

# Today's business needs intelligent data storage

By [Adam Day](#)

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The world is driven by data. It's an instant world, where customers can make or break a business and the insights derived from data is the only thing that gives companies any indication of how to satisfy their markets.



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Data can deliver insights into shifting demographics, customer behaviour, operational efficiencies and inefficiencies, and enable a world where instant product feedback and satisfaction is expected.

However, data is accumulating at a rate faster than most businesses can cope with and in addition, often don't have the skills to effectively manage it. Further exacerbating this is the emergence of technologies such as cloud and the Internet of Things (IoT) coupled with traditional core data that has accelerated data growth. Data is also now created and stored everywhere, adding to the growing complexity.

For businesses, this means that their data storage needs to do more than just store data.

## Intelligent storage

Data storage has come a long way since the humble hard drive. We've moved from traditional to converged to hyperconverged storage, where flash arrays offer cloud or cloud-like storage capabilities. However, storage has also evolved through intelligence.



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The addition of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to storage has made it more efficient, more economical and more capable than ever before.

Today, we see storage that has become intelligent enough to understand and interpret a business' workload, shifting to accommodate as they vary. It can adjust the performance of data based on its location and demand in real-time, moving it to where it's needed most. It can optimise data to adapt to the economic model most suited to a business.

Intelligent storage doesn't just deliver insights into the business, it also leverages data from a vast network of data storage systems and a pool of historical data about data (metadata) to optimise itself, ushering in an era of autonomous storage.

### **Autonomous storage**

Today's storage is self-aware, context-aware, and autonomous. Imagine data storage that is fully capable of not just storing and managing a business's data but can also self-manage, self-heal and self-optimize?

AI allows a storage system to leverage telemetry data from around the world, observing and learning in order to identify common data problems and address them. It can predict where issues will arise, such as if an event will trigger a business system to have insufficient capacity to cope with a load. It provides automated solutions and fixes allowing the business more time on other areas instead of IT maintenance.



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This level of automation extends beyond data storage to a business' compute and network, too. Integration across the stack allows intelligent storage to deliver insights on issues such as network interconnects, latency, server performance and a score of other vital factors that contribute to a seamless, synchronous IT environment.

### **Strategic storage**

What does this mean for businesses? It means that businesses can more effectively manage their risk, preparing for unpredictable data growth, potential data loss and the costs associated with both. Businesses can also more effectively manage their data performance, squeezing out as much benefit from each byte as it can.

On a broader scale, intelligent, autonomous storage helps a business to grow, creating new revenue streams, reaching their market faster and maximising their bottom line.

### **Flexible storage**

This sounds grandiose and, when grandiosity comes into the picture, businesses tend to think "expensive". Perhaps the best feature about the new era of storage is its ability to scale, allowing it to grow in line with the business and without disruption. Businesses should be able to add to their storage as and when they need it and be automatically alerted to

trends which signify an imminent need for more.

Organisations require the ability to start small and scale up and out, along with many different payment options. Each business is different and, while some prefer investing capital as needed, others prefer more predictable monthly, or pay-as-you-use financial models.

Interoperability and 'built for cloud' systems are increasingly important in a landscape where organisations are migrating to the cloud, and most IT environments are some level of hybrid. Businesses cannot afford data storage systems that integrate with only some of their systems – they need a solution that is capable of integrating across all of them, even legacy systems.

Storage can no longer be a passive, resource-intensive exercise. Data needs to work for the business, spurring its growth and contributing as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Intelligent storage makes this a reality.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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