

PRODUCT FLASH

IBM Announces Software for Continuous Data Protection for Files

Michelle Zou
Rhoda Phillips

Natalya Yezhkova

IN THIS PRODUCT FLASH

This IDC Flash analyzes IBM's announcement of Tivoli Continuous Data Protection (CDP) for Files, and the impact such products will have on the backup and recovery software market.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

On August 26, 2005, IBM announced its Tivoli Continuous Data Protection for Files software. Over the past year, CDP has garnered a lot of attention in the market. A number of vendors have begun offering solutions that can back up data continuously as changes occur, either at the block or file level, and provide the capability to restore data from any point in time much faster than with traditional backup solutions (see *Continuous Data Protection: Is This a Revolution in Storage?*, IDC #33733, July 2005).

IBM's new software provides CDP at the file level for Windows applications. It combines data replication and traditional backup technologies in one product, and can be configured for either continuous or scheduled protection. For important files that require continuous protection, when a file is saved or closed, Tivoli Continuous Data Protection for Files creates a full copy of the file on the local machine (laptop, desktop, or file server) immediately. If the network is available, it instantly sends another copy to a remote file server. If the network is unavailable, the files are held in cache; changes are transferred to the server once the network becomes available. The files can also be sent to a removable device such as a USB or floppy disk, or a Tivoli Storage Manager (TSM)-installed backup server. All other files configured for scheduled protection are backed up incrementally at the scheduled time to a file server and use a change journal to discover the changed files quickly, without scanning the file server.

IBM officials said that the software is designed to be user friendly, easy to install, and simple to use. User self-recovery is a growing issue for companies as they try to improve service levels without increasing IT staff workloads. Because all of the files are in native file format and Tivoli Continuous Data Protection for Files keeps all versions, end users can recover files on their own by restoring the version of the files they need. The software allows files to be recovered immediately from any previously saved versions, before they were corrupted or accidentally deleted.

Tivoli Continuous Data Protection for Files can be used as a standalone product or as a complement to IBM TSM. It is priced at \$35 per laptop or desktop, and \$995 per server processor, and will be generally available this month. Primary target customers for this new product are mobile users, small and midsize businesses (SMBs), and departments in large organizations. IBM says it plans to add Unix, Linux, and Mac support and offer broader application support in future releases.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

IBM Tivoli Continuous Data Protection for Files provides real-time protection for files stored on desktops, laptops, and file servers. It will compete with other CDP products that protect desktops and laptops, and with Microsoft System Center Data Protection Manager (DPM), which protects Windows file servers (see *Microsoft Officially Enters the Backup and Recovery Software Market*, IDC #33723, July 2005). Microsoft DPM's approach, different from Tivoli Continuous Data Protection for Files, combines replication and point-in-time snapshot technologies to back up data at scheduled times. Data can then be recovered from those snapshots. Microsoft DPM does not capture changes made to files stored on desktops or laptops if the data is not saved on file servers.

IDC's research shows that many end users have heard about CDP but do not have a clear understanding of what it is. We believe that established vendors such as IBM and Symantec/VERITAS (which announced a public beta for CDP software this spring) that offer CDP features will be investing more efforts in educating end users about CDP methodology and benefits, which may help drive CDP adoption.

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Filing Information: September 2005, IDC #34019, Volume: 1

Storage Software: Product Flash