Storage Decisions Hosted by OSeerdsteerge.com Writing a Switch RFP "All we want is everything we can get."

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RFP Platitudes

- Get as much decision-point data as possible at the beginning of a project (rather than at the end).
- Be aware of all project phases up front so that you can gather data for each phase *during* the RFP process.
- You don't get what you don't ask for.

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The SANcycle

- 1. Business Problem Assessment
- 2. Information Gathering and Synthesizing
- 3. Build the Architectural Model
- 4. Select the Vendor(s)

Storage Decisions The SANcycle (continued) 5. Build a Test Model 6. Roll-out and Stabilization 7. On-going Maintenance 8. Change Management

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Business Problem Assessment

- Whose problem is it?
- IT only
- Business Unit
- Enterprise
- Who will you have to sell the solution to?
 - CxO
 - Business Units
 - Others within IT
- When the ROI won't cut it...
- Ask vendors for help with the internal selling process via the RFP (or any other means)

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Information Gathering and Synthesizing – the RFP Process

- Do
 - Be detailed and specific.
- Be as descriptive of the IT environment and the business need as is prudent in the RFP.
- Know the standards.
- Put yourself in the vendor's shoes. (Ask a confusing question, get a confusing answer.)
- Be as vendor-neutral as possible.
- Give vendors a reasonable time to respond.
- Don't
 - Create a "vendor bias" impression.

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Building the Architectural Model:
Relevant Standards
Switch interoperability
• FSPF
• FCSW-2
• FSPF-BB
• MAN/WAN
• FCIP
• iFCP
Management software
 Switch vendor or ISV
 SNMP vs. SMI-S vs. WideSky
Would a SAN design/modeling tool help?
Anddon't forget to ask about security

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Can Interoperability and Security Co-exist?

- Is today's SAN security enough?
- Data "on the fly" vs. data at rest
- IEEE: Searching for a standard encryption method
 - Proposed solutions now on the table
 - One method: Use open source-developed code with unique user-created keys to "unlock" the data.

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Can Interoperability and Security Co-exist?

- Investigate potential conflicts with existing SAN security features (i.e. Zoning and Masking).
- Investigate impact on data life cycle management infrastructure and strategy (i.e. exposure to data loss long term).
- Investigate potential for vendor lock-ins.
- Whatever you do, don't lose the keys.

Storage Decisions Hosted by Objection Preparing for Negotiation

- Buying the switch: Bundled in SAN solution or stand-alone?
- Whenever possible, get a line-item cost for everything.
- Switching hardware
- Add-ons and upgrades (even if you don't need them right now)
- Management software
- Implementation services
- Maintenance service (when out of warranty) and support

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Building a Test Model

- Will your architectural model scale?
 - Can the bidding vendor demonstrate scalability?
- Labs are a great resource to ask for.
- Get performance data.
- Get the relevant interop data.
- <u>Caveat</u>: Vendors usually publish only the good news.
- Ask for the relevant certifications:
 - Vendor-sponsored
 - Third party-sponsored
 - FCIA SANmark
 - SNIA ICTP

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What Do These Terms Mean?

...to you <u>and</u> the bidding vendor

- Compatibility
- Qualification
- Conformance
- Compliance
- Certification

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Roll-out and Stabilization

- Switch vendors commonly sell through OEMs and channel partners.
- Use the RFP to understand the bidding vendor's problem resolution process.
- Be a "pleasant pest" on this issue.
- The experience of others can be a valuable resource here.

Ask for references.

• Important indicators of success during this phase

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SNIA Supported Solutions Forum (SSF)

- Configuration and testing of multi-vendor "registered solutions"
- Presently 10 registered solution sets
- Multi-vendor Support Agreements
- Cooperative support for tested solutions
- Contact information and problem escalation procedures known to and endorsed by all members
- Support available 24x7, worldwide.
- Get the details via the RFP

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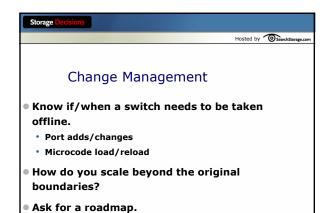
Ongoing Maintenance and Support

• Understand the Warranty.

- What's covered and what isn't?
- How are upgrades and modifications addressed?
- Under what conditions can the warranty be voided?

• Understand the maintenance agreement.

- Same as above
- Get reliability data.



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i Want to iSCSI Too

- Is the switch protocol agnostic?
- Is the vendor protocol agnostic?
- Do all of the caveats for FC apply to iSCSI as well?

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When a Switch Isn't Just a Switch

- Virtualization is passé.
-Don't say the "V" word.
- The "smart switch" is cool.
-But, where is it?
- Do you want a smart switch or an appliance?I dunno. What's the difference?

Storage Decisions Hosted by Observertioning common Giving the Scarecrow a Brain • What does the surgery look like? • Rip and replace? • Add-on or add-in? • Many vendors approaching opportunity as a "solution" sell • Who owns the solution after the sale – you or the vendor?

• Who owns the support?

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FAIS – The Intelligent Switch Standard

- Fabric Application Interface Standard (FAIS)
 - ANST T11.5 Working Group
- <u>Goal</u>: Create a standard set of APIs for use by developers writing software management applications that take advantage of intelligence in the storage fabric.
- Question 1: Is the fabric a good place for intelligence?
- <u>Question 2</u>: Should you even care enough about FAIS to specify it in an RFP?

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Thank you. Questions?

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Mr. Webster is unable to attend the Ask-the-Expert booth in the Exhibit Hall. Please send additional questions to jglossner@techtarget.com.