Three **hot** topics **for customers**

Information Loss Prevention

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Data Loss Prevention (DLP) or Information Leak Prevention (ILP) is the topic of discussion in many recent customer meetings. It is all about monitoring and protecting proprietary and confidential information, including trade secrets, intellectual property, legal and financial documentation, client communications and personal information. Whether unintentional, intentional or malicious, the ramifications of information leaks can be significant. DLP/ILP solutions allow organisations to control the transmission of data in accordance with established corporate security policies.

Loss of data can be damaging to both market credibility and customer confidence. Solutions that can control the flow of such information are therefore being sought. Regulatory frameworks such as PCI and SOX increase the need for levels of control within the enterprise.

Both Websense and McAfee have recently acquired DLP technology and can monitor, detect, report and audit such events, providing the Board with the confidence that appropriate steps have been taken to protect their brand and customers. Solutions can be implemented that work both within the infrastructure and also outside, for employees who travel. The value that Vistorm brings is to ensure the solutions integrate seamlessly, are simple to administer and, critically, do not negatively impact the end user experience or overall productivity.

Improved desktop management through virtualisation

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Delivering a robust and stable desktop platform for a distributed and mobile workforce is a challenging problem. Keeping that platform up-to-date, secure and managed cost-effectively, presents even more complexities. The recent release of Microsoft Vista has been a catalyst for many organisations to reconsider their own desktop management and refresh strategies and explore alternatives.

Desktop virtualisation is one approach that is gathering momentum. Expanding the server-based computing architecture of Citrix Presentation Server, desktop virtualisation, using VMware's Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI), virtualises the entire desktop machine within the data centre. Users securely access a 'pooled resource' of virtualised desktop machines from low-cost thin client terminals on the corporate network or from remote, unmanaged PC devices. Citrix Presentation Server facilitates the delivery of a 'shared' desktop environment, and VMware VDI additionally provides users with greater desktop flexibility, personalisation and the necessary compute resource aligned with the application requirements of their job role. Desktop virtualisation provides an excellent framework to deliver the Vista experience to users rapidly, without the overhead of an expensive desktop upgrade.

Vistorm brings a wealth of experience and expertise in determining how desktop virtualisation can bring value to organisations, and in designing and implementing cost-effective desktop delivery architectures and desktop management frameworks.

Storage and Archiving

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Information is the lifeblood of companies, so the standard has been to store everything. As more users require access to information, more servers have been installed, each with more storage. Data also ends up being accessible by only one group, or being duplicated many times to ensure wider access. This is then amplified as backups are needed to support the organisation's business continuity needs. Applying some intelligent thinking to what data is stored, on what media, and how long it needs to be kept and accessible, can have huge benefits.

Storage usually has different performance characteristics according to its cost – the higher the cost, the higher the performance. It is logical to assume that data requiring the highest performance resides on the highest performing storage. Unfortunately, data tends to be dynamic in nature: as it ages, its value to the business decreases. Sites with poorly managed data will have seldom-accessed information taking up valuable space on high performance storage.

Information Lifecycle Management (ILM) attempts to match data and its usage with the required level of storage performance according to the data's value to the business at any point in time. A prime example of this is email. Companies and organisations need to comply with various rules, regulations and laws, so all email is kept. Most email usage decays after a relatively short period and so need not be kept on expensive storage. Properly managed email is archived (not deleted) once its value to the business drops. The archive is kept initially on low performance storage and can even be deep-archived onto magnetic tape. Exactly the same policies can be applied to files.

Email archiving is certainly a hot topic today with customers. Working in partnership with EMC, HP and Symantec, Vistorm can design and implement the right storage solutions for your business.