CommVault Takes You Back to the Future

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Management Summary

One of the most popular movies in 1985 was *Back to the Future*. *Doc Brown* (played by Christopher Lloyd) modified a *DeLorean* car so that he could travel back and forth in time at will. Why did Doc Brown choose a DeLorean car as his time machine? He explained that, in the movie: "The way I see it, if you are gonna build a time machine into a car, why not do it with some style?" The DeLorean car had style. Its stainless steel body and gull-wing doors were unique. The original DeLorean was priced at about $25,000 in 1982. Many were willing to pay $10,000 over list price to own this car. In fact, the majority of the DeLorean cars that were manufactured from 1981 to 1983 are still on the road today. That is a testament to its appeal.

I enjoyed watching *Back to the Future*. There were two aspects of the movie that I really liked – the DeLorean car and the ability to go back in time at will. It seems that going back in time would make life a lot simpler. For example, all of us at some point in our life have said something that we probably should not have said. *ZIP*…go back in time and say something more appropriate the second time through. Or, how many times have we hit the delete key, or not properly saved a working document, sending our data into the big black hole never to be recovered again. *ZIP*…go back in time and do it right the second time.

I will never own a DeLorean car and I will probably never travel back and forward in time. **But what if we could go back and retrieve data from years ago without requiring the servers and applications that created that data? That could make the lives of IT administrators a lot simpler.**

CommVault has developed software that can retrieve data from years ago without requiring the servers and applications that created that data. No longer does IT have to keep older servers and applications in a back room *just in case* they may need them some day. CommVault's software products designed under the unified *QiNetix* platform consists of products that provide data protection, snapshot and recovery management, archiving and data resource management for many data centers today. Within the QiNetix platform is the *Common Technology Engine* (CTE), which provides shared services for all programs such as data movement and device sharing. CTE allows IT administrators to move data easier between different types of storage.

Read on to find out how CommVault is the DeLorean transportation for traveling back and forth with your data.

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Back to the Past Data

Microsoft Exchange Server 4.0, released in June 1996, was the original version of Exchange. Since then, Microsoft has introduced numerous versions of Exchange including the most recent version, Exchange 2007. In many cases, Exchange administrators have consistently updated Exchange to the latest release to take advantage of new features and enhanced capabilities.

Upgrading to the latest release to take advantage of new features makes good business sense but it can also give Exchange administrators problems. To add to this, the Exchange Server 2007 upgrade also requires IT teams to upgrade the software ***and hardware*** to a 64-bit computer. Consider the following situation. IT is currently running 32-bit Exchange 2003 and the legal department wants a copy of all the e-mails about certain financial transactions that occurred between 1999 and 2001. *Easy request?* Hardly. Those e-mails have long been deleted from the current version of Exchange. IT's only chance to recover those e-mails is to restore the Exchange backup tapes between 1999 and 2001 and hope that they can recover those e-mails.

The Exchange administrator must find the old version of Exchange 5.5 software, install it on an available server with the old version of Windows NT4, then restore each Exchange 5.5 backup tape to find any e-mails that discussed the financial transactions in question. However, the backups from 2001 were created using Exchange 2000 and Active Directory. When the search of backups of Exchange 5.5 is completed, the administrator now has to install Exchange 2000 and restore each Exchange 2000 backup tape, one at a time. This is a tedious, time-consuming process that requires that IT keep older versions of Exchange (and older versions of servers to support those environments) available for this current search and all future searches. This process could take days, delaying delivery of the requested e-mails.

CommVault's *Galaxy Backup and Recovery* software can take you *back to your past data* without requiring the need to keep older versions of Exchange or the servers to run these older versions around. Galaxy Backup

and Recovery software allows Exchange administrators to restore older e-mails from Exchange 5.5 or Exchange 2000 to Exchange 2003 (or 2007) environments. That saves time and money and makes Exchange data "Release Independent".

How Does CommVault Do It?

How can CommVault restore older e-mails without requiring the older applications to be in place? The answer lies in their strategic partnership with Microsoft. Since 1999, CommVault has some of its engineers occupying cubicles in Microsoft's headquarters in Redmond. When a CommVault engineer needs to understand how to communicate best with Microsoft Exchange, they simply walk down the hall to discuss integration with an Exchange engineer. These discussions between engineering groups led CommVault to store e-mails in a native format without dependencies on a particular release level of Exchange.

This partnership has been very successful. Microsoft uses CommVault to protect their data; in fact, CommVault has been protecting Exchange 2007 data for the entire Exchange and Office product groups within the Redmond data center since 2004.

CommVault exploits the 64-bit server architecture supported by Exchange 2007. By optimizing their code for the 64-bit environment, CommVault has been able to improve performance of their software dramatically, while still allowing older 32-bit applications to leverage the performance benefits of 64-bit servers.

While Exchange has become a mission critical application for many organizations, SharePoint has also become an important application for collaborative file sharing. Here, CommVault again allows older SharePoint items to be brought back to the current SharePoint system without requiring older versions of SharePoint be installed.

CommVault is certified with Microsoft's *Windows Server System Reference Architecture (WSSRA)* program. WSSRA partners work with Microsoft to architect, develop, and document IT infrastructure. Blueprints are available today that step administrators

through the best ways to implement Comm-Vault backup and recovery software with Microsoft products. These blueprints are based on real-life experiences. Microsoft has been supporting thousands of Exchange users with CommVault's products for years.

Back to the Future Data

With CommVault's products, IT can retrieve e-mails from older backup tapes to satisfy legal discovery. Going forward, it is good business practice to store these e-mails in an archive that can protect them from modification, while providing fast access. Another product in CommVault's QiNetix platform is *DataArchiver,* which integrates with Exchange to extract, index and store messages and attachments to secondary storage. Messages and attachments can be searched and retrieved without requiring access to Exchange. The Common Technology Engine contains a feature called *Content Indexing*. Content Indexing provides full text indexing for many Windows data formats, such as Web, Office, Adobe, and e-mails. With CommVault, under Windows Server, it is one solution suite, not a plethora of disparate solutions.

Secondary storage devices can be SAN or NAS disk, Content Addressable Storage (CAS), tape or optical media. DataArchiver has other benefits as well. Archiving messages and attachments to lower cost storage reduces the requirements for primary storage. This saves money while improving performance for Exchanges users and reducing the time to back up the primary Exchange store.

Do you need to archive data? The simple answer is yes. Surveys suggest that about 80% of the businesses within the United States are involved in litigation at some point in time. While you have the option with CommVault software to retrieve these e-mails from backup tapes, CommVault's DataArchiver allows IT administrators to archive not only messages and attachments, but file systems and data stored on NAS storage systems, as well. Having many different data types stored in one archive can speed up the discovery of all documentation related to one discovery event. **DataArchiver does not require that IT organizations retain older versions of appli-**

cations or hardware to retrieve the data in the future.

Back and Forth to the Future

Years ago, older versions of backups were kept to restore data *just in case – just in case* someone in engineering needed to retrieve an old engineering document that had been deleted from primary storage months before, or *just in case* auditors wanted copies of old financial records that had long since been deleted. The current climate has changed and many IT organizations are being asked to produce numerous e-mail messages to satisfy the demands of the legal counsel on a regular basis. Installing older versions of Exchange, then restoring older backups takes people, money, and time. More importantly, there is always the risk that one backup tape may be overlooked.

IT organizations need to evaluate solutions that will let them retrieve old data and store current data in a format that is application and hardware-independent. They need a solution that will allow them to go back and forth to the future with their data. CommVault has such a solution. Moreover, like the DeLorean car, CommVault has longevity. CommVault software has its origins almost twenty years ago where a development group within AT&T created the first versions of the software to automatically backup and restore the data within AT&T Bell Labs. A Bell Labs background with a heavy modernized Microsoft influence is a key reason for CommVault's success in many heterogeneous environments.

Microsoft runs the CommVault suite of products to support their IT environment. If it works within their large environment, in particular for the teams that make Exchange and Office, then it can work for you. Take a closer look!

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About the Author

Dianne McAdam **is Director of Enterprise Information Assurance for the Clipper Group**. She brings over three decades of experience as a data center director, educator, technical programmer, systems engineer, and manager for industry-leading vendors. Dianne has held the position of senior analyst at Data Mobility Group and at Illuminata. Before that, she was a technical presentation specialist at EMC's Executive Briefing Center. At Hitachi Data Systems, she served as performance and capacity planning systems engineer and as a systems engineering manager. She also worked at StorageTek as a virtual tape and disk specialist; at Sun Microsystems, as an enterprise storage specialist; and at several large corporations as technical services directors. Dianne earned a Bachelor's and Master's degree in mathematics from Hofstra University in New York.

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