

3 Human Factors that Inhibit Storage Analysis

by Van Symons, President, Clear Technologies

The economy is still in a fragile state. Although we see signs of recovery, a majority of our customers are in the process of, and seem to be relishing in cost containment. Analyzing the wasted dollars spent on storage management is a task that is constantly playing in the minds of storage professionals and executives. Yet all too often, this task is not able to be performed.

At one of our recent customer visits, the IT executive was sharing his ongoing frustration with the wasted dollars spent on storage. We probed further to understand the cause of this frustration. He explained that although storage is cheap to buy, *it is not cheap to maintain*. Further, he was quite frustrated that he could not make better storage allocation and purchasing decisions because of his team's inability to provide a visual, actionable storage intelligence report. His words were, "It seems that our current visual for storage intelligence is a blank look!"

Despite his frustration we probed further to find the cause of this analysis gap. What he stated as the cause of his predicament truly surprised us. Although he had both human and technology assets to perform the analysis, his team could not, in a repetitive and timely manner provide intelligence, because of the difficulty of performing to the analysis.

As a result, we realized that three human factors were to blame. These include that the analysis is not visual, thorough, and time consuming to attain.

You can't 'get' what you can't 'see'. One study concluded that 65% of people are visual readers and learners. This executive stated that each time he asked for a Storage Area Network (SAN) analysis report, he received a ream of paper filled with an over-whelming amount of verbiage. He simply did not have the time to pour through reams of data to make a thoughtful decision.

The dollars are in the details. The tragic flaw with most SAN analysis tools is that they can only analyze homogeneous environments. This executive's environment was filled with EMC, IBM, and HP SANs. Thus, the reams of data he received were a result of three separate, voluminous SAN reports.

I asked for the time and got the history of the watch. When he asked his team to 'roll-up', the report into a user-friendly format, they responded that they do not have the time, given the current human resource constraints. Ironically, this is especially true even when a company has a storage tool in place. Most tools, including excel, require a person, who is already overworked, to learn, maintain, and hopefully, if their work week allows, use the tool.

SAN Analysis is too important of a task to be overlooked. In order to offset detrimental costs, IT executives must first understand, address, and resolve the issues that inhibit this important task. A great way to help to counteract these three human factors is to provide your IT staff with an easy to use tool that provides a visual and thorough analysis.

About Clear Technologies. Since 1993, Clear's customers have relied on them to meet their hardware needs. Today, their customers look to them to increase their organizational effectiveness by providing continuity, infrastructure, security, and virtualization solutions. Based in Coppell, Texas, Van can be reached at www.cleartechnologies.net/VisualStorageIntelligence or (972) 906 -7500 or vsymons@cleartechnologies.net.