

INSIGHT

Symantec Tackles Remote Office Data Protection Challenge

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IDC OPINION

On April 3, Symantec Corp. announced the availability of a new product in the NetBackup line. Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition is targeted at solving management, reliability, and availability challenges associated with remote or branch office data protection and recovery. This new product offering allows Symantec to:

- ☒ Extend the brand equity and product value of the NetBackup offering to a broader range of environments and customers as well as provide broader product functionality to existing NetBackup customers.
- ☒ Provide a solution to the challenges of data protection in remote and branch office locations, with centralized control through a consistent and standardized management approach.
- ☒ Develop further integration points between its Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition and the core NetBackup product offering as well as expand to integrate with other Symantec storage software offerings over time.
- ☒ Roll out a professional services and consulting offering to help firms design, tune, and implement effective data protection strategies in remote or branch office locations as well as maintain those strategies over time.
- ☒ Address the unsolved problem of the continual backup of unchanged data to tape. Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition utilizes a single-instance storage or data reduction process to eliminate the backup of the same data again and again — thus optimizing performance and capacity.

IN THIS INSIGHT

This IDC Insight analyzes the remote office data protection, availability, and recovery problem and Symantec's ability to address these challenges with its recently announced Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition product.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

On April 3, Symantec announced the availability of Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition. Symantec will license this product through its normal distribution channels with a focus on its extensive network of value-added resellers (VARs). Symantec intends to license the product both as a standalone offering and as an extension to the existing NetBackup product. The Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition software will be licensed on a per-terabyte model based on the amount of data stored (following the data reduction process).

The NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition product will be targeted at enterprise environments with a network of remote offices where data protection needs exist but backup approaches have not been in place or standardized because of the absence of onsite technical resources, limited network bandwidth to the remote office, and the sheer growth of data outside the main datacenters. Many enterprises have limited IT staff to strategically manage these increasing capacities. Some industries are more distributed than others, and vertical industries such as manufacturing, financial services, healthcare, and life sciences frequently face remote office data protection challenges.

NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition

With the initial release, the product will consolidate the protection of Windows and Linux file data that exists in remote offices to a NetBackup PureDisk Remote Office Edition centralized data store. The centralized data store can be located at the remote office itself, at another remote office, or at a main datacenter. The remote office protection can be managed centrally in a main datacenter, addressing the absence of technical resources at remote or branch office locations. Although data protection is managed centrally, a local data protection appliance can also be deployed in the remote office location (or in the main datacenter), allowing for high-performance local restores while still affording centralized protection.

One of the most compelling features of the NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition offering is its intelligent data reduction feature, which identifies globally unique files and data segments that have already been protected — and eliminates the redundant process and storage of duplicate content on the NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition data store. This data reduction process, also known as single-instance storage or data deduplication, is done by breaking up a file into variable length segments based on the size of the file. Therefore, if any changes are made to any of the segments within a file, NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition will only protect the changed segments that make up the file. The NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition data reduction function can identify unique content across the entire network of remote offices — offering even further levels of optimization.

Other key features of the Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition at its initial deployment include:

- ☒ **Disk-based protection** provides for improved backup performance and enhanced restore times and eliminates the challenges of tape management or reliability. The use of disk as a target eliminates manual tape handling, collection, and administration.
- ☒ **Flexible storage deployments**, with support for both internal high-capacity, cost-effective ATA disk storage and modular or enterprise storage arrays, allow a firm to deploy configurations based on in-house expertise and skills, leverage existing supplier discounts, and protect investments in existing hardware. Supported storage configurations will include DAS, NAS, or Fibre Channel SAN implementations.
- ☒ **Self-service, Web-based restore** allows users at remote sites to restore files directly from the disk-based data store without involving IT personnel. Users leverage a Web-based file explorer interface and search capability to locate files based on their permissions and access controls. The interface is based on Web services and uses secure HTTP sessions, requiring no agent be installed on the user's system.
- ☒ **Data encryption**, both in transit and at rest, ensures that data and sensitive content within data cannot be compromised. The use of 256-bit encryption provides security, and native key management streamlines administration. Additionally, it satisfies regulatory pressures in key industries such as healthcare, financial services, and credit card processing.
- ☒ **Remote replication** of data from one or many Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition data stores to a remote data store provides a disaster recovery solution. Only the new data is replicated; leveraging the global data reduction feature thus optimizes throughput performance of the network bandwidth. Data travels over the network in an encrypted fashion, minimizing security risks over wide area networks.
- ☒ **Centralized administration** can be achieved, eliminating the need to involve nontechnical remote office personnel in the backup process. Through a secure SSL Web-based administration interface, IT staff in a remote location or datacenter can centrally manage all instances of Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition. Additionally, data can be restored by users themselves — eliminating IT in the frequent and high-overhead file recovery process.
- ☒ **Scalable, distributed architecture** ensures that as the environment grows in terms of numbers of remote offices, servers, and files, the Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition can scale with the growth. The product architecture is based on a distributed, content-based routing system and catalog database that allow the product to scale as additional content is ingested into the system.
- ☒ **Tape backup support** is available for environments that require that the Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition data store be backed up to tape. Backup applications, including NetBackup and BackupExec, can be used to protect the data store and back it up to tape.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

The future for this product looks extremely promising as users continue to evaluate and deploy disk-based data protection approaches to achieve higher levels of recovery and eliminate the historical challenges associated with remote office tape backup. Because of increasing regulatory pressures, globalization, increasing numbers of remote workers, supply chain integration, offshoring, and other business drivers, firms need to address the protection of enterprise data at remote offices. The Veritas NetBackup 6.0 PureDisk Remote Office Edition product helps them meet these business goals while improving availability and recovery service-level agreements (SLAs), reducing costs, optimizing storage and network bandwidth, and reducing IT administration and overhead.

Users can expect further enhancements to the product over the course of 2006 including additional platform coverage and application agents, such as Microsoft Exchange and Microsoft SQL Server. Additionally, in future releases of NetBackup, the single-instance storage or data reduction technology used to eliminate the backup of the same data again and again will be expanded to all data protected by NetBackup.

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