
Symantec's Backup Exec 10d

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Abstract: With the whole industry talking about CDP (continuous data protection), Symantec gets into the game by adding the capability into Backup Exec 10d.

The Problem

Backup isn't the problem – recovery is the problem. With Backup Exec 10d (formerly Backup Exec “Panther” Beta), Symantec is changing the game of recovery with significant enhancements to address improved recovery by better disk-to-disk-to-tape functionality. Backup Exec 10d eliminates the traditional “full and incremental” backup by making the process continuous – changes to data and files are automatically protected. Symantec is also bringing to the table another industry first – a “Google-like” web-based file retrieval that enables users to retrieve their own files without IT help or intervention. This self-service model will address the problem of overloaded help desks, improving overall service levels for IT.

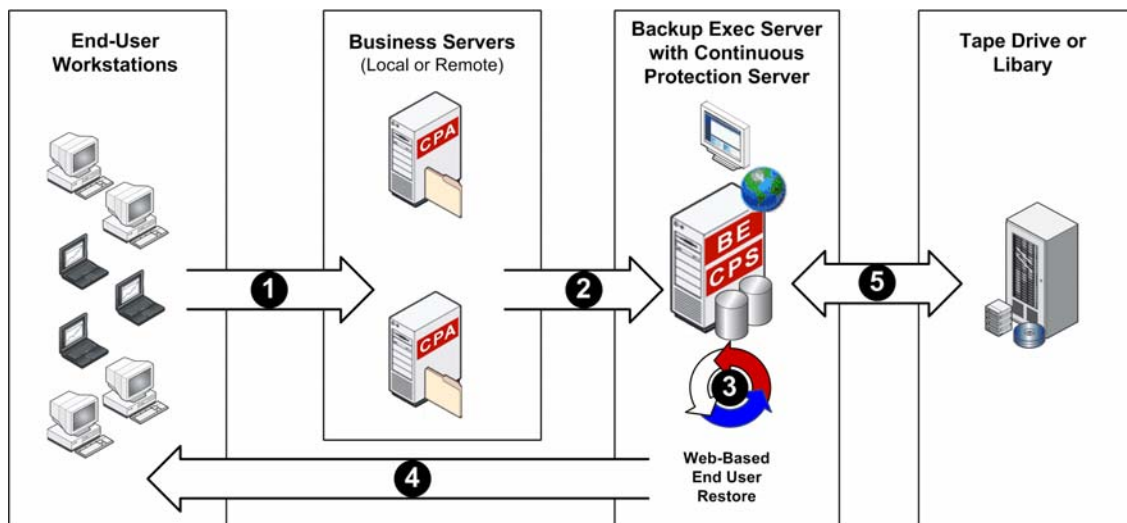
How It Works

Traditional backups involve a combination of full, incremental, and differential tape backups done within a specific time window – often an expensive and complex process. Backup Exec 10d leverages proven technology to deliver a pure disk-based data protection solution which includes the Backup Exec Continuous Protection Server. (The initial release is for file servers only, with support for Exchange and SQL to follow in future releases.)

Customers can use the Backup Exec 10d Continuous Protection Server (CPS) to protect local and remote offices. A Continuous Protection Agent (CPA) is added to each of the file servers. (Agents are purchased separately or are included with certain options.) As users write to the file servers, the Backup Exec Continuous Protection Agent automatically captures all changes to data continuously and sends those changes to the Backup Exec server with the Continuous Protection Server option. The changed blocks of data are saved to the Continuous Protection Server.

The server then leverages Microsoft Volume Shadow Copy Service (VSS) technology to create new historical versions of files (or point-in-time snapshots). Backup Exec CPS expands VSS snapshot capabilities, enabling administrators to effectively and efficiently manage the data retention periods beyond VSS' 64-snapshot limit. For example, customers may initially want hourly snapshots the first week. Customers may consolidate those and keep only one daily snapshot for a month. Beyond one month, they may want to keep one weekly snapshot. Backup Exec 10d can take those snaps and store them onto disk or to tape for long-term data retrieval and archival.

As indicated above, the Continuous Protection Server can be leveraged to protect remote offices – centralizing backups to a primary location and eliminating the need for hardware, media, and administration at those remote offices.



- ➊ Users save files to file servers (Business Server).
- ➋ Continuous Protection Agent streams file changes to Backup Exec Continuous Protection Server.
- ➌ VSS Snapshots provide versioning and granular point-in-time recovery of files.
- ➍ Users can retrieve previous versions of files using simple, web-based recovery.
- ➎ Backup Exec media server provides backup to tape for longer term retention or disaster recovery

Backup Exec 10d provides users and administrators with a web-based recovery tool to see and recover their files. Backup Exec Retrieve is the new web-based recovery tool that allows end-users to use a simple “Google-like” solution. After logging in, users can search based on full file names, partial file names or even file extensions (i.e. *.ppt). Alternatively, users can browse their directory to find a file. Files are shown based on recently saved dates, recent activities, etc.

Backup Exec 10d is being announced simultaneously with LiveState Recovery 6.0, which provides rapid recovery of Windows system. (See ESG brief “Symantec LiveState Recovery 6.0”) With the two solutions, Symantec brings to the table comprehensive Windows data and system recovery.

Backup Exec 10d also includes an agent to protect Microsoft’s Data Protection Manager Server (DPM) – enabling users to integrate DPM into a full-scale backup schema. Backup Exec 10d supports offloading to tape, unlike DPM.

Pricing for Backup Exec 10d starts at an estimated \$795 USD. The Continuous Protection Server is included at no additional charge with purchase of Backup Exec 10d. The Backup Exec 10d Continuous Protection Agent is priced at \$295 USD per protected file server.

The Bottom Line

This is an overall recovery enhancement to the massively popular Backup Exec, and should be received with open arms.

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