

Copy data management (CDM) is an approach to reducing storage consumption that involves eliminating the unnecessary duplication of production data.

Backup software and other enterprise applications operate independently, often creating multiple copies of the same data. Redundant copies of the same data, however, can waste storage space, slow network performance, and make accessing or restoring mission-critical data more difficult. CDM software can help eliminate those problems by reducing the number of full copies using data virtualization.

# **How CDM works**

Most copy data management software works by creating one full virtual copy of the data. When unique changes are made to the production environment, the software creates and stores a <u>snapshot</u> of incremental changes at the block level. The snapshot mechanism creates a read/write <u>differencing disk</u> with a parent-child relationship to the backup copy without creating an entire new copy. Because <u>write operations</u> are not directed to the backup copy, administrators do not have to worry about the contents of the primary backup being changed by accident. Reducing the number of full copies also reduces the chance of server sprawl and has a positive effect on costs, because valuable storage space is not taken up with unnecessary copies of data.



I Jason Buffington, a principal analyst at Enterprise Strategy Group, explains the importance of copy data management. The term *copy data management* was made popular by virtualization software vendor Actifio. Actifio captures production data, keeps a <u>golden master</u> current and spawns unlimited virtual copies for use whenever a copy of production data is needed. In a development, analytics or test environment, this approach is especially important; it means that the development, analytics or test environment can be based on an exact replica of the organization's production data without unnecessarily consuming storage space before it is needed.

#### Why copy data management is important

As storage capacity expands, it throws the need for copy data management into sharp relief. Data is growing at a steady rate, and unnecessary copies of data take up much-needed storage space. Storage virtualization has benefited backup and recovery, but the creation and storage of extra copies of data can be a pain point.

Storage snapshots are used in both traditional data backup and CDM, and some organizations consider snapshots as a replacement for backup. However, since both snapshots and backup often give peace of mind through redundancy, CDM may not serve the same purpose.

#### How to find the right CDM product

While some features and capabilities are consistent across copy data management platforms, products vary among vendors, and some CDM products may be a better fit for particular organizations than others.

Leading CDM vendors include Actifio Inc., Catalogic Software, Cohesity Inc., Commvault Systems Inc., Delphix Corp. and Rubrik Inc.



Currently, copy data management vendors are releasing products that have many of the same features and capabilities. Most CDM vendors sell products that can import data from production platforms into storage managed by their software. Others allow data management across different traditional storage products from other vendors. All mainstream CDM products work with physical and virtual sources, and some offer appliances for <u>secondary storage</u>. As the market matures, more vendors are adding public cloud capabilities to their products.

# The future of the copy data management market

Confronting data sprawl is becoming more of a priority, and the issue of data growth is not going away any time soon. According to a 2017 study by Taneja Group, more than 30% of companies are considering or implementing CDM products.

As vendors add more features to copy data management software to confront common data protection and backup concerns, that number could continue to grow.

This was last updated in October 2017

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- Why copy data management is important

- What to ask copy data management vendors
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# **Related Terms**

#### direct-attached storage (DAS)

Direct-attached storage (DAS) is a type of storage that is attached directly to a computer without going through a network. See complete definition 10

#### email archiving

Email archiving is a systematic approach to saving and protecting the data contained in emails to enable fast retrieval. See complete definition 10

# Terabyte (TB)

A terabyte (TB) is a unit of digital data that is equal to about 1 trillion bytes. See complete definition 1

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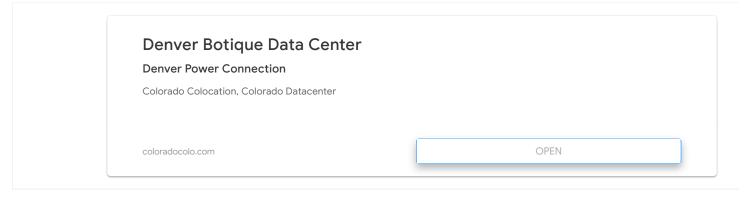
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