APTARE®

Cost Benefits and Key Attributes of a Successful Storage Chargeback Model

Visibility throughout the storage environment makes it easier and more efficient to track storage usage in real time and assign actual costs to business units.

Key Challenges

- Users of enterprise data center resources lack visibility into accurate usage and associated costs
- Operational managers want users to optimize storage usage, deleting old and unnecessary data or migrating infrequently accessed files to less expensive storage
- Lack of visibility makes it difficult to motivate stakeholders to optimize usage of limited data center resources

Powerful yet flexible cloud infrastructures are changing the way organizations provide IT services to their users. As market conditions change on a dime so follows the organization's IT needs, and cloud computing, with its flexible architecture and economic, provides a flexible platform for ensuring the availability of business systems no matter where they sit or don't sit on the corporate network. Some organizations are making sure they can have their cake and eat it too by building flexible cloud infrastructures within the corporate firewall while leasing server and storage capacity from vendors such as Amazon, Google and EMC. These new private cloud infrastructures provide the flexibility and economics of the cloud while ensuring the security and control over corporate assets and business information.

However, with millions of dollars in leased storage on the line and a virtual army of data-hungry users spread across multi-national organizations, the ability to accurately track storage usage in real time and calculate the associated costs remains difficult and cost prohibitive. It's also nearly impossible to educate users on how much their storage is costing the organization. Clear visibility into these costs would encourage users to optimize their storage usage by deleting old and unnecessary data or migrating infrequently accessed files to less expensive storage.

Instead, storage administrators have to manage multiple databases—sometimes with tens of thousands of rows—and compile detailed reports about dozens of various business units and their storage usage. Robust data protection policies, while necessary, compound the complexity as data is often stored, backed up and archived on multiple networks, data centers and media. Even then, organizations can't be sure the data is accurate due to human error, complexity and a lack of visibility into storage usage, backup processes and disaster recovery.

"Many organizations may unwittingly be overpaying for their cloud services because they lack the framework to accurately track how much their cloud storage needs are costing them," said Bob Laliberte, senior analyst, Enterprise Strategy Group (ESG). "Likewise, while successful businesses rely on data analytics, seldom do the business owners contemplate impact to the storage environment. Organizations need solutions in place to help them better understand how a business decision pertaining to analytics can dramatically increase storage and data protection costs. In order to have an intelligent cost-benefit analysis for internal or cloud storage detailed information on the storage and data protection environment is required."

Extensive Data Collection in a Single Platform

Automatically collecting storage data across all devices regardless of platform or physical location, APTARE StorageConsole solutions provide the visibility into storage processes, capacity and usage necessary to enable an effective chargeback strategy while aligning storage use and costs to individual business units. This enables a better understanding of how specific business decisions, projects and initiatives impact storage costs and allows organizations to optimize existing resources and plan, predict and charge accurately for storage usage per user or business unit.

APTARE collects storage data through light-weight agentless technology and compiles actionable information in a central web-based platform where it can be viewed, analyzed and exported as easy-to-read reports. Data that is stored in multiple places for data protection and disaster recovery is recognized and tabulated appropriately and virtual machines that tend to be spun up and spun down quickly are taken into account in real time, ensuring that the true cost of storage is calculated accurately and efficiently. Instead of storage administrators being elbow deep in multiple spreadsheets, APTARE collects the data in real time, saving administrators hundreds of hours of manual labor per year. In addition, the potential for human error is taken out of the equation, ensuring the data is accurate and actionable.

View Accurate Storage Usage and Associated Costs in Real Time

By enabling the chargeback model, the APTARE StorageConsole platform allows the IT department to essentially become a zero cost center, accurately dispensing capital and operational expenses to their business uses. In addition, operations managers have the visibility into the true costs of storage and can make timely and educated business decisions based on that information. It also makes them rethink their data protection requirements by putting a dollar figure on tiered storage, making them pause to consider whether the more expensive medium is the right choice for a specific project. It also encourages them

Why APTARE?

- Agentless collection of storage and data protection usage data in real time and associates costs with end users and end user organizations
- Customized chargeback and show back analytics based on specific data center accounting practices and enterprise organizational structure
- Enables end user engagement as part of enterprise data center optimization of critical resources
- Collects usage data across platforms, media, management tools and data centers for unified data center chargeback

to delete old and unnecessary data and migrate infrequently accessed files to less expensive storage, ultimately optimizing their use of storage resources.

Chargeback also makes it easier to embrace the new private cloud infrastructures that make organizations' computing capabilities more flexible and cost efficient. Storage usage can be tracked, analyzed and predicted per business unit, making it feasible to employ a pay-as-you-go acquisition and provisioning model. Billing from cloud vendors is also more accurate as the organization can point to actual storage usage in real time from a holistic perspective down to the user. Many APTARE customers have shaved millions of dollars off their cloud storage costs simply by running APTARE reports at the click of a button and showing their vendor. The organizations are then able to reallocate that budget to more pertinent and strategic business uses.

"APTARE makes collecting storage data efficient and accurate, giving administrators actionable data that tells them how much storage the organization is using, by whom and how much it should be costing them. This allows them to get storage costs under control, optimize existing resources and better inform operations staff so they can make more educated business decisions," said Walt Duflock, vice president of marketing. "Organizations have the peace of mind that their usage data is reliable, making it easier to assign costs to specific business units or projects."

APTARE®

1359 Dell Avenue
Campbell, California 95008

Tel +1 408.871.9848
Fax +1 408.871.9858
sales@aptare.com
www.aptare.com