

P R O D U C T P R O F I L E

New Veritas Storage Foundation: Powerful and Free

August, 2006



Like many industry observers, we have long imagined Symantec's Veritas Storage Foundation as that powerful aircraft carrier on which thousands of global enterprises base their entire storage management capabilities. The fact is that when we are talking to enterprise end users, there simply is no ignoring the near ubiquity of this storage management platform. However, if you thought you knew the whole story on Storage Foundation, you would be wrong. In a very interesting move that may be a harbinger of things to come in the wider industry, Symantec has just announced free software additions to the Storage Foundation family. And unlike many vendors' giveaways in the past, these two additions are *real*, *capable*, and immediately *useful* to an incredibly wide cut of the global enterprise IT community. Specifically, Symantec has released a fully-featured version of Storage Foundation for small or edge environments (Storage Foundation Basic) and a Storage Foundation Management Server application that provides a range of unified management coordination, automation and insights across existing Storage Foundation deployments of all sizes (including Storage Foundation Basic). We believe this is a great move by Symantec. We love to see vendors think about their users' challenges and then actually give something useful with no strings attached. It's a rare thing, but sometimes the best things in life are free... even in IT. We heartily encourage Symantec customers to check out both of these applications and find ways to enrich their existing environments. Quite simply, there is no reason not to do so! Customers can download the software and see for themselves at "www.symantec.com/sfbasic" and "www.symantec.com/sfms".

Go End-to-End and Centralized

All of us in the storage community have become so accustomed to paying for our advanced software functionality that we throw a sideways glance when real software power shows up at our data center door at no cost to us in terms of management complexity or dollars. Yet, that is precisely what is happening right now at Symantec with respect to the Veritas Storage Foundation platform. Taneja Group has taken a look at two very useful, feature-rich additions to the Storage Foundation family. Our verdict: These applications hold the potential to provide significant value-add to

IT teams everywhere. Why so? Because Symantec is aiming to make standardized and centralized end-to-end storage management a reality. We believe that these two new applications will go a long way towards completing that vision.

Before we move into a deeper discussion of these two technologies, it is worth noting that they are squarely targeted at addressing two of the key storage management issues that we see IT teams wrestling with today:

Challenge #1: *Extending a common edge-to-core management framework across the enterprise.* While most IT teams have rightly

PRODUCT PROFILE

focused their energies and investment in their core infrastructure, we see increasing interest in developing true total-enterprise coverage for all storage, server and application assets. This necessarily entails edge and small deployments that may not have made the budgetary cut, yet still consume both managerial and hard resources. We believe Symantec's approach with Storage Foundation Basic is targeting this challenge straight-on.

Challenge #2: *Achieving centralized Management of the entire application-to-storage IT stack.* The proliferation of complexity at each of the application, server and storage layers has created the need for significant new efforts to federate controls up and down the stack. The blindness in reporting between applications, servers, and storage is untenable moving forward, but finding viable centralized controls have been a challenge for many IT teams. In our view, Veritas Storage Foundation Management Server directly addresses this challenge for Storage Foundation customers.

The fact that Symantec is hitting hard on these two top challenges with free add-on software shows they are very serious about getting results. Let's now take a quick look at both of these software applications and what they mean for enterprise IT teams.

Quicklook: Veritas Storage Foundation Basic

The first software that we want to discuss is Symantec's Veritas Storage Foundation Basic (SF Basic). SF Basic is a no-cost version of the market leading Storage Foundation

platform, which is based on the industry-leading Veritas File System (VxFS) and Volume Manager (VxVM). SF Basic is intended for server workloads requiring up to four user-data file systems, four user-data volumes, with two processor sockets per system. There is full support for dynamic multi-pathing, portable data containers for data migrations, hot relocation, RAID support, and heterogeneous storage integration. Moreover, if a customer would like to upgrade for larger workloads (with SF Standard), or to deploy the cutting edge features of the SF Enterprise version for high-end applications including Oracle RAC, DB2, Microsoft SQL Server, and Microsoft Exchange, this can be done with a simple license key upgrade. It is currently supported on popular versions of AIX, HP-UX, Novell SUSE, Red Hat, and Solaris, with the Windows version coming in late 2006.

We believe that SF Basic is well suited for edge-tier (web servers, app servers, infrastructure servers), departmental database applications, and test/dev environments. It will be ideal for teams that may have wanted to extend their integrated storage management capabilities all the way across the enterprise on the same platform, but resisted for budgetary or complexity reasons. That hurdle is removed with this application.

One of the key pieces of functionality this will bring to small and edge deployments in the enterprise that has been sorely needed is seamless data migration. For whatever purpose an IT team may want to migrate data around the edge, SF Basic should now become an obvious candidate for handling

P R O D U C T P R O F I L E

the task: OS platform remounting, testing, protection, or capacity balancing. Having a feature-rich version of Storage Foundation applied to these often neglected edge environments will make them truly enterprise caliber; no more orphaned resources. This is a critical step to achieving a centralized management practice in the enterprise, the topic to which we now turn.

Quicklook: Veritas Storage Foundation Management Server

The other major free software application that Symantec has made available is the Veritas Storage Foundation Management Server (SFMS). This new application is impressive to us because it actually solves a major management issue that we see teams wrestling with daily: Centralized management and controls for applications, servers, and storage. That fact that it can be downloaded, immediately integrated, and is free is just icing on the cake.

SFMS is deployed as a free licensing add-on to Storage Foundation. It deploys as a web-based application that supports security and role-based authentication, just like all other Storage Foundation applications. SFMS is designed for use with any combination of Storage Foundation versions 4.x and 5.0, on any supported OS version, and does not require an active support contract. When deployed atop Storage Foundation, SFMS essentially becomes the management bird's eye of the entire deployment, responsible for providing the following key benefits:

- One centralized view of the entire infrastructure, inclusive of all applications, servers and storage.
- Consolidated storage reporting of all covered storage resources, regardless of deployment locations or groupings.
- Centralized controls for operations such as mirroring, replication, and customize reporting.

In an operating context, there are several new capabilities enabled by SFMS, mainly residing in the areas of enhanced visibility and infrastructure controls. Because SFMS correlates all Storage Foundation data across the entire deployment, it allows administrators to identify which applications are associated with particular Storage Foundation fault events. This end-to-end correlation is critical to achieving rapid root cause analysis. SFMS then provides the central interface by which the administrator can take corrective action within Storage Foundation to remedy these storage-to-application issues.

This leads to a discussion of some of the control advantages of SFMS, as it coordinates Storage Foundation policies across the IT stack. For example, capacity and policy-based controls can be handled directly through this same console. In concrete terms, this means that routine activities like disk group migrations or volume-level migrations could be coordinated, scheduled and automated on an entire enterprise level from a single unified interface. This is a real management gain that we know customers are looking for.

P R O D U C T P R O F I L E

Taneja Group Opinion

Actions speak louder than marketing. To that end, both of these applications, Storage Foundation Basic and Storage Foundation Management Server, point to an unspoken mission statement from Symantec: *Quickly get our customers to true enterprise-wide coverage, and do it from a centralized platform.* That is the most cogent summary we can surmise to describe the impetus behind giving these two high value pieces of software away at no cost. Working in tandem, they both significantly further that goal.

Why does this matter? Because edge computing environments are no longer sideshows. In the context of a strategic storage consolidation initiative, or distributed environment, they absolutely matter. Using SF Basic to pull them into the management fold should be a total no-brainer for any Veritas Storage Foundation customer. The answer to integrated edge-to-core management is literally a download away.

With regards to creating a centralized management schema, likewise, SFMS is equally obvious as the way to go for Veritas Storage Foundation customers: Here is your means of establishing a higher-level tool that

will automatically improve fault identification and remedy, enable end-to-end automation of all Storage Foundation tasks, and create significant operational gains in the process. For free on both 4.1 and 5.0 versions. This story sells itself.

Symantec is making great moves here by releasing both of these tools to the community. At a strategic level, it shows that the company is deadly serious about providing both edge-to-core and application-to-storage management coverage in a centralized fashion. Those are precisely the kind of moves we love to see from market leaders. Additionally, this is a move that will force a difficult-to-top competitive response from other vendors. Of course, most vendors are not in a position to offer this kind of far-reaching end-to-end value, at any price.

By seeding this opportunity, we believe Symantec is both giving a great gift to the enterprise and securing competitive advantage. We applaud the effort on both fronts. And besides, the world's IT teams are already working so hard, they deserve some presents every now and then too! We encourage Symantec customers to download and evaluate these two applications.

NOTICE: The information and product recommendations made by the TANEJA GROUP are based upon public information and sources and may also include personal opinions both of the TANEJA GROUP and others, all of which we believe to be accurate and reliable. However, as market conditions change and not within our control, the information and recommendations are made without warranty of any kind. All product names used and mentioned herein are the trademarks of their respective owners. The TANEJA GROUP, Inc. assumes no responsibility or liability for any damages whatsoever (including incidental, consequential or otherwise), caused by your use of, or reliance upon, the information and recommendations presented herein, nor for any inadvertent errors which may appear in this document.
