



2011 ENTERPRISE SCALE-OUT STORAGE BUYER'S GUIDE

The Insider's Guide to Evaluating
Enterprise Scale-Out Storage Solutions

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Introduction

The era of Big Data is here. But its arrival creates a new problem: What type of storage solution is best equipped to manage and store all of this data?

This is where the DCIG 2011 Enterprise Scale-out Storage Buyer's Guide comes into play. It offers organizations valuable insight and guidance into this new, rapidly maturing class of storage systems.

Enterprise scale-out storage systems are particularly unique as they provide the architecture that is viewed by many as a prerequisite for building out tomorrow's public and private storage clouds that need to handle this influx of "Big Data."

But as with any emerging market a variety of scale-out storage architectures are being developed and released. This made evaluating and scoring this set of solutions more challenging than normal as the intent of each DCIG Buyer's Guide is to provide apples-to-apples comparisons so organizations have the information they need to make an informed buying decision.

One of the specific obstacles DCIG encountered in the preparation of this Buyer's Guide was properly comparing product architectures. Some vendors have adapted their existing storage system or systems to bring them into the scale-out storage space. Others went for a pure cluster approach. Still others opted for software solutions.

So to accurately compare each of these enterprise scale-out storage systems DCIG took a rigorous process of gathering as much information about each one as possible.

The evaluation process started with a lengthy effort to identify vendors and models that claimed to offer enterprise scale-out storage systems. That research enabled DCIG to arrive at a working definition of "enterprise scale-out storage." Once defined, storage systems were then re-evaluated to ensure they met this definition.

This evaluation entailed looking at the features on each system and then creating a 175-point questionnaire that covered over 70 capabilities and features that are found across them. Once completed, this survey was sent to each vendor to validate what features their scale-out storage system model or models supported.

After the questionnaires were completed and returned each vendor's responses were checked against publicly available data as well as double-checked with the vendors themselves. Features were then weighted, scored and ranked. The features were then distilled into the individual product data sheets found in this Buyer's Guide that reflect how each product supports these features.

The level of detail in this Buyer's Guide combined with a consistent scoring system helps organizations in two key ways.

First, it provides a powerful yet concise method to evaluate each enterprise scale-out storage system so organizations can understand the overall strengths and weaknesses of each solution. Using that information they can then understand how well designed each solution

The entire *DCIG 2011 Enterprise Scale-Out Storage Buyer's Guide* is now available from HP. To read the full report, [click here](#).

on each product as well as a data sheet for each enterprise scale-out storage system.