

Veritas Lays Out Its Own Agenda for Enterprise Data Management at Veritas Vision

This year's Veritas [Vision 2016](#) conference held a lot of intrigue for me. The show itself was not new. The Vision show has been an ongoing event for years though this was the first time in more than a decade that Veritas was free to set its own agenda for the entire show. Rather the intrigue was in what direction it would take going forward. This Veritas did by communicating that it plans to align its product portfolio and strategy to deliver on an objective that has, to date, eluded enterprise organizations and vendors alike for at least two decades: enterprise data management.

Veritas' intent to deliver comprehensive data management to enterprise organizations is likely to be welcomed by executives in large organizations but also viewed with a certain amount of apprehension. This is not the first time that a major technology provider has cast a vision to bring all data under centralized management as providers such as EMC and IBM have both done so in the past. However, each of these prior attempts resulted in outcome that may be best classified as somewhere between abject failure and total disaster.

Now Veritas stands before leaders in enterprise organizations and asks them to believe that it can accomplish what no prior technology provider has successfully been able to deliver. To its credit, it does have more proof points to support its claim that it can succeed where its competitors failed. Here's why.

1. ***Veritas probably protects more enterprise data using NetBackup than all of its competitors combined.*** This breadth of enterprise backup data under NetBackup's

purview puts Veritas in a unique position as compared to its competitors to understand more than just how much data resides in their archival, backup, and production data stores. It also gives NetBackup unparalleled visibility into the data stored in these various storage silos using the metadata that it has captured and stored over the years. Using this metadata, Veritas can create an Information Map that informs organizations where their data resides as well as provide insight into what information these data stores contain and how frequently the data has been accessed. This breadth and quantify of historical information contained in NetBackup is insight that Veritas' competitors simply lack.

2. ***Veritas (for the most part) remains a pure software play which aligns with the shift to software defined data centers that enterprise want to make.*** While Veritas admittedly does sell a NetBackup appliance (and it sells a lot of them,) there has been almost no discussion from Veritas executives at this event about expanding its hardware presence. Just the opposite, in fact. Veritas wants to boldly go into the software defined storage (SDS) software market and equip both cloud providers and enterprise organizations with the SDS software that they need to first create and then centrally manage a heterogeneous storage infrastructure. While I can envision Veritas building upon the success it has experienced with its NetBackup appliance in order to create a turnkey SDS software appliance, I see that more as a demand imposed upon them by their current and prospective customer base than a strategic initiative that they will aggressively seek to promote or grow.
3. ***The technologies as well as the political structure within data centers have sufficiently evolved and matured to permit the adoption of an enterprise data management platform.*** 20 years ago, 10 years ago, and even a couple of years ago, enterprise organizations simply were not internally technically or politically

ready for an initiative as aggressive as enterprise data management. The climate on both of those fronts has changed. On the technical side, the advent of flash, hyper-converged infrastructures (HCI), and software-defined flash have contributed to enterprise organizations getting more performance and consolidating their infrastructure at ever lower costs. As these infrastructure consolidations have occurred, IT head counts have remained flat or even declined leaving them no time to pursue strategic initiatives such as implementing an enterprise data management available from third parties. However, by using Veritas NetBackup as the foundation for an enterprise data management platform, enterprise organizations can lay the groundwork to achieve this strategic initiative using the people and resources they already possess.

Veritas outlined an aggressive and potentially a controversial vision for its own future as a software company as its plan is not without many potential pitfalls. Even as I sat through the multiple briefings at Vision, I have many reservations about the viability of its plan on its ability to gather information as comprehensively throughout organizations as it hopes to do as well as delivering an SDS software solution that works the way enterprises will need it to work for them in production to rely upon it.

That said, Veritas sits in the catbird seat from an enterprise perspective. I have to agree with its internal assessment that it is better positioned than any other enterprise software company to deliver on the vision as it has currently laid it out. The real task before Veritas now is to begin to execute upon this vision and show some successes in the field which it appears it has already begun to do. If that is the case, enterprise organizations may see the first vestiges of an enterprise data management platform that actually delivers on what it promises sooner than later.