Nominee: FalconStor

Nomination title: FreeStor

As companies look to maximise workload efficiencies and lower costs, they need the right insights and tools to make that happen. FalconStor's heterogeneous storage platform, FreeStor, is able to effectively address today's modern IT challenges, through its management interface. It gives customers the power to seamlessly migrate, recover, protect, and optimise data—on-premises and in the cloud—without tying their business to specific hardware, networks, or protocols. FreeStor provides game-changing value by offering a software management platform with intelligent and built-in analytics at the right price.

FreeStor's Unified Client Manager enables enterprises and service providers to manage and deploy predefined templates in binary format to support security requirements, end point data protection requirements, and monitoring the end point into a simple, single pane of glass. FreeStor also gives users additional features that other vendors can't provide such as snapshot and disaster recovery (DR) across platforms and arrays, providing a huge cost saving and optimising performance.

Core Platform Capabilities

FreeStor is built on five core capabilities, which provide an organisation's network with:

- **Continuity** – This warrants that data, files, applications, systems, and even entire sites are always available including mobile or web-based applications, providing a level of service that ensures both scheduled and unscheduled outages don't impact the overall service performance.

- **Optimisation** – FreeStor's optimisation with inline deduplication enables smaller footprints for increased cost savings in storing data. With FreeStor's caching capability organisations can increase the performance of applications at no additional cost

- **Migration** – A unified platform for legacy and virtual storage resources to migrate both data and workloads from legacy storage to new platforms, such as Flash, NVMe, as well as to, from, and across clouds

- **Recovery** – FreeStor automates complex recovery processes, ensuring data can be recovered before business operations are impacted, on the go

- **Analytics** – FreeStor provides Core-to-Edge real-time and historical analytics of health and performance metrics across the heterogeneous storage pool to better manage capacity, performance and availability

Intelligent Abstraction

FreeStor uses ground-breaking intelligent abstraction technology that works across all storage infrastructures - regardless of platform, type, or vendor, at a single price. This is a patented approach, allowing IT teams to gain ultra-control of their storage heterogeneously across legacy, modern and virtual environments.

Cloud Enablement

FreeStor also embodies cloud connectors for public clouds (AWS, Azure, Aliyun, Oracle), permitting users to extend their on-premises enterprises with the economic benefits of public cloud infrastructure-as-a-service .

Core-to-Edge Management from a Single Pane of Glass

FreeStor offers information from the "Core" physical resources to the "Edge" workload from a single pane of glass. This Core-to-Edge insight across locations and platforms provides health statistics, capacity utilisation, throughput and other variables to help evaluate the quality of service, diagnose bottlenecks and make informed decisions.

Users can set up customisable dashboards with both real-time and historical information. FreeStor's portal offers flexibility, it can be viewed on a tablet or smartphone with an iOS- or Android-native mobile app, and receives alerts via text/SMS, email or SNMP.

More than 3000 organisations worldwide have turned to FreeStor to address their data management needs, highlighting its success in the market. These organisations include:

- 115 of the Global Fortune 500

- 3 of the Top 5 Global Auditors

- 6 of the Top 10 Automotive Manufacturers

- 30% of the Top Pharmaceutical Companies

FreeStor has allowed these organisations to avoid vendor lock-in, by creating a virtualised layer that sits on top of disparate storage arrays. FalconStor has also implemented intelligent pricing, meaning that customers can benefit and regain control of their costs by only paying for their primary copy of data.

Sunrise Communications AG in Switzerland is a typical FreeStor customer. It is the largest private telecommunications provider in Switzerland and the leading non-incumbent operator in both the mobile and landline retail voice markets, as well as being the third-largest landline Internet provider with IPTV. Sunrise implemented the FreeStor solution to reduce and eliminate bloated software costs and remove vendor lock-in issues.

"FreeStor helps us to provide infrastructure services that support our business to provide the highest levels of availability and data security. It allows us to support the business by driving faster and lower-cost launches of new products and services," said Sandor Orban, Technical Lead Infrastructure Services at Sunrise.

In comparison to other vendors, FreeStor provides an intelligent approach to managing storage. It means organisations can:

• Adapt faster - They have the ability to provision storage in six clicks (less than one minute)

• Lower their costs – They can reduce costs by 90% by buying the same features and capacity vs. array-by-array

• Use one tool – They can review, monitor, report and analyse all their storage on a single pane of glass

• Have no surprises – They can track utilisation and predict capacity to better forecast budgets and resources

Another main differentiator between FreeStor and other vendors is that FreeStor enables the management of data heterogeneously from one GUI. This is regardless of vendor or type, in the cloud or virtual, eliminating the complexity and cost of unmanageable silos and data growth. FreeStor also has an intelligent abstraction layer that sits on top of multiple storage platforms, meaning there is a common way of managing all the different storage arrays.

Compared with other vendors, FreeStor offers:

• Intelligent Pricing – Unlike other platforms, deploying and maintaining infrastructure is expensive. FreeStor helps companies to regain control of costs by only paying for the primary instance of data.

• Scalability - FreeStor is vastly superior to its competitors when it comes to scalability and can manage up to 128 storage servers in two-node or four-node high-availability configurations.

Competitors such as Nexenta, DataCore and Maxta are only able to manage around a fifth of this figure.

•   Replication – With FreeStor's snapshot technology, customers benefit from continuous data protection. Not all SDS providers, including DataCore's product, can allow for this.

•   Deduplication – Unlike other platforms, FreeStor deduplicates data, allowing for huge cost savings on storage. This benefits end users by improving storage utilisation, reducing storage footprint, providing WAN optimised replication and data movement – reducing costs up to 95 per cent.

Why nominee should win

•   FalconStor reduces costs as users only have to pay once for their primary instance of data on FreeStor

•   FreeStor's ground-breaking intelligent abstraction approach works on a virtualised storage pool abstracted from the underlying physical storage

•   FreeStor increases productivity and business decisions for managing data through a single-pane-of-glass to provision, orchestrate and manage capacity and data services, as well as offering analytics

•   FreeStor gives users public cloud benefits by offering cloud connectors to minimise cost when storing additional copies of files for compliance and archive

•   FreeStor offers freedom for customers as it prevents storage hardware vendor lock-in