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Cyber Recovery Guarantee Marks New Era for Channel Sales Strategy

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Biography

James (JT) Lewis is the Channel Director, EMEA & APJ, Infinidat (<https://www.infinidat.com>). He is an experienced international Sales Director with a proven track record in the enterprise IT, storage, and network security industries.

His broad industry experience includes roles involving cyber security, Storage Area Networks (SAN), enterprise storage, IT service management, IT strategy, professional services, cloud computing and virtual computing environments. Based in Frankfurt, Lewis will have responsibility for Infinidat's EMEA and Asia Pacific regions, including Japan. Lewis served in the US Military before embarking on his technology sales career.

Most recently, he worked for Data Interchange as Head of Channel Sales and was the Strategy and Growth Officer for Altdata Technology Solutions, focusing on the cyber security market. He also spent 15 years at EMC and RSA, based in London and Frankfurt, where he built up comprehensive experience in the recruitment, enablement, and leadership of channel partners and distributors.

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Abstract

The rise of vendor guarantee programs is increasing, but if customers are going to use them to help make an enterprise storage purchase decision, it is important to really understand which program facets offer differentiating value and which are just baseline capabilities available from most vendors explains the author of this article.

Introduction

Since debuting in 2015, storage vendor guarantees are commonplace. These days almost every vendor offers something to reassure its would-be customers. Some guarantees are clearly more valuable than others and when in the market for storage, today's enterprise buyers actively compare what is being offered when they evaluate suppliers.

To guide end users in the right direction, IDC has published a detailed analysis of storage vendor guarantee programmes¹ and this lists ten different areas of focus, from data reduction, storage media endurance, money back satisfaction and



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availability, to breadth of coverage and floor space reduction. Its author and a big proponent of guarantee programs, Eric Burgener, research vice president, Infrastructure Systems, Platforms and Technologies Group at IDC, believes they can offer real value for customers. In his June 2021 report on storage vendor guarantee programmes, he says that provided customers understand which program facets offer differentiating value and which are just baseline capabilities available from most vendors, guarantees can reliably be used to help inform enterprise storage purchasing decisions.

As IT has become more critical to day-to-day business operations, availability requirements have been on the rise. Most enterprise-class storage systems are marketed as supporting at least 'five-nines' availability, which translates as 99.999% uptime, or roughly five minutes of downtime in an 8,760 hour year. Many support 'six-nines' and Infinidat is one of just four vendors offering a 100% data availability guarantee on a single storage array. However, although a 100% data availability guarantee indicates that the vendor stands behind their system reliability, it cannot replace data lost after a ransomware attack.



Until now, none of the guarantees offered to date have specifically addressed cyber resilience and the threat of ransomware, yet this is one of the most critical risks facing enterprise users today. We all know that the level of cyber threat today is so high that it is not a case of 'if' there's an attack, but 'when'. Enterprises need to be



expecting that their data will be breached at some point, and they need a rapid recovery plan in place to mitigate the effects. Rather than worrying about simply keeping intruders out, the key question needs to be 'how quickly can you recover compromised data and avoid reputation risks or business downtime?'



It was with this thinking in mind that Infinidat introduced its cyber security guarantee, described by Eric Burgener at IDC as a 'game changer'. Channel partners focused on the storage sector should take note of its arrival because it expands the sphere of buying decision influencers and potentially creates a new, lucrative business opportunity.

Cyber resilience is such a big threat that many enterprises now employ a Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) and their recommendations will accompany those of the Chief Technology Officer (CTO), and the Chief Information Officer (CIO) when purchasing decisions are made. Storage is a highly collaborative buy and although the CISO is not usually a budget holder, they are an important influencer and so presenting a cybersecurity guarantee during negotiations could be the differentiator that tips the scales. Just consider all the digital first businesses for whom a ransomware attack could mean a drop-in service to appreciate why CISOs need to be included in your messaging.

Apart from the potential to reach a new influencer, how else does the cyber recovery storage guarantee translate into a business opportunity for the channel?



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It's another feature driving the overall improved CX now expected as standard by enterprise storage buyers.



Cybersecurity it is all about recovery, minimizing any service disruption and being able to get back online as quickly as possible. For any enterprise planning to deal with a cyber threat, they should understand that a breach is bound to happen. It's not just about prevention, recovery time and general preparedness is what matters.

These issues are important for channel sales to understand because discussions about cyber resilience do not involve the traditional personas as when selling storage. Storage industry vendors need to be acknowledging the importance of cybersecurity and moving away from simply talking about performance, to offering guarantees that are more practical and helpful, designed to support current industry issues. We believe Infinidat's new cyber resilience guarantee is the first of a new era.

Reference

- ¹ Burgener, E (June 2021), How to Evaluate Enterprise Storage Vendor Guarantee Programs, IDC. Available at: <https://www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=US47768121>