

## IBM Aids Storage Woes with Virtualisation-based Solutions

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*While an IT manager's most immediate storage needs are often more disk, more space, this is frequently only a symptom of one or more serious problems. Ultimately, adding storage that isn't part of a well thought out plan can exacerbate the problem rather than ameliorate it. Often the best place to start is for vendors, business partners, and customers to have a serious conversation that explores beyond surface symptoms. The results should lead to solutions that add business value rather than increase management hassles.*

### Doctor, I Have this Pain...

Many people approach a doctor with common symptoms such as aches, fevers, and congestion. While these may be the result of a common cold or flu, they may also be indicators of greater systemic issues that could lead to critical problems if not diagnosed effectively. While we want a quick analgesic for immediate relief, we understand that we must also diagnose and treat the underlying causes. Similarly, in an IT infrastructure it may seem a simple sell of more disk or tape would solve the immediate problem, but understanding how information use and distribution is growing in an organisation will result in a better solution to improve overall performance, reduce management complexity, or increase overall utilisation, providing real customer benefits. As a good doctor will check a patient's medical history, lifestyle, work situations, and other factors, a good business partner or sales rep will seek to understand the business issues facing the organisation, group or individual department, and governance or compliance issues as well as the standard technology issues.

### Open Your Mouth and Say "Ahhhhh"

IBM has a rich set of industry knowledge and experiences to help build optimal storage solutions for customers. Customers who are suffering from islands of storage of various provenances can use the SAN Volume Controller, now in its sixth generation, to resolve multiple storage islands into one repository for better resource management and utilisation, or to improve productivity through management of combined storage volumes from one interface. Customers can also create tiered storage environments that match technology costs to data value. With the SAN File System, now in its second generation, customers can combine the benefits of network-attached storage (NAS) that puts many similar files together with the benefits of storage area networks (SAN) that allow many resources to be managed virtually as a single entity. It can also improve security across heterogeneous platforms with cross-platform authorisations, or reduce overall storage needs by eliminating duplicate data copies. Additionally, Tivoli Storage Manager and the Tivoli TotalStorage Productivity Center suite help customers secure data, reduce backup and recovery time, and create policy-based data retention. IBM has over a thousand customers who are already using the SVC and SFS products, and hundreds of customers are using Tivoli for storage management. IBM has proven solutions that span the full range of data and information needs.

### Working for Ongoing IT Wellness

At the end of the day, the storage industry is sufficiently advanced that customers can find technology to meet their functional needs at an acceptable cost. What is more difficult to sort out is how to match various vendor solutions to customer needs and focus not on the hype surrounding any particular technology implementation but on technology implementations that understand and solve business needs. Approaching the overall IT infrastructure wellness calls for a holistic approach leading to sales of products, and starts with an evaluation of the current situation and what it needs to improve. IBM partners and sales that start by seeking to understand these needs can provide these solutions and make IT managers heroes in their own organisations.