



## NuView's *StorageX* Delivers Elegant, Cost-Effective Solution for File Management

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### Management Summary

Automobiles have been around for well over 100 years, and many manufacturers know how to make a reliable, easy-to-use car. Electric starters, automatic transmissions, power steering, fuel injection, and so forth are standard fare. Quality is high. As long as the owner keeps gas in the tank and occasionally changes the oil, the car usually keeps going. It is not like 100 years ago when a car owner also had to be a mechanic – constantly tweaking, tuning, and repairing to maintain a vehicle. **Progress has brought simplicity, reliability, improved power and fuel efficiency, and a much lower total cost of ownership (TCO).**

In comparison, information technology is more like the auto industry of 100 years ago. While computer applications have become a necessity to run a modern business, the underlying infrastructure is complex, costly to maintain, and not well-utilized. Enterprises feel this pain in a number of ways, but from the executive perspective, it is the pocketbook that hurts most. **Enterprises want economic relief that comes from simplicity and reliability.**

NuView brings to the table a software solution called *StorageX* that can simplify an important aspect of the IT infrastructure – the management of file systems in both Windows and Unix environments. When an enterprise reaches a certain point of scale, the number of file servers, NAS appliances, user desktops, and application servers and their interrelationships for file access become an intricate and constantly-changing web. Like the cars of old, it requires time-consuming tweaking, tuning, and repair to keep it all going.

**StorageX masks this complexity by pooling files into a *global namespace* that all users and applications access.** Administrative tasks and data management occur “behind the veil”, so clients do not need to be regularly reconfigured. The software installs on top of existing infrastructure and provides data migration, replication, fast disaster recovery, centralized device management, and policy-based automation. Business benefits include:

- Lower storage operating costs due to simpler management,
- Lower storage acquisition costs due to more efficient use of storage, and
- Greater value from information due to broader, easier access.

While *StorageX* does not leap 100 years of evolution in a single bound, **it does offer a targeted, non-disruptive solution with a sound economic rationale.** Read on for details.

### IN THIS ISSUE

› Complexity Hurts.....	2
› StorageX Simplifies File Management ..	2
› Benefits to the Business.....	3
› Conclusion.....	3

## Complexity Hurts

Enterprises have long been saying: **“Make information technology simpler because complexity costs money. It is not about having the most bells and whistles. It is about solving business problems.”** As a result, the marketplace is brimming with solutions that promise simplicity. To varying degrees, they deliver, though the “ideal” IT infrastructure – one that provides exactly what everyone needs and takes care of itself – is still a future vision.

These solutions fit broadly into two categories: **(1) major overhaul and (2) targeted solution.** A major overhaul usually involves:

- Broad renovation of the IT infrastructure and likely business processes;
- Big, upfront investment in time, money, and risk;
- Long deployment period; and
- Larger, long-term return on investment.

A two-year deployment of an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system is classic example of a major overhaul. It is a strategic, all-hands-on-deck effort.

In contrast to its elder sibling, a targeted solution is characterized by:

- Solving a specific, perceived pain,
- Fixing existing infrastructure rather than replacing it, and
- Faster deployment and more immediate return on investment.

In these uncertain times, enterprises are gravitating toward the second category. IT budgets are stagnant and confidence in the near-term economic outlook is still waffling. **A targeted solution presents itself as a safe investment.** It is less risky, less disruptive, and more palatable for executives who are focused on near-term cost cuts to achieve profitability, though it can still deliver long-term benefits. The corporate mood seems to be: **“My cars works fine, though it has a flat tire. Just fix the tire – I don’t need a new vehicle.”**

## StorageX Simplifies File Management

In this environment, NuView offers a non-disruptive, targeted solution for file system management called *StorageX*. **This software solution manages multiple, heterogeneous, distributed file servers and NAS appliances by masking the underlying complexity.** StorageX is able to deliver a variety of features for saving labor, controlling costs, and enhancing performance and availability.

**The key feature of StorageX is a global namespace that all application servers and user desktops can access.** A global namespace is like a phone book for file systems. With a phone book in hand, a person only needs to know the name of an individual or business to find the corresponding phone number. There is no need to know the physical address or to keep track of everyone in town. Furthermore, as people move and new businesses spring up, the phone company sends a revised book each year to reflect the changes.

In a similar fashion, a global namespace keeps track of file systems and shares so a user or application only needs to know a file’s logical name. This is not the case in most enterprises today that have multiple, distributed file servers or NAS appliances. Clients must know the physical address of every file directory they need to access. It is like placing calls without a phone book, and if anything changes, it is a time-consuming effort to re-map every client to the right locations. By eliminating these direct dependencies, StorageX is able to deliver a number of features:

- **Non-intrusive data management** – Administrative tasks like adding file servers or appliances and moving files occur behind the veil of the global namespace. User desktops and application servers are not affected by these activities, so administrators do not have to reconfigure share mappings.
- **Data migration and replication** – Offers built-in data migration and replication features that work across even heterogeneous devices. Migration is useful for load

balancing to optimize performance, improving overall capacity utilization, and upgrading or consolidating file servers and appliances. Replication is useful for distributing files, log collecting, and backup.

- **Fast disaster recovery** – Automatically detects a file server failure and transparently redirects clients to a local or remote failover platform within minutes.
- **Centralized device management** – Manages Windows NT/2000 file servers as well as NetApp and Windows SAK filers.
- **Policy-based automation** – Automates routine tasks for the features above.

StorageX supports clients running Windows and – for NetApp filers only – Solaris and Linux. Supported storage targets include NetApp filers, Windows SAK appliances, and Windows NT/2000 file servers with direct-attached or SAN-attached storage. Deployment is fast and no client installation is required. List price begins at \$2,000 per file server.

### Benefits to the Business

Due to the fast, continuous growth of enterprise data, file management can represent a significant expense for enterprises as well as burden for IT administrators. As an incremental solution targeted at this problem, StorageX delivers several business benefits:

- **Lower operating costs due to simpler management.** The general principle here is straightforward: It is easier to manage one of something than many. In this case, one global namespace is much easier than many, discrete, and possibly different file systems. Less training and fewer people are required. It provides a single point to act upon. Data services and administrative tasks can be leveraged over the entire namespace, and there is no need to reconfigure potentially thousands of clients. In short, simplicity saves time and, time is

money. **Lowering operating cost is critical because it is by far the largest component of storage TCO, and it impacts expenditures in the short and long run.**

- **Lower acquisition costs due to more optimal use of storage.** A global namespace minimizes redundant files through sharing, so less capacity is required. It is also possible to attain a higher utilization of capacity with a single, transparent file “pool” versus many discrete “islands”. Both benefits help lower upfront storage procurement costs, also contributing to lower TCO.
- **Greater value from information due to broader, easier access.** The real purpose for storing information is to use it to make smarter decisions and better manage the business. The ability of StorageX to enhance performance, availability, and accessibility through a global namespace and other features helps ensure continuous, timely access to information. Even a basic file search is much easier. As a result, the business itself can be more productive and competitive.

Finally, each of these can contribute to the bottom line of an enterprise, which is the true test of what makes them *business benefits*.

### Conclusion

StorageX is a simple, elegant solution to the complex problem of file system management. It is not obtrusive, over-engineered, or high-risk. It merely rides on top of what is already there. The price is such that a quick, back-of-the-envelope ROI calculation should yield a solid multiplier. **So, if your enterprise is looking for a targeted solution to shave out costs in the short and long run (and who isn't), StorageX may be a sensible investment.**



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