

HP Rolls Out Enhanced 'All-in-One' Storage System for SMBs

The company is focusing more intently on the midtier market segment, likely due to a steady loss of high-end storage market share for past several quarters.

This will come as no surprise to anybody following the data storage market: Hewlett-Packard is focusing a substantial corporate effort to win the small-to-medium business sector over to its new, simplified products.

Part of the reason for this concerted SMB campaign, analysts surmise, may be that HP is slowly but surely losing market share to IBM, BlueArc and others in the high-end enterprise ECB (external controller-based) disk storage market, according to the latest Gartner and IDC reports, and needs to concentrate its engineering and marketing muscle elsewhere.

More evidence of this trend came April 11, when the Palo Alto, Calif., company introduced a new version of its All-in-One storage system for SMBs - the latest in a long list of new product offerings for the midtier business sector.

The HP StorageWorks 1200 All-in-One Storage System (HP AiO1200), is HP's fifth storage product rollout for SMBs since September. The company hasn't had a new product for the high-end market since last October, when it introduced a high-performance blade server and ultra-high-speed gateway for enterprise storage systems.

In February, the company introduced its StorageWorks D2D Backup System. In December, HP unveiled the entry-level direct-attached StorageWorks MSA60 and HP StorageWorks MSA70 arrays .

In October, the company introduced a dedicated network storage "starter" kit , designed expressly for the midtier business market. And in September, it rolled out its first StorageWorks AiO system , which combines NAS (network-attached storage) and iSCSI connectivity.

The StorageWorks AiO1200, unlike offerings from Big Blue, EMC and other competitors, is a system designed for IT generalists who have no storage expertise, a company spokesperson said.

The HP AiO1200 offers a maximum of 9 terabytes of raw capacity and provides customers with increased storage density in a 2U form factor. The high-performance controller in a 12-drive array allows storage to be allocated at a highly granular level, depending on business demands.

Unlike other offerings, the spokesperson said, the All-in-One Storage Manager features mixed drive support, which lets customers leverage the cost efficiencies of SATA (serial ATA) with the speed and reliability of SAS (serial-attached SCSI).

The All-in-One Storage Manager now includes setup and migration wizard support for Microsoft Exchange 2007 so customers can move from direct-attached to network storage in fewer than 10 mouse clicks. It also can now provision iSCSI storage for servers running both the 32- and 64-bit versions of Windows Server 2003; setup and migration wizards give administrators the flexibility to mix and drive technologies to meet the storage needs of individual applications.

'Carefully Thought-Out' System

"HP carefully thought out the HP All-in-One 1200 Storage System to provide the specific features and

capabilities that make it easy for SMB users to implement and manage a storage network," said Tony Asaro, senior analyst for the Enterprise Strategy Group, in Milford, Mass.

"It is not just a watered-down version of a more expensive storage system. HP is one of the best at bringing storage networking to SMB customers because of their support, brand awareness and portfolio of SMB-oriented products."

HP's All-in-One package is a good match for file vaulting, back-up and disaster recovery needs, said Dwight Smith, product data management specialist at CalsonicKansei North America.

"In less than 2 hours, we were able to get our first AiO system up and running, and have since added a second system onto our platform that requires little management effort and experiences no downtime. HP's continued effort to deliver tailored solutions to their customers is paying off," Smith said.

Pricing and Availability

The HP AiO1200 is available now with 12 drive bays, up to 9TB of capacity and SATA or SAS options. It will be sold primarily through HP's network of more than 145,000 channel resellers worldwide. Pricing ranges from about \$7,000 per unit (3TB capacity) to \$8,700, depending upon configuration.

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