

DEMYSTIFYING INFRASTRUCTURE CHARGEBACK AND SHOWBACK

Enhancing transparency, efficiency,
and strategic IT investments with
NetApp Data Infrastructure Insights

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INTRODUCTION

The rise of hybrid architectures (on-premises, multi-cloud, and Storage-as-a-Service) has brought flexibility and scalability to many organizations but has made unifying usage data across those environments increasingly difficult, which creates significant challenges in achieving financial transparency. As IT infrastructure becomes more complex and involves more tools, it becomes harder to account for all storage usage and to understand exactly how resources are being consumed. With growing infrastructure comes increased demands from finance teams for precise cost allocation and transparency in storage use across the business, and providing that information for a sprawling infrastructure will only become more difficult.

Collecting the precise and transparent chargeback and showback data necessary to deliver clear storage usage data that accounts for storage costs across the infrastructure has turned into a near impossible dream for modern enterprises. In order to meet this challenge, IT organizations are applying governance practices to their infrastructure by using storage and usage data to make informed decisions for their ecosystems. Because many storage platforms are moving from a single, upfront cost model to a subscription based on usage, storage teams are being asked to provide consistent data on usage across complex hybrid environments, with some teams hiring headcount to exclusively provide this data to finance teams. But getting a clear picture into your storage costs is tricky and difficult to manually execute, taking time and resources away from providing actual business value.

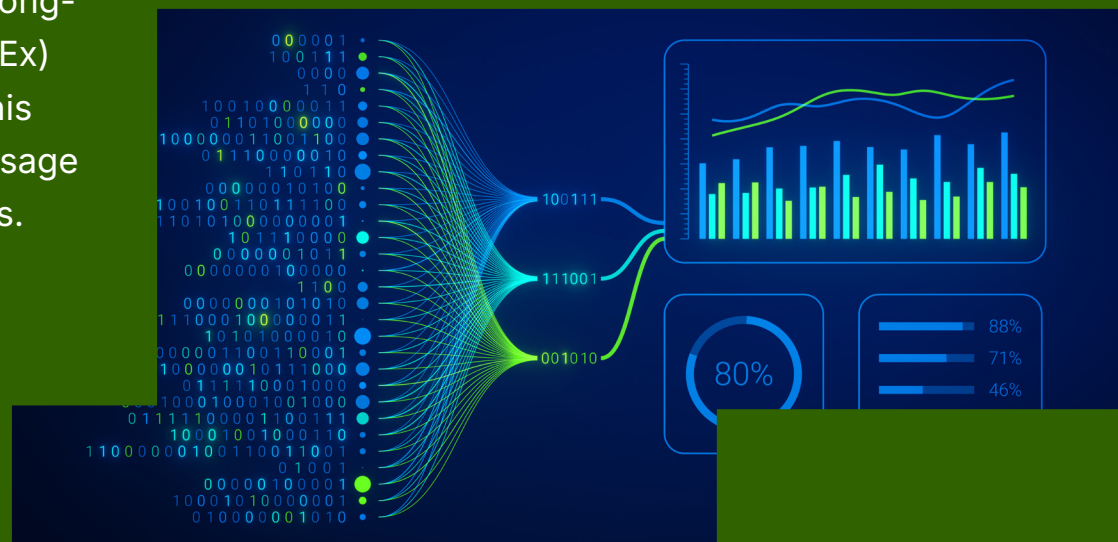
NetApp® Data Infrastructure Insights provides real-time monitoring and observability metrics for hybrid IT infrastructures. It also empowers IT professionals to deliver clear and reliable chargeback and showback data. Data Infrastructure Insights collects and attributes storage usage data from your entire infrastructure to map storage consumption directly to departments, removing the guesswork and manual efforts that go into storage use attribution and allowing storage teams to meet usage accountability demands.



THE COMPLEXITY OF ENTERPRISE STORAGE COSTS

Modern enterprise storage systems serve multiple teams and departments simultaneously but often without granular insights into how storage is being used within specific departments, leading to pressure and questions when it comes time to validate IT spend and budget correctly for the future. With massive, complex environments only becoming more complicated with more tools and spread across on-premises, cloud, and Storage-as-a-Service, it becomes nearly impossible to precisely allocate costs, leading to challenges when it comes to workload optimization as well as misaligned budgets and pressure from finance teams to gain more transparency into storage use across the company.

Organizations are increasingly moving away from long-term, depreciation-based capital expenditure (CapEx) models to dynamic consumption-based pricing. This shift means increased requirements for real-time usage tracking and adoption of new reporting frameworks.



Many IT teams try to gain insight into storage usage through manual reporting, a labor-intensive system prone to errors, and are unable to provide near real-time insights. Manual reporting relies on aggregated data, which often oversimplifies complex environments, failing to provide the granularity required for modern financial accountability when it comes to complex hybrid workloads. This manual reporting task can put huge strain on IT teams and pull employees away from other tasks that drive value for the organization and its customers.

Homegrown reporting tools often calculate utilization and costs inconsistently across platforms, making it challenging to provide finance teams with reliable metrics. Manual aggregation and conventional reporting methods can result in delays and inaccuracies in cost distribution and resource utilization. Without a unified approach, they often resort to oversimplified allocation strategies, such as dividing costs evenly or basing them on headcount, which fail to reflect actual usage patterns and lead to misaligned budgets, inefficiencies, and stakeholder frustration.



COMMON GROUND: THE NEED FOR ACCURATE, CONSISTENT REPORTING DATA

Storage teams are at the core of ensuring optimal resources are available to meet workload demands across the organization.

Balancing these operational responsibilities with the needs of other internal groups presents a persistent challenge. Departments and teams relying on storage solutions expect systems to be scalable, reliable, and capable of handling growing data demands to maintain productivity, enable innovation, and ensure smooth operations. Meeting these diverse and increasing needs requires storage teams to be both proactive and strategic in their planning and resource allocation.



Adding to those demands, storage teams must also address the never ending demand for precise, actionable data to satisfy finance team requirements for IT financial management.

- Budgets, resource distributions, and ongoing infrastructure investments rely on trustworthy data that reflects storage utilization across environments.
- Misalignment in reporting or failure to provide clear, accurate data can lead to operational inefficiencies and frustration, making it harder for storage teams to secure the resources and support needed to perform effectively.
- Manual reporting typically can't keep pace with the demands for transparency and accuracy across departments.

Without consistent and reliable insight into storage usage, IT teams risk friction with other business units, misaligned priorities, and shrinking budgets, all of which make it challenging for them to operate efficiently.

Achieving transparency is the foundation for bridging these needs and enabling IT teams to deliver the accurate usage data necessary to align with organizational goals and meet the demands of all internal stakeholders.

Data clarity not only facilitates stronger collaboration but also ensures storage teams maintain the high performing systems required to support innovation and growth across the business.



OVERCOMING CHALLENGES WITH DATA INFRASTRUCTURE INSIGHTS

Rather than disparate manual solutions, Data Infrastructure Insights enables better governance by helping storage teams collect the data they need, supporting the journey of attribution and reporting. Data Infrastructure Insights provides detailed, real-time analytics that map storage consumption directly to business units. This makes showback and chargeback processes seamless and defensible and provides granular visibility into storage usage across the organization.

With Data Infrastructure Insights, IT storage teams are empowered with the data they need to show exact budget requirements, and provide finance teams with actionable, real-time data for true storage costs that enable them to make confident decisions to balance operational needs with strategic financial goals.



WITH DATA INFRASTRUCTURE INSIGHTS, TEAMS CAN:

01

Eliminate manual reporting

Teams will no longer have to manually gather data and create spreadsheets. Data Infrastructure Insights standardizes data across storage types and collates it into one place for easy accessibility.

02

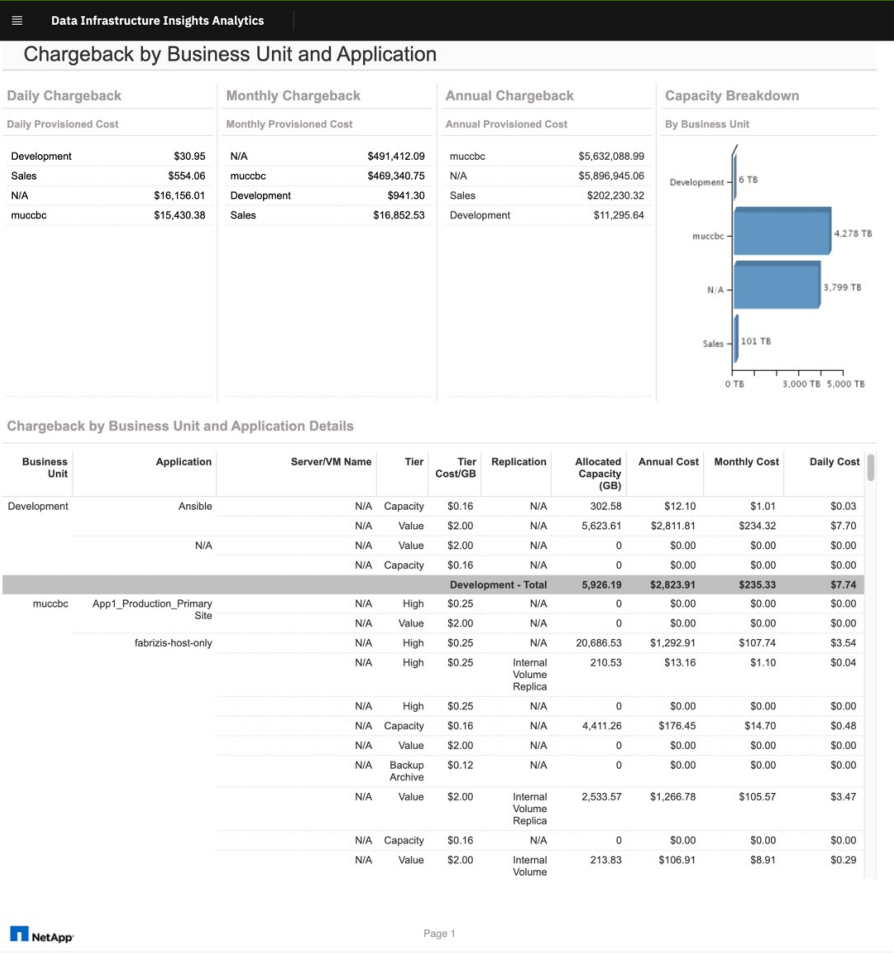
Seamlessly integrate with organizational systems

Data Infrastructure Insights seamlessly connects with existing finance and IT systems, ensuring consistency and streamlining financial workflows. This integration eliminates silos between teams, promotes collaboration across departments, and accelerates decision-making processes.

03

Predict future storage demands

Based on historical usage trends, teams can proactively budget and negotiate cost-effective storage contracts.



Chargeback report example from Data Infrastructure Insights

04

Track and analyze in real-time

Live analytics and reporting allow IT teams to get a comprehensive view of their entire hybrid ecosystem and attribute usage, identify underconsumption, and troubleshoot overconsumption.

05

Automate reporting

Build automated reports tailored to finance team needs showcasing chargeback and showback data required for IT financial management. Data Infrastructure Insights simplifies workflows, ensuring accuracy and removing time-consuming repetitive tasks.

By automating the analytics process and removing the arduous, manual oversight required by homegrown monitoring solutions, IT teams can focus their time on meeting business priorities rather than manually accounting for every usage dollar spent. Empowered with the complete data visibility needed, IT teams can easily show finance teams exactly what storage is being used by what department.



Data Infrastructure Insights dashboard example for VM overview by business entity

THE BUSINESS IMPACT OF TRANSPARENT STORAGE USAGE

Granular insights empower teams to collaborate seamlessly across departments, ensuring a balance between performance, costs, and operational objectives for shared success. By automating reporting processes, inefficiencies are eliminated, IT is freed from repetitive tasks, and errors that could compromise decision-making are significantly reduced.

With access to detailed, accurate data, businesses can justify new investments with confidence, control overspending, and align IT infrastructure decisions with long-term strategic goals. This integrated approach not only fosters transparency and collaboration but also drives smarter spending, streamlined operations, and sustainable growth.

"Before Data Infrastructure Insights, we spent days or even weeks manually compiling data in spreadsheets to calculate chargeback numbers, not to mention the challenges of modeling, validating, and getting the data into the billing system. DII has modernized and automated this process, which is saving immeasurable time getting the data into the billing system in a simple and accurate manner."

IT Analyst

for a large municipal government

CONCLUSION

Data Infrastructure Insights turns complex storage setups into accessible financial insights, empowering storage teams to accurately and precisely identify storage usage and allocate costs.

Consistent and reliable data that seamlessly feeds into existing business processes creates a bridge between finance and IT, promoting collaboration and alignment across departments.

In addition to reporting, Data Infrastructure Insights helps teams:



1. Foster transparency

By creating a transparent picture of storage usage, Data Infrastructure Insights can enable cross-department collaboration to create a shared responsibility for optimizing resource consumption across the organization.



2. Save time with automation

Automated, reliable reporting can be tailored to a finance team's needs and negate the usage of error-prone manual data collection techniques.



3. Encourage smarter spending

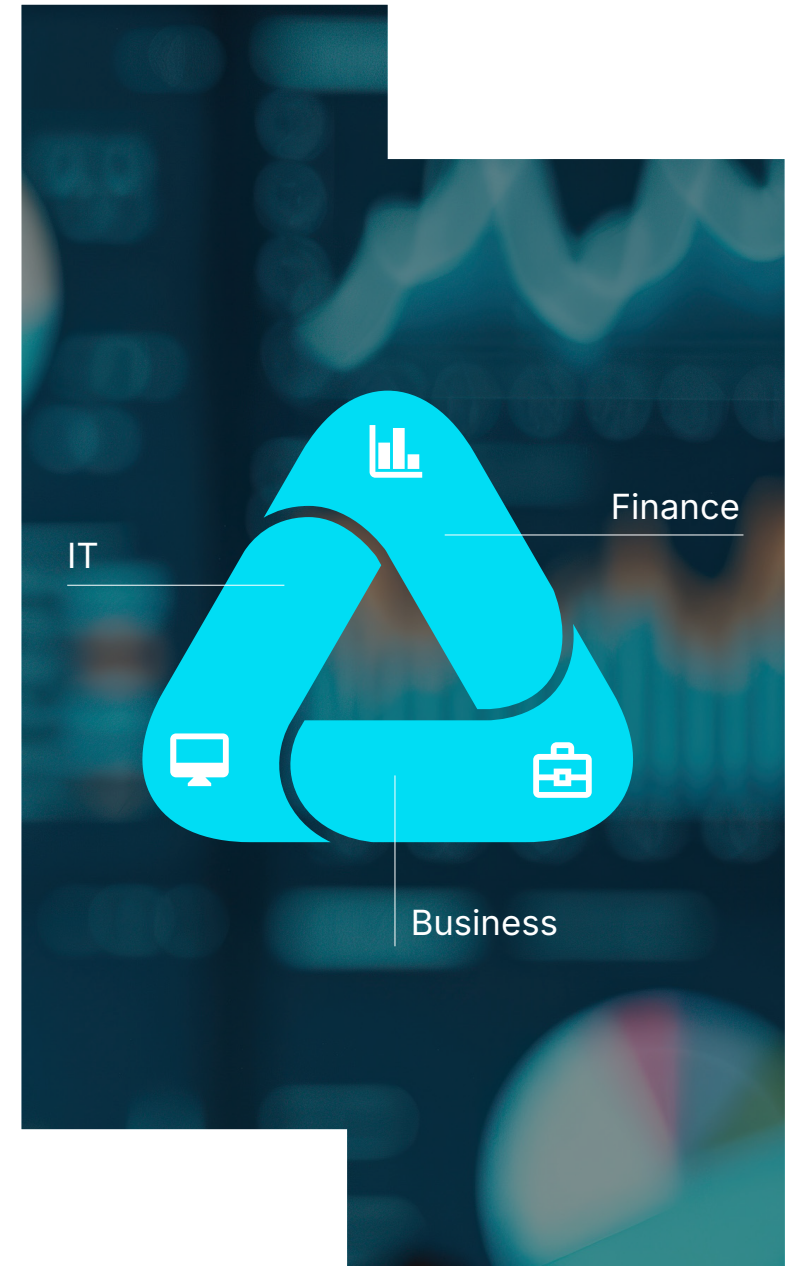
IT teams can align storage spending with strategic business objectives and easily access the data needed to justify future storage investments.

NetApp Data Infrastructure Insights provides comprehensive visibility into storage utilization across multi-cloud and on-premises environments, offering granular insights for precise cost accountability and financial transparency.

By generating accurate and defensible metrics, it simplifies chargeback and showback reporting, ensuring finance teams receive consistent, detailed data while eliminating manual inefficiencies.

With IT Financial Management (ITFM) frameworks becoming more common, there's more pressure on storage teams to deliver detailed usage data, but piecemeal, manual solutions strain IT teams and can't offer the granularity finance teams require.

The long-term benefits of investing in a smarter usage governance tool like Data Infrastructure Insights lead to deeper trust between teams, reliable financial reporting, and a clear understanding of storage usage across the organization, positioning businesses for long-term operational success and scalability.



LEARN MORE ABOUT DATA INFRASTRUCTURE INSIGHTS

Bring simplicity to your storage cost reporting, empower your IT team to confidently optimize your complex hybrid environments.

Take the first step towards smarter IT financial management today!

→ Simplify chargeback and showback

→ Discover Data Infrastructure Insights



Contact Us



About NetApp

NetApp is the intelligent data infrastructure company, combining unified data storage, integrated data services, and CloudOps solutions to turn a world of disruption into opportunity for every customer. NetApp creates silo-free infrastructure, harnessing observability and AI to enable the industry's best data management. As the only enterprise-grade storage service natively embedded in the world's biggest clouds, our data storage delivers seamless flexibility. In addition, our data services create a data advantage through superior cyber resilience, governance, and application agility. Our CloudOps solutions provide continuous optimization of performance and efficiency through observability and AI. No matter the data type, workload, or environment, with NetApp you can transform your data infrastructure to realize your business possibilities. www.netapp.com

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