

Expanding IT Demands and Shrinking IT Budgets

Why Pre-Owned Storage is the Answer

IT Professionals face growing concerns that today's IT budgets will not keep pace with tomorrow's storage demands. The need for hardware, software, services, and implementations is increasing rapidly, and vendors are scrambling to meet customer requirements. The advent of the Information Lifecycle Management (ILM) age has created additional obligations for managers, as they must comply with stringent regulations for keeping data safe and available for extended periods of time. This paper will discuss how recent technologies in the storage arena have increased the burden on IT budgets, and the storage options available for relieving some of this burden. We will focus specifically on the benefits of utilizing pre-owned enterprise storage equipment to get the most from your IT budget.

Data storage decisions in today's environment are more complex than simply choosing a hardware or software vendor. In many industries, the government has imposed strict rules on what data needs to be kept and how it needs to be maintained. Data that needs to be kept but is accessed infrequently is referred to as Content Addressed Information (CAI). Because managers faced the dilemma of whether to store CAI on expensive disk configurations, such as SANs, or add on to their existing disk arrays, a need was created for inexpensive long-term (coined "2nd Tier") storage.

In theory, the purpose of 2nd Tier storage products is two-fold. First, these products allow IT managers to remove CAI from their expensive disk arrays, and they eliminate a need to add more expensive disk arrays. Secondly, removing data that is not going to be used in daily operations frees up space for data that WILL be accessed frequently, and helps to maximize the performance of existing storage arrays. Some examples of 2nd Tier offerings include EMC's Centera and Permeon by Permabit. The Centera is targeted at the high-end enterprise, while Permeon is a great fit for small and medium sized business. Both offer record-retention and archiving capabilities, and when coupled with backup software from manufacturers like CommVault and Legato, both are extremely effective for answering compliance issues.

Although both Permeon and Centera have provided excellent results and proven that they can get the job done for end-users, 2nd Tier storage is only one piece of the IT puzzle. Investing in storage products like these can make you compliant, but it still doesn't answer that vital question of **“How do I achieve the optimal IT set-up with the money I have available?”** A path to this end is through the purchase of pre-owned high-end server and storage equipment.

All IT Managers crave the optimum set-up: high-end servers, highly available storage, compliant 2nd Tier storage, and a solid disaster recovery plan, to name a few staples. The problem is that the budget required to make this happen with new equipment is huge. Usually, the high-end servers that keep a business operating day to day eat up the bulk of an IT budget, leaving little money available to round-out the overall infrastructure. Opting to utilize pre-owned servers and storage can cut your IT spending by as much as 80%. And choosing to go pre-owned in one area doesn't mean that you can't also incorporate new equipment into your infrastructure. Often, it is finding the right mix of new and pre-owned equipment that can help an IT department reach optimal functionality within their budget. Companies like BL Trading in Hanover, MA know how to help customers find out which storage options are right for them, because BL sells and services both new and pre-owned equipment, and has over 20 years experience in the industry.

There is always risk associated with purchasing equipment that has been used, and IT managers need to make sure they've done their research before purchasing. A smart choice is to buy from a company that offers a warranty on their pre-owned equipment. For example, a company like BL Trading not only performs extensive interoperability testing and quality assurance, but they also offer manufacturer-class warranties on all pre-owned enterprise equipment. Choosing a reseller that backs up their pre-owned equipment through such measures will ensure that the benefits of buying pre-owned outweigh the risks.

Pre-owned storage solutions kept Fortune 500 companies on track when the economy slowed in the past, and it can work for your company today. Utilizing quality, pre-owned storage to compliment your new equipment will save your budget and enhance your infrastructure, paving the way for tomorrow's technology investments.

