RETHINKING DATA PROTECTION
IN THE AGE OF TOTAL DATA DEPENDENCY

How MSPs Can Profit With Total Data Protection Solutions

datto

datto
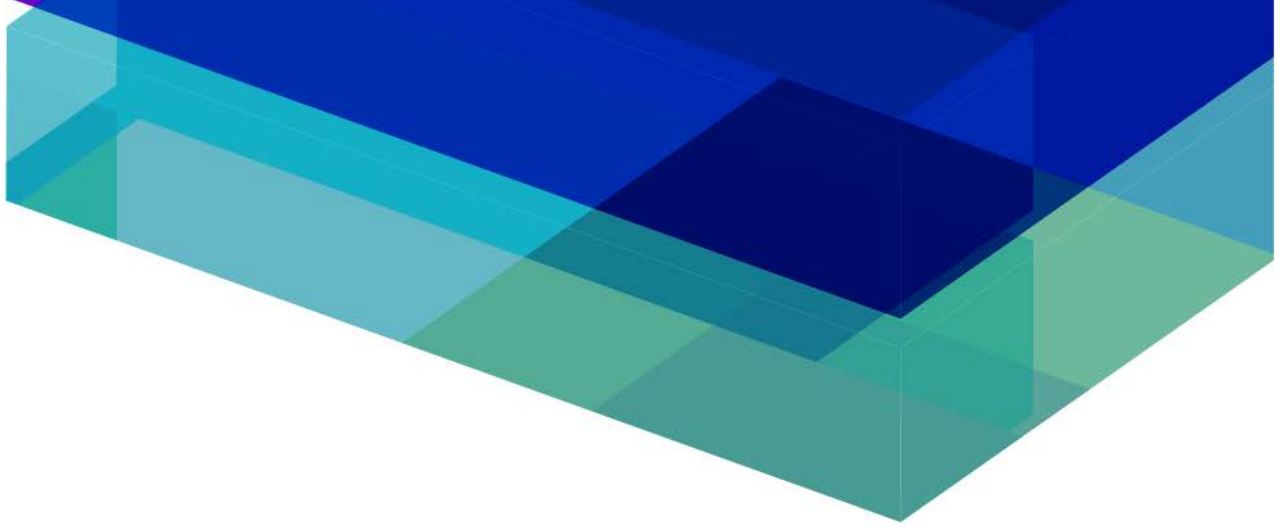
HOW MSPS CAN PROFIT WITH TOTAL DATA PROTECTION SOLUTIONS

The term "big data" may be overused – but something big is going on.

The big thing is this: digital information has become the lifeblood of every business – and an increasingly important part of the value of all products and services.

From the obvious, like law offices and engineering design firms, to the surprising, like construction companies and craft beer makers, businesses large and small are discovering that they have no business without their data. And these examples are not hypothetical; they're straight from the managed service providers (MSPs) interviewed for this eBook.

Advancing technology is driving this "perfect storm" of data. Technology is centralizing in some ways, like cloud/SaaS; decentralizing in others, like smartphones and tablets. And it's always getting easier to use – so it's used more, and is throwing off a lot more data. Did you read the part about the perfect storm?

But "easy" for end users often means greater complexity for the MSPs who serve them. For example, technology evolution over the last five years has changed the data protection risks facing MSPs' customers in ways that many customers don't fully realize. That's putting more and more businesses at risk. Inevitably, systems will fail. Inevitably, data will be lost.

This eBook shows how MSPs can come to their rescue. It explores the magnitude of data protection challenges in the emerging data-dependent business era, along with a new generation of Total Data Protection solutions. These solutions safeguard data everywhere it lives – on-premise, in virtualized environments, in the cloud, and even in third-party SaaS applications.

Through Total Data Protection solutions, MSPs have an opportunity to help customers navigate and succeed in the age of data dependency.

RETHINKING BUSINESS DATA

Where do an MSP's customers do business? Everywhere!

Once upon a time, your customers conducted business in their offices on PCs or at their customer sites, bringing relevant information back to the office for data entry.

Now, smartphones and tablets let customers do business anywhere and everywhere. Data is entered in the moment, shuttling to and fro between mobile devices in the field and server-based applications back in the office or the cloud.

The magnitude of this data transformation is evident in two client scenarios provided by MSP Central Pa Technologies.

Joe Wright Jr., President and co-founder of Central Pa, talks about one of his clients, a cell-tower inspection company. Once, paper reports were the primary output. Now, smartphone or tablet photos document the condition of towers in the wilds of, say, Minnesota, and reports are filed from the field. As a result, this particular client went from generating 250 gigabytes in eight years to more than 1 terabyte in 2013 alone, its first full year as Central Pa's client.

As another example, Central Pa was called in last October to take over IT infrastructure for a multi-site ophthalmology practice. Between HIPAA rules, doctors starting to use iPads, new electronic medical record (EMR) software and lack of IT forethought, data proliferation was out of control. "It's more than just proliferation," Wright says: "If this client's EMR system goes down, they are pretty much out of business."

When businesses depend on data to this extent – and most now do – their challenges extend beyond the data itself. Data won't keep an MSP customer in business if there is no IT infrastructure to make use of it. That's why Total Data Protection solutions must keep your data safe and

also protect your infrastructure, so when something goes wrong you can continue your business – not just restore your files.

Wright's restored many businesses in a long career. So you can hear the delight in his voice when he describes bare metal restores without re-installing operating system or application software, or re-configuring custom settings – or anything else. "Normally, that stuff all goes away. But when I do a restore, the most I have to do is enter the Microsoft product keys. From there, everything's good." Datto Inc. is Wright's Total Data Protection provider.

> *Total Data Protection solutions must keep your data safe and also protect your infrastructure, so when something goes wrong you can continue your business.*
>
> *- Joe Wright Jr.,*
> *President and co-founder of Central Pa*

With Datto, Businesses-Critical Data and Infrastructure Are Always Available

Businesses that depend on data and always-on system availability demand Total Data Protection (TDP). Today, for thousands of MSPs and their many more thousands of business customers, Datto is the leading and fastest-growing Total Data Protection Platform provider. With the Datto TDP Platform, you can:

- **Protect data on a diverse range of new devices and environments (including cloud and SaaS apps)**

- **Utilize image-based backups that include all the business data plus the customer's IT environment**

- **Keep customers' data safe and also protect their infrastructure, so when something goes wrong they can continue doing business – not just restore their files**

RETHINKING TECHNOLOGY ARCHITECTURE

Technology paradigms come and go – and sometimes come back again. So it is with the cloud.

While data is spreading out among dozens of forms and formats throughout your clients' businesses (PCs, servers, smartphones, tablets, clouds, SaaS apps), it's also centralizing. Tablets and smartphones behave in the same way as the mainframe era's "dumb" terminals when it comes to business applications. Sure, they enable data to empower business everywhere – but they act only as pure "client" front-ends to applications running on a server somewhere.

Increasingly, that somewhere is the cloud.

While many businesses still prefer to operate their own servers and networks (or have MSPs do it for them), cloud adoption is on the rise – and will only accelerate, says Matthew Hahn, Vice President of Network Services at SWK Technologies, Inc., an MSP headquartered in Livingston, NJ.

"Today, it's all mobile workforces. Many people don't even work out of a standard office today," says Hahn. "As a result, they need access to the resources on their network, whether it be line of business applications, collaborative documents, or email. There needs to be a way for them to constantly be connected."

Thus mobile clients are pushing businesses to put more and more data into the cloud, or in SaaS applications, because this approach makes it more easily accessible for mobile devices.

But it raises new challenges for Total Data Protection, because clouds are not magical infrastructures. They're prone to the same flaws inherent in all IT. But even MSP customers who understand the importance of backing up their own systems often fail to grasp the risks they're building by migrating to clouds or SaaS applications without commensurate backup and business continuity plans.

So MSPs who are putting more infrastructure in the cloud – and most are – need Total Data Protection programs that integrate backup of those clouds, or SaaS applications. Otherwise, you're betting more of your business, and your customers' businesses, on unprotected infrastructure.

We recommend you take five minutes – right now – for the following exercise. Open a document and just start writing down all the locations where you, or your customers, have business data. And ask yourself, "How is our data being safeguarded in *each* of those locations?"

Datto Protects Customers' Data Everywhere it Lives and Everywhere They Do Business

With customer's data living in different devices and different environments, MSPs have to cast a wider net than ever before to truly ensure data protection and business continuity. Through its Total Data Protection (TDP) Platform, Datto uniquely:

- **Enables you to backup customer data everywhere it lives and everywhere they do business – on-premise, in virtualized environments, in the cloud and even in SaaS applications like Salesforce.com and Google Docs**

- **Allows rapid restore of any and all data and systems, from anywhere, in an hour max**

- **Manages backup and recovery across various environments easily with minimal staff time via a unified "one pane of glass" interface**

RETHINKING CLOUD BACKUP

Cloud storage and backup are causing a critical rethink of business continuity approaches – and are now required components of a Total Data Protection solution.

But there are clouds – and then there are purpose-built clouds obsessed over from the first stroke of the design pen to:

- **Create extremely fast backups**
- **Deliver lightning-fast restores**
- **Eliminate data loss**
- **Make the entire backup and restore process simple and easy**
- **Do it all for one simple price**
- **And provide MSPs a rock-solid source of recurring revenue and profit growth**

General-purpose clouds are designed with many functions in mind. But clouds that form the backbone of a Total Data Protection solution should be designed solely to answer one question: How do we protect business data and bring it back as quickly as possible?

SWK's Hahn uses just such a purpose-built cloud as a key element in a hybrid (on-site and in-the-cloud) Total Data Protection solution deployed for multiple customers. Hahn notes: "General-purpose clouds such as AWS, Azure or Rackspace can't hold a candle to this infrastructure when it comes to rapidly virtualizing a customer's environment. When you are spinning up images for emergency purposes, you need to allocate incredible resources. We use a cloud with the resources and horsepower to put the pedal to the metal when they need to virtualize environments in their cloud."

In addition, Hahn likes the "one-price" retention-based pricing approach of his Total Data Protection solution – and so do his customers. "It works great for our customers because they know exactly how much they're going to spend every month," says Hahn.

That pricing approach also leads to recurring MSP revenue and greater profitability. "We've saved our clients a lot of lost revenue and profit from downtime and lost business opportunities – and at the same time generated recurring revenue and increased our own profitability," explains Kersti McDonald of Western Canada's SysGen Solutions Group. "We've brought 50 clients to our Total Data Protection solution over the past year, and that's a solid source of recurring revenue."

Wright points to the obsessive commitment of support staff as key to Total Data Protection – and his own good night's sleep. He says every time he calls for support from his Total Data Protection provider, a live person answers. And only one time was the support rep unable to immediately answer. "I called around midnight, and they had not encountered my problem before. So they built a test environment that night. They were able to replicate the problem and tell us how to fix it. By 6 o'clock the next morning I had the answer," Wright explains.

Business Continuity with Datto Has Never Been So Easy, Reliable or Profitable

With its Total Data Protection (TDP) Platform, Datto has re-imagined business continuity. Should a customer experience server failure, or the like, its systems may be virtualized instantly to avoid data loss. So customers can continue to operate "business as usual" – and so you have the time to fix their server issues without compromising data or incurring downtime. With the Datto TDP Platform:

- **Backups can be virtualized either locally on Datto appliances or remotely in Datto's secure cloud, in mere seconds, with the click of a button**

- **Datto's advanced web interface allows for configuration of CPU and memory resources. Network resources can also be configured dynamically, allowing for changes to be made without restarting the virtual machine**

- **Even while virtualized, systems can continue a normal backup schedule to both the Datto appliance and Datto's secure cloud**

RETHINKING SECURITY

It turns out that Total Data Protection solutions have a "side effect": they're the ultimate security solution, too.

But don't be too surprised. Total Data Protection platforms were conceived with laser focus on the challenge of ensuring your customers' business data is always protected and their business continuity is always guaranteed. Malware, hacker attacks, and (most commonly) human error are simply three of many "disasters" they defend against.

Several technical factors come together to enable a Total Data Protection solution to be the fastest, safest way to return a breached customer environment to normal operation – and some MSPs have begun to notice and make it a key selling point.

- **Total Data Protection requires image-based backups that include all the business data plus the customer's IT environment**
- **They combine use of on-site or virtual appliances and a purpose-built, secure cloud, always storing backup images in an archival format (ZFS) that is essentially invulnerable to malware**
- **Total Data Protection includes tools that let you pinpoint the moment of attack or infection**
- **By using Inverse Chain Technology™, they ensure that backup images stored before the attack are wholly uncorrupted**
- **End-to-end 256-bit AES encryption safeguards data in transit and at rest.**
- **Security features such as encryption simplify compliance with regulations (e.g., HIPAA and PCI)**

Thus many MSPs address virus, ransomware and other attacks by rolling back a customer's entire environment to the last uncorrupted backup image. A bare metal restore from their Total Data Protection platform guarantees a clean result.

Says Hahn: "The security aspect has been one of the biggest points of our business continuity and disaster recovery solution." SWK takes backup images every 15 minutes. So despite multiple cryptolocker attacks, SWK's clients using Total Data Protection have never lost more than 14 minutes worth of productivity.

"We've definitely sold Total Data Protection as primarily for backup and business continuity, but also as a failover or secondary security backup," adds SysGen's McDonald. "The way it functions, you're able to just turn back time. It's a lot easier than relying on any other application or software to get back your uncorrupted data."

With Datto, Total Data Protection Means a New Level of Security

The leading provider of Total Data Protection (TDP) solutions, Datto adds a powerful layer of security as a key safeguard in its TDP Platform. With Datto, you can:

- **Implement image-based backups as often as customer need dictates – and include their business data plus their IT environment**
- **Pinpoint the moment a customer suffers an attack or infection**
- **Roll back the customer's entire environment to the last uncorrupted image**
- **Enable rapid return to normal operations with only limited loss of productivity and downtime**
- **Encrypt data in transit and at rest**
- **Simplify compliance with regulations such as HIPAA**

RETHINKING DATA PROTECTION

Data dependency is rising for all businesses, of all sizes. Their technology options are proliferating and their IT architectures are evolving. This means data protection must be rethought, and broadened to encompass IT infrastructure – especially for the small- and medium-sized businesses who are moving most rapidly to cloud solutions.

Consequently, emerging Total Data Protection solutions must:

- **Safeguard data on a diverse range of new devices and environments (including cloud and SaaS apps)**
- **Guarantee data is always available – because you can't do business without it**
- **Use image-based backup approaches in order to capture the IT environment along with the data**
- **Assure extremely fast and easy restores, because disruption is inevitable**
- **Simplify the lives of MSPs while providing a long-term source of recurring revenue**

Listening to the MSPs interviewed for this paper, it's easy to conclude that Total Data Protection solutions meeting these criteria will emerge as a critical advantage for the businesses that deploy them. For example, McDonald tells of a flood that closed downtown Calgary two years ago. SysGen clients using the MSP's Total Data Protection solution were back in business in 24 hours or less. But it took four days, on average, for SysGen's other clients to get back up and running.

At Central Pa, the MSP won't even accept a managed services contract unless the customer agrees to use its Total Data Protection solution.

The conclusion has become clear for these MSPs: the age of total data dependency demands Total Data Protection.

ABOUT DATTO

At a time when customers' data lives in and flows freely from on-premise servers and systems, virtualized environments, clouds and third-party SaaS applications, data protection and recovery take on a whole new meaning. For MSPs, this is both an unprecedented challenge – and an opportunity to generate recurring revenue from existing and new clients. Now, Datto enables you to add even more value to customer relationships – with the first Total Data Protection Platform. Available exclusively through Datto partners, thousands of MSPs rely on the Datto TDP Platform to:

• **Backup customer data everywhere it lives and everywhere they do business – on-premise, in virtualized environments, cloud-stored, and even data in SaaS applications like Salesforce.com and Google Docs**

• **Restore any and all data and infrastructure, from anywhere, in an hour max**

• **Manage backup and recovery across various environments easily with minimal staff time via Datto's unified "one pane of glass" interface**

• **Help customers manage costs while growing MSPs' own revenue through simple, fixed pricing that doesn't change during the course of a contract**

• **Enable the agility, flexibility and assurance that are the cornerstones of business today**

The Datto Total Data Protection Platform. It's data protection, fully extended across today's digital ecosystem and available exclusively through MSPs. For more information, **visit Datto.com.** □