

Driving the IT Organization to the Future of Storage

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To acquire and maintain long-term competitiveness in the storage infrastructure, IT organizations are establishing dedicated storage teams. These teams will develop over time, taking on more responsibilities for the benefit of their companies.

ANALYSIS

Prior to the late 1990s, physical storage was always dedicated to individual servers, and storage management was a part-time job of either the system administrator or the database administrator (DBA). But with the advent of storage shared over networks for many servers, a change in approach was required. This change has begun to appear across the industry: the introduction of dedicated storage teams managing the storage resources as a service to the system administrators and DBAs who used to do the work. The "necessary" part of the job description — configuring, monitoring and troubleshooting the storage network and devices — has been broadly implemented across larger organizations. The opportunity side, what Gartner terms full empowerment, has not. And yet it is the opportunity side that promises dramatically improved costs, availability, recoveries, business flexibility and more.

Getting to the opportunity is a journey through organization and people changes that track and mirror advances and deployments in storage technology, management and applications, but require significant investment and effort in their own right. This Spotlight takes a look at the journey and evolution to fully empowered storage teams — why, what, who and when — from several perspectives. It is required reading for top-level managers, since organizational change needs to be supported from the highest ranks in the organization, as well as for the storage organization, higher-level IT management and anyone who has a concern about staffing, skills, training, retraining, and so on.

Features

"Competitive Organizations Need a Dedicated Storage Team" — Historical and current trends in storage management suggest that organizations that want to remain competitive in their fields must have well-established storage teams in place by 2008. **By Robert E. Passmore and April Adams**

"Empowering the Dedicated Storage Teams: A Step-by-Step Guide" — Organizations wishing to use a storage utility model require a framework for establishing a dedicated storage team, which will evolve through three stages to reach full empowerment. **By Robert E. Passmore and April Adams**

"Staffing the Dedicated Storage Team" — Storage managers should look beyond the obvious to secure all of the critical skill sets for the team that creates and manages a storage utility. **By Robert E. Passmore and April Adams**

"Implement 10 Best Practices to Effectively Manage Storage" — CIOs and their direct staffs can follow these best practices to ensure that they achieve the benefits promised by modern storage technologies. **By Robert E. Passmore and April Adams**

"Q&A: Issues in Storage Team Organization and Change Control" — We address several commonly asked questions about storage team organization, roles, responsibilities and processes. **By Robert E. Passmore and April Adams**

"Poll Shows Interest in Empowering Storage Teams and Handling Storage Networking Challenges" — Electronic polling at our Data Center and PlanetStorage conferences provides insight into how organizations are progressing in optimizing the storage team organization and addressing the challenges associated with deploying storage area networks. **By Robert E. Passmore and April Adams**

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