STRONGLINK

WHITEPAPER

Non-Disruptive Technology Refresh

StrongLink's metadata-driven policy engines automate management of data and storage resources

The Problem

Every organization today struggles with technology refresh: a cyclical replacement of older technology for newer technology within the IT infrastructure. In the case of storage, the tech refresh cycle can be particularly painful both from a cost perspective and from the standpoint of practical data management.

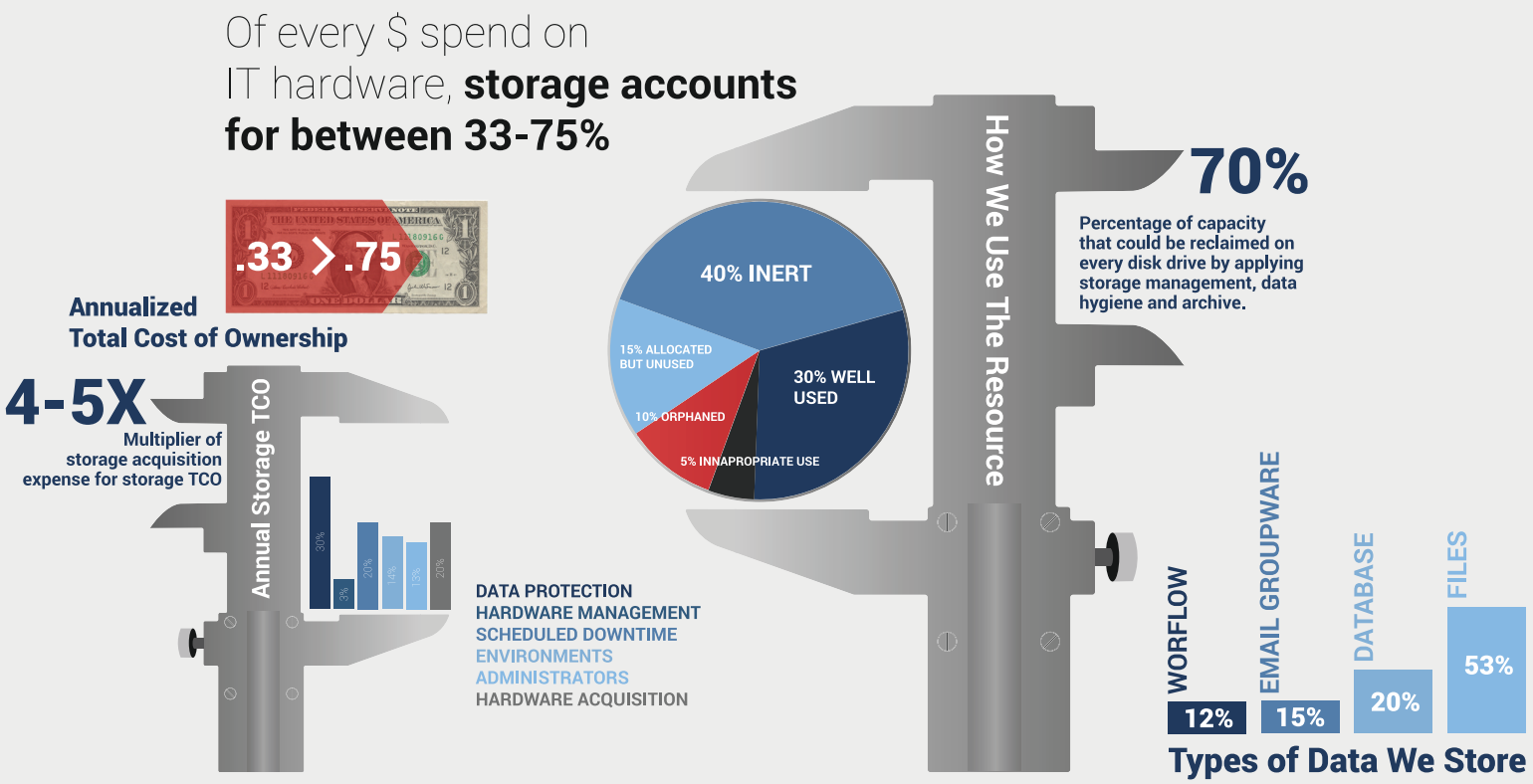
High cost has long been a challenge in storage technology refresh planning. Organizations already spend between $0.33 and $0.70 of every dollar in their annual IT hardware budgets on storage technology. Many times, new gear is sold with a three-year warranty and maintenance agreement that, if planners decide to keep storage in service for another two years, it can cost as much to renew as it does to buy a new platform entirely. And, of course, technology is constantly changing, so realizing the best performance, density, capacity, or functional capabilities often requires the addition of new devices to the infrastructure. That creates potential issues of compatibility and interoperability as well as cost.

From a practical perspective, tech refresh represents a challenge for data management. Any time that data is moved, especially between technology silos or between on-premises storage and cloud storage, there is a risk of lost or misplaced data. As data is moved, users or applications can lose track of their files, which interrupts workflows. The file movement that is part of the refresh process can also modify data itself, changing its metadata references so that it is much harder to identify and to manage by automated means.

Our customers have shared their war stories about the storage technology refresh cycle. They have made it clear that they need new tools that will simplify the technology refresh cycle by enabling automated data movement between infrastructure components in a way that doesn't interrupt users or cause downtime. They also want to bend the cost curve of storage generally by keeping older gear in

service longer, even as new technologies are deployed. That requires an autonomous data management technology that is vendor agnostic – and that works with the latest gear just as efficiently as it supports legacy platforms, all in a unified enterprise infrastructure.

StrongBox Data Solutions has responded with StrongLink, a software solution that delivers the non-disruptive tech refresh that our customers are seeking. StrongLink provides autonomous data management, powered by StrongLink's policy engines.



This advanced technology simplifies both the storage infrastructure refresh process and the management of data across legacy and newer storage platforms regardless of their physical location or storage type/ vendor. With StrongLink, you can pursue the hardware options you prefer, keep older technologies in play while deploying new technologies selectively, with assurance that your data will remain accessible and protected.

With StrongLink non-disruptive technology refresh capabilities:

- Your data is always online and synchronized, so there are no scheduled outages required to accomplish data movements across existing and new platforms.
- Legacy hardware can continue to deliver return on investment even as new technology is added to your infrastructure to achieve performance or capacity objectives
- Data consistency is maintained and metadata can still be used to support lifecycle management, archiving, and data agility
- Data provenance is enforced with verification and auditability, ensuring regulatory and legal compliance, and data itself remains immediately accessible to applications and end users authorized to use it.

To the IT planner, StrongLink is the solution for future-proofing storage infrastructure. With StrongLink, you are in control of your technology refresh cycle. You can avoid technology dead ends and lock-ins because StrongLink can manage data across heterogeneous platforms effortlessly, whether the platforms are on-premises or in the cloud.

StrongLink's metadata-driven policy engines automate management of the data and storage resources so administrators can optimize data placement and accessibility simply and affordably without disrupting user access. Deployment is a snap and organizations begin realizing benefits right away, as they system describes and indexes all data hosted on ALL storage regardless of platform or location. As your storage environment is changed and refreshed, data itself can be automatically migrated to the new infrastructure, in accordance with policies, or retained on legacy platforms if that is your choice. Users and applications have uninterrupted access to the files throughout this migration. Their files are just there, at the mount point they expect, even though the data has moved from one store to another.

The payoff is immense and immediate. Technology refresh becomes a simple and straightforward task for IT planners and administrators. In addition to minimizing the risk of hardware-related data access and sharing issues, StrongLink also protects you from the risk of early technology obsolescence. You can even try the latest storage technologies from innovative start-up vendors that you might otherwise have had to side-step in favor of less innovative offerings from established storage vendors. StrongLink, simply put, enables innovation by enabling the integration of virtually any storage technology into your infrastructure design.

So, whether you are seeking to reduce the cost and complexity of storage infrastructure refresh cycle or trying to minimize the practical pain and hassle of data management on a constantly changing and expanding storage platform, StrongLink has just what you need.

Schedule a free demo today to get answers to all of your questions and to see, first hand, why StrongLink has captured the interest of organizations and enterprises large and small!