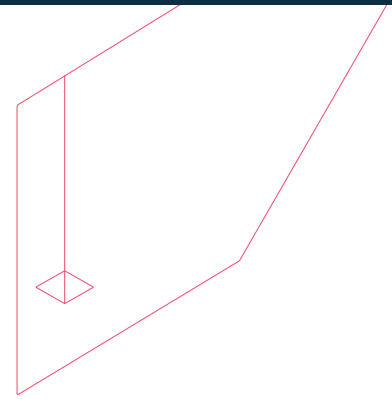


5 important questions to ask yourself before renewing your backup software

To change or not to change: Does your current backup solution meet these key criteria?



We all know that nothing ever stays the same, and this has never been truer than in today's modern IT environment. The datacenters of today are evolving and changing so much, that it can be difficult to keep pace. The cloud, multi-cloud, SaaS, containers, automation, data privacy, etc. all contribute to this increasing rate of change. When your existing backup solution comes up for maintenance renewal or a major refresh, you need to take a moment to re-evaluate if the time for change is now.

It may seem easy to simply stick with your existing backup solution provider, but if it's unable to address your needs, how "easy" is it really? In fact, Gartner predicts that by 2022, 40% of organizations will replace their backup applications from what they deployed at the beginning of 2018.¹ At the end of the day, you need to be confident the solution you choose will be ready for what your business will need over the next several years. Maintaining the status quo will not serve you or your organization in the long run.

By taking a structured approach, you can quickly identify the key considerations you need to make a smart and informed decision about your backup and recovery software solution. Evaluate the current state of your backup solution and see how new technology developments may warrant change. Pose these questions to your current backup vendors as well as those you are considering to best understand their ability to meet your needs today and tomorrow. You may be surprised by the answers!

1 Can I really manage all of our data with this solution?

Managing multiple backup and recovery point products for different data sets is a time and resource drain. Even more, it means that even simple tasks like finding the data you need are exacerbated by having to look in multiple places. Who's backing up what? What might you miss?

To be sure that the backup and recovery solution is ready to support all your data, ask these questions:

- Can it backup data wherever it exists? On-premises? In multi-cloud? Virtual? Physical? Applications? Containers?
- Can it restore data, fast, to anywhere it's needed? Across clouds? Across hypervisors?
- Does it depend on a lot of scripts or proprietary hardware in order to meet your data needs?
- Will it not only protect your entire physical, virtual, hyper-converged and cloud environment, but enable full search and recovery access using a single user interface?
- Can you use it to apply consistent policies across all of your data while segmenting data sets for storage in the infrastructure that best meets their value to your organization?
- Does it have built-in protection to make sure the backup data itself is safe from threats like ransomware and other malware?

2 Is it both simple to use and flexible?

This doesn't mean "basic" or "limited," this means "can it make the difficult tasks easy." Look for solutions that offer straightforward and automated deployment options, an intuitive user interface and the ability to define SLAs with ease. From initial purchase to the ongoing management and support, backup and recovery software should simplify your processes, not add more complexity.

¹ Gartner, "Magic Quadrant for Data Center Backup and Recovery Solutions," Santosh Rao, Chandra Mukhyala, Nik Simpson, October 10, 2019

When it comes to making your IT life easier, you need to ask these questions:

- Can you manage by exception? In other words, does the solution offer a streamlined interface enabling your team to quickly identify and respond to issues that may occur?
- Does the user experience allow you to access, manage and protect data across your entire environment, regardless of its location, application or storage type?
- Is the solution “self-driving” or do you need a lot of hands-on? How much automation and intelligence is built-into the solution? Does it leverage machine learning or AI to support more efficient operations?
- Can the solution easily manage and migrate data to, from, and within the cloud, as well as between clouds? Can the solution do it with native capabilities or must it rely on gateways and other third-party products?

Scale-out technology is another consideration when looking at simplifying the backup infrastructure. Having a solution that can support multiple deployment scenarios gives you the flexibility to install what you need, where you need it, and how you want it. This also can simplify things financially as you only need to purchase enough to cover your immediate needs with the knowledge that you can seamlessly scale the infrastructure as needed.

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Gartner, “Magic Quadrant for Data Center Backup and Recovery Solutions,” October 10, 2019

3 Is your solution “future proof”?

Technology, and business requirements, change fast. Your data protection needs today won’t likely be the same three years from now or even one year from now. Just think of all the new workloads and applications you’ve adopted in the past three years or how your infrastructure has changed through hyperconvergence, the introduction of containers, or your shift to the cloud.

While it can be hard to predict what your environment may need in the coming years, you can opt to select a backup and recovery solution that stays one step ahead. As you anticipate changes in your infrastructure and application environment, ask these questions:

- Is the solution truly technology agnostic? Can it support heterogeneous and hybrid environments? Or is it limited to only a few options?
- Does it offer industry-leading integration with a wide selection of storage arrays, storage platforms and cloud storage options? This integration can help drive snapshot-based protection, replication, and rapid disaster recovery.
- Does it offer native cloud integration with public clouds including Amazon AWS, Microsoft Azure, Oracle Cloud and Google Cloud? Or does it need another 3rd party product or separate, expensive cloud gateway?
- Does it provide extensive APIs to enable deeper integrations across your data and applications? Can it plug into your other tools like ServiceNow, Splunk, VMware vRealize, or vCloud Director?

Addressing these criteria will ensure that you have the ability to easily move your data or adopt new infrastructure as your business goals and supporting technologies continue to change.

READ [Simple, cost-effective, modern data backup and recovery: How to have it all >](#)

4 Does the math work?

Let’s face it, cost is always a key consideration. When looking at the renewal contract for your backup and recovery solution – be sure to think about all the elements that go into its total cost of ownership. The true costs of a solution aren’t always apparent, be sure to ask these questions:

- How much time is my team really spending on keeping my backup solution running? Consider how much time your team spends on backup and recovery management, including daily and weekly administration, patches and refreshes, and managing support issues. If you use multiple products that number can grow exponentially.

- Is there 3rd party or proprietary technology required? Calculate the infrastructure requirements for your data protection solution. Can you easily scale and add capacity as you need it, or must you predict your storage needs and risk over provisioning?
- What is the downtime risk of your solution? How long might it take you to recover during a downtime event? What will that cost your business?
- Can you easily move data between storage tiers – including tape and the cloud – based on data policies and service level requirements? Is the data being natively deduplicated at the source and target to further reduce storage needs? Does deduplication or cloud storage access require additional hardware?
- Can you change vendors for your storage, compute, or cloud? Are there dependencies with the backup to any of those? How would a change to any of those affect your backup?

Renewal costs are merely the tip of the iceberg, be sure to study all financial elements related to each solution you consider. What else is required to keep your existing backup solution viable? Is there another point product needed? Special hardware? Other licensing? It's important to have the complete picture when looking at the costs of continuing to prop up your existing solution or evaluating a new one.

5 Ready for change? What are the risks?

If you're not happy with your answers to the questions outlined above, you're ready to change your backup solution. But what about the risks involved with making a switch? Change is always a little nerve-wracking, especially when a misstep may mean downtime or data loss. Before taking this final step, be sure any solutions you evaluate have given you satisfactory answers for the prior questions. Lastly, when it comes to the migration itself, ask these questions:

- How fast can the new solution be ready to backup your data?
- How long will it take to transition your existing backup workloads to the new solution? Is that process automated or will it be manually intensive?
- How much of your team's time is required? Are there additional services or training needed to be ready? What are the associated costs? If you're short-staffed, is there an option to have the new vendor manage your environment remotely for you?
- What's the full cost of your current solution, including new hardware, software, and installation? What do those costs look like as you scale? What about next month? Next quarter? Next year? Do those costs change?
- What's the customer support experience like? What are their SLAs? How easy are they to engage for all of your sites and team members globally?
- Lastly, what do you do about the old backup data? Is there a way to migrate important backups to the new solution?

When evaluating a new solution, you want to be sure that it isn't just the "new shiny thing" – you want to make sure it can meet your needs today and tomorrow. You need it to be flexible, cost-effective, scalable, automated, and (most importantly) proven.

By weighing your options carefully during this important decision, and you'll realize the simplicity, lower cost and modern features your organization's data requires. Even better, you'll be ready for whatever tomorrow holds for your data.

Be ready to backup and recover all your data – whatever it is, wherever it lives. [Visit commvault.com/backup-and-recovery](https://www.commvault.com/backup-and-recovery) >