution, customers are able to do more than solve an immediate storage problem. Ordinary storage treats all data the same and stores it on the same medium, but the SAN Volume Controller manages storage from multiple controllers more efficiently. It combines the storage from multiple controllers into a single pool of disks, increasing the capacity utilization. This means that older data can be transferred to slower commodity storage devices, and business-sensitive or repeatedly-accessed data can sit on the more expensive, high-performance equipment. For example, IBM has recently added support for serial ATA disks, which can lower the cost-per-megabyte significantly for near-line storage needs. It also means that more than just IBM storage can be integrated, including the HP/Compaq MA8000, EMA12000, and EMA16000 systems, as well as the HDS 9200. And because the SAN Volume Controller works at a level above the controller, it requires less knowledge, skill, and time from administrators, offering the benefit of complex technology without requiring complex operations. The solution can be purchased either as a SAN Volume Controller plus the FAStT storage, or as one completely tested and integrated product in the SAN Integration Server. Both options provide identical capabilities, and the choice depends largely on whether the customer already has a SAN installed.

Planning for the Future Today

The IBM offerings are targeted at customers who are looking to build storage, but also need to provide ongoing cost reductions through better utilization of existing storage, increased system uptime, and better management. The SAN Volume Controller offers the immediate benefit of increased space today much as any other solution would do. However, for a competitive price, it also aligns the customer to the path of storage virtualization at a pace the customer can determine with minimum risk or cost. This gives the IT manager the capability to add heterogeneous environments over time leading to further cost reductions and easier manageability of diverse data and device requirements.

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