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ESG storage attitudes drive need for power and rackspace consumption efficiency – Highlights from VotE: Storage

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Environmental, social and governance goals continue to affect storage infrastructure decisions. In the latest study, most respondents continue to place importance on reducing power consumption, carbon emissions and rack space consumption. The rise of all-flash storage is increasingly impacting organizations' expectations for performance and extended lifespans for storage systems.

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Introduction

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) goals continue to affect organizations' storage infrastructure decisions. Most respondents to our Voice of the Enterprise: Storage, ESG Attitudes 2023 survey continue to place importance on reducing power consumption, carbon emissions and rack space consumption. The rise of all-flash storage is also increasingly impacting organizations' expectations for performance and extended lifespans for storage systems.

THE TAKE

ESG goals continue to have a major impact on storage purchasing decisions, which not only affect current purchases but will also drive the evolution of storage systems and cloud storage services. All-flash storage systems in particular benefit from the influence of ESG because they consume less power and rack space compared with legacy systems, and they can run for a decade or more in production environments. Although many still consider all-flash storage expensive, the high costs of power and the desire to reduce carbon emissions have given flash storage an edge over disk systems, especially in environments that require higher performance and superior resiliency. Public clouds are also affecting storage decision-making: 40% of respondents strongly agree that they are moving data and workloads from on-premises datacenters to public cloud to meet ESG strategy goals.

Summary of findings

More than half (56%) of respondents say power efficiency and rack space consumption of storage systems are very important factors when making purchasing decisions. The rising costs of power and datacenter rack space have highlighted the need for efficient storage systems. Nearly half (48%) of respondents strongly agree that they are investing in both tools and human talent to meet objectives related to their ESG strategy.

Respondents cite extended array life cycles (57% "very important") as the top ESG requirement when evaluating on-premises storage assets. Nearly as many (56%) say reduced power consumption is very important. Sustainable hardware retirement and/or recycling program (49% "very important") is the third-highest-rated requirement. As carbon emission reduction requirements rise, organizations will have more reason to optimize the end of their system life cycles.

The majority of respondents are using all-flash storage for primary storage use cases. A large majority (87%) of respondents say they are using all-flash storage in their storage environments in some capacity, although only 23% are using all-flash arrays for all primary and secondary storage use cases such as backup and archiving. The largest portion of respondents (39%) say they are using all-flash storage for all production use cases, but not yet for secondary use cases. A quarter (25%) have only deployed all-flash storage for niche performance use cases. The power efficiency and storage density of flash storage have become more highlighted with rising influence of ESG on storage purchases.

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