

Bocada Enhances Data Protection Manager 2007 with Centralized Management

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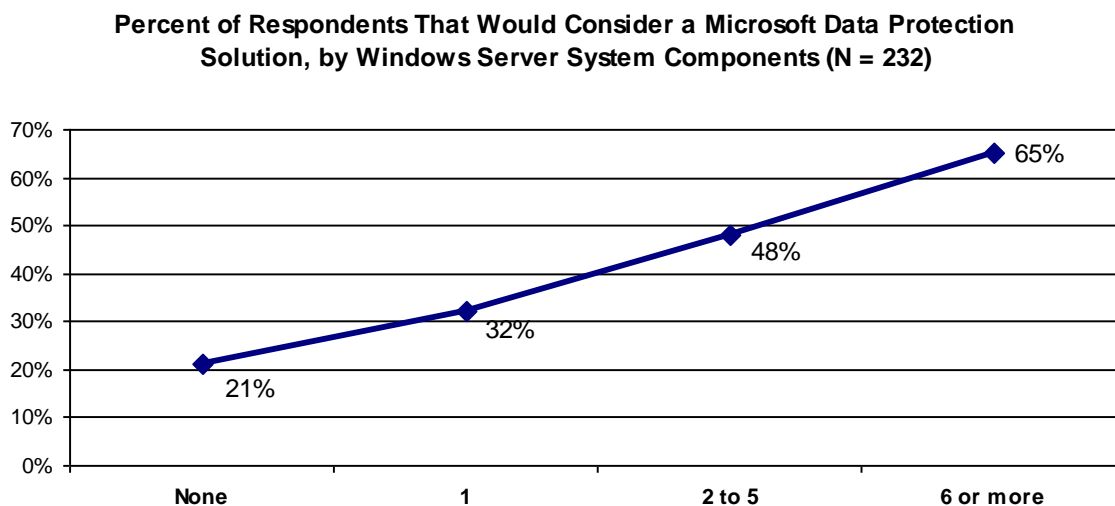
Abstract: Bocada Centralized Manager (Bocada CM) for Microsoft System Center Data Protection Manager 2007 (DPM 2007) provides organizations with a unified view of multiple DPM 2007 instances. Bocada CM can help reduce the cost and complexity of managing multiple DPM 2007 servers by centralizing monitoring and management, and automating reports and audit trails.

Overview

Microsoft introduced the latest version of its DPM in late 2007—a more mature and feature-improved version of its initial DPM 2006 product. Using disk as its target storage, DPM 2007 provides backup and recovery of Microsoft-specific environments and applications. Microsoft is targeting organizations with the majority of their servers running the Microsoft Windows operating system. Microsoft believes that these organizations are more likely to standardize on a Microsoft backup and recovery solution due to in-house expertise with Microsoft products and the importance of tight integration with Microsoft applications and server infrastructure.

ESG Research surveyed storage and IT professionals prior to the Microsoft DPM 2006 launch to understand the level of interest for data protection from Microsoft. The ESG data supports Microsoft's thesis. Organizations with multiple Windows Server system components (i.e. six or more Windows servers) are far more likely to consider a Microsoft Data Protection Solution (Figure 1).¹

FIGURE 1. INTEREST IN A MICROSOFT DATA PROTECTION OFFERING, BY NUMBER OF WINDOWS PRODUCTS IN PRODUCTION



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, 2005

¹ Source: ESG Research Report, *Microsoft's Data Protection Move*, July 2005.

Microsoft DPM 2007 is designed with attractive features for organizations in its target range (including some large enterprise organizations where it believes it can take over data protection for Microsoft workloads). For example, DPM executes block-level VSS snapshots—one full backup and incremental backups (only changed blocks) thereafter—in user-defined intervals (as little as 15 minutes), storing them on disk. This approach is optimized (reduces the capacity of data transferred and stored) and provides many recovery points. In fact, DPM can manage tens of thousands of recovery points. It allows for individual file or item recovery (i.e., an individual mailbox in Exchange; and a farm, site, database or item in SharePoint); however, it's a two-step process (for example, in Exchange you'd have to recover to an alternate storage group and then restore a mailbox). Microsoft added tape support (disk-to-tape and disk-to-disk-to-tape) and the capability to replicate data between two DPM 2007 systems—two built-in methods for moving data off-site for disaster recovery purposes.

The one feature that was missing? A central console for managing multiple DPM 2007 servers. Central management is a must-have for organizations using more than three DPM systems as the overhead of managing each DPM server locally would likely be a roadblock to adoption in larger sites.

That's why Redmond neighbor Bocada was enlisted to develop and deliver a central management solution for Microsoft DPM 2007. A pioneer in backup reporting, Bocada was one of the first vendors to offer backup reporting for distributed, multi-vendor backup environments in large enterprises. Its flagship product, Bocada Enterprise 5.1, provides reporting on Microsoft DPM 2007—in addition to most popular backup applications. With the introduction of Bocada Centralized Manager, Bocada now provides a central management console to discover application servers, set data protection schedules, monitor policy adherence and enable users to perform recoveries.

Analysis

Once adopted, backup solutions tend to stick around for a long time. ESG research found that 35% of users surveyed have employed the same backup software for more than four years and another 12% have used the same solution for more than eight years.² Organizations often have a lot invested in backup solutions—including acquisition cost, deployment and customization, disaster recovery processes and documentation, training and more. However, this is less of an issue for organizations that believe their backup solution is not keeping pace with requirements or for those that have a “catalyst” event—an initiative such as a planned re-architecture, consolidation, new application deployment or upgrade and/or the implementation of new, disruptive technologies such as server virtualization.

Microsoft has the opportunity to establish a presence for DPM 2007 in Microsoft-centric accounts. This is especially true for those organizations that have experienced or will experience a catalyst event, such as an upgrade to Exchange 2007 or Windows Server 2008, a Microsoft Office SharePoint Server (MOSS) implementation, or planned adoption of Microsoft Virtual Server.

Today, Microsoft is seeing a lot of interest in DPM 2007 as a departmental or application-specific backup/recovery solution, which is not surprising given the resources Microsoft has invested in its launch. Microsoft has multiple sales teams—DPM, System Center, Exchange, SQL and MOSS—as well OEMs and its volume channel promoting DPM; in most cases, with one of the applications that DPM 2007 protects. When included as part of enterprise application bundles, the cost of DPM 2007 may only be a fraction of the cost of an existing backup solution—an incentive for anyone with cost reduction goals to switch out the incumbent.

The opportunity for Bocada to deliver the management component for DPM is significant, especially since a central management component will be required for most of the accounts that Microsoft is targeting. The company has been serving a niche segment within the data protection market and central management solution for DPM 2007 offered Bocada a chance to expand in an adjacent market and differentiate itself from its backup reporting brethren. The move also allows Bocada to gain exposure in new accounts and boost its visibility overall—for both Bocada CM and Bocada Enterprise.

² Source: ESG Research Report, *Data Protection Market Trends*, January 2008.

Both current and prospective DPM 2007 customers will benefit from Bocada Centralized Manager. Organizations will be able to:

- Centrally monitor multiple status views (by application, user and priority) of all jobs across multiple DPM 2007 servers and restart failed jobs, which will save time over managing jobs locally.
- View and manage configuration settings for protection groups and media targets, as well as policy settings for short- and long-term protection goals, centralizing control for IT staff.
- Track DPM 2007 storage capacity and be alerted to capacity thresholds before space becomes critically low. Tracking resource utilization aids in capacity planning.
- Perform administrative tasks, such as user authentication and access controls for the larger DPM 2007 environment, rather than through disparate DPM 2007 systems.

The Bottom Line

Microsoft is not the first name that comes to mind when talking about backup, but the efficiency and application integration capabilities of DPM 2007 are sure to garner attention. However, there's always room for improvement. Microsoft's efficient approach on the backup side needs to be extended to recovery. DPM 2007 can meet aggressive RTO and RPO objectives based on the snapshot model, but Microsoft needs to work on making granular recovery just as fast and simple as full system recovery.

Bocada brings significant expertise in monitoring and managing data protection solutions with Bocada Enterprise. By partnering with Bocada to provide a key feature like central management, Microsoft has addressed a critical requirement for larger organizations evaluating DPM 2007. The Bocada-Microsoft pairing certainly benefits both organizations, but more importantly, it will offer significant value to mutual customers—specifically, by saving administrative time.