Position your organization for success
with IBM Systems and storage
Executive overview

In a marketplace that is increasingly fast-paced and competitive, the mid-sized businesses that are best equipped for success will be those that put the power of technology to best use. Tomorrow’s leading organizations will be those that find new ways to do business through innovation, knowledge and speed to market. The companies that rise to preeminence in a challenging marketplace will be those whose IT systems are flexible, expandable and capable of change. This flexibility can give the business a strong competitive edge by helping it confidently adapt to market shifts and quickly respond to customer needs.

As CEOs and IT professionals take action to help their organizations reach new goals, many come face-to-face with a challenge that affects their ability to deliver fully on success: outdated infrastructure.

Mid-sized companies can benefit from a fresh look at the systems and storage that are so crucial to competitive advantage. The following scenarios commonly indicate a need for change:

- Managing a large number of single-workload servers
- Preparing for a major technology refresh
- Feeling the pressure to lower IT costs
- Paying more for hardware maintenance
- Struggling to handle seasonal or unexpected peaks in demand from business units and customers

IBM® Systems and storage can play a deep role in your business success, because they work to improve security and business flexibility, increase return on IT investment quickly and help a company’s operations run more effectively. IBM can provide the technology and expertise that your business needs to maintain a competitive advantage—not just today, but far into the future.
Achieve financial health

Control of IT infrastructure is crucial to business success, because the ability to respond quickly to change is what sets successful organizations apart. As integrated systems and data storage solutions continue their rapid evolution, IT professionals can meet the challenges of outdated infrastructure with new confidence and power. With the ability to reduce costs, grow profit and better utilize IT resources, integrated solutions help you handle spikes in demand and provide a consolidated view of data—wherever it is housed. IBM Systems and storage solutions help you analyze and use information more effectively, which drives better decision-making. We provide integrated solutions that can make a real difference in your effort to achieve financial health.

Today and in the future, fast return on investment will never go out of style. And regardless of the size of your organization, decisions to upgrade IT systems and storage have unique potential both to reduce costs and grow profit. As you put resources to use more effectively, take control of spikes in demand, and gain a consolidated view of data throughout your enterprise, return on IT investment accelerates.

Innovation in server speed and performance offers a proven way to capture value in the IT environment. IBM recently introduced the first of a new generation of IBM Power Systems™ designed specifically for mid-sized companies. With simplified pricing, increased application choice and reduced energy and administration costs, our new Power Systems servers will incorporate industry-leading POWER6™ processors (the world’s fastest chip), and will support UNIX®, Linux® and i applications simultaneously on a single server system.

As technology helps business stay a step ahead, organizations seek scalable, extreme performance that helps innovation become real. IT professionals and CEOs are embracing IBM System x™ quad-core solutions that help them
create a competitive edge. Scalable servers and proactive tools make it easier to manage complexity, growth and risk. You spend your efforts more strategically. Your organization becomes more responsive to customers as good information is shared with the right people.

According to IDC, the costs of server management, including power and cooling costs, will outpace the costs of buying these servers by a factor of four times and eight times respectively.\(^n\) Mid-sized companies cannot afford to throw more and more technology at a problem. The philosophy of “add another application, buy another box from the lowest-cost vendor” no longer works for them, because the result of that approach is costly server and storage sprawl, low average utilization of the servers and much difficulty managing this growing environment.

We have a better solution: virtualization capabilities. Through virtualization, IBM System and storage offerings can better monitor and manage themselves while driving up utilization rates, driving down costs and making the most of your IT assets. In 2006, Gartner found that the average server utilization rate in most companies is 5% to 10% and that such rates are the rule rather than the exception.\(^m\) Yet IBM customers who run virtualized System x servers report an average utilization rate of 50%.

Unlike stand-alone servers that need multiple power supplies and fans, individual systems management, numerous cables and a lot of floor space, IBM BladeCenter\(^*\) is compact and easy to use. The blade contains all the necessities to run an application—processors, memory, I/O and storage. Components that are duplicated in rack servers (redundant power, hot-swap cooling, DVD and consolidated management) are placed in the BladeCenter chassis and shared. The beauty of the BladeCenter architecture is that now everything needed for the solution can be housed and managed from a single point of control. With BladeCenter, IBM can help you cut costs with technologies that not only increase performance per watt, but also help you budget, plan and control power usage.
Create operational excellence

Picking the right servers, storage systems and management software is essential to successful IT operations. In the past, either scaling up (bigger, faster servers) or scaling out (more servers) would have been the answer. But one platform does not fit all needs. With IBM’s portfolio of systems and storage, it’s easy to scale up or scale out— or a combination of the two— to create a solution that best fits your specific situation. With IBM, you’re not locked into a single platform or a single strategy; instead, you can choose the optimal mix of technologies to provide the greatest return on investment for your company.

Security, reliability, scalability and support can make a real difference in the race for operational excellence. IBM works with companies around the world to help them keep IT invisible and cost effective. Polar Speed, a logistics company based in the UK, is a good example of a business that saw positive impact from IBM’s approach to highly scalable blade architecture. Polar Speed employs more than 100 people and operates a fleet of 70 temperature-controlled vehicles from 11 depots across England, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland, delivering vaccines, drugs and medical devices to surgeries, pharmacies, hospitals and homes. The flexibility of our BladeCenter architecture made it the ideal solution for this growing business; whenever it needed more capacity, Polar Speed could simply slot in another blade— there was no need to worry about new power supplies, cabling or switches. And because the company could have a mixture of different processors in the same chassis, it was easy to achieve the right balance of performance and cost-efficiency for the different systems. In addition to the excellent performance and simple expandability offered by our system and storage hardware, the solution gave Polar Speed a truly enterprise-class IT infrastructure. This mid-sized company found real value in the ability to show large-enterprise customers that it could deliver the same level of service that they would expect from a partner of their own size.

“Omicron is a top-notch partner,” says Alan Cheshire, chairman of Polar Speed. “They really understand our business, have delivered excellent solutions, and we have real confidence in their technical abilities. When they recommended replacing our existing servers with an IBM BladeCenter, it was immediately clear that this would be the right choice for our business.”
Achieve outstanding customer value

The organizations that deliver outstanding value to customers will be those that are able to run a more effective business with more productive employees. The best systems and storage solutions provide reliability and ease of use that help you deliver products and services faster and facilitate collaboration among customers, partners and suppliers.

All of this takes the kind of experience you get only with IBM Systems and storage—a strong, sustained investment. A depth and breadth of services, solutions, innovation centers and technical support that’s difficult to find anywhere else on the globe. And more than 90,000 IBM Business Partners and business consultants who are ready to lend a hand. There’s no one better positioned to help your organization succeed.

Trust that your IT is designed for maximum uptime of critical business applications: IBM Systems and storage solutions possess the resiliency required for mission-critical online systems that must provide high-availability services to a geographically-diverse audience. IBM BladeCenter and System x servers are the only x86 servers with the ability to “call home”—they place service calls for themselves without customer user intervention—and the IBM System Storage™ DS4000™ platform is the only mid-tier open systems storage platform with the same ability.

IBM Systems and storage provide tools that are specifically created to simplify the management of your IT. We offer an end-to-end approach that encompasses hardware (servers and storage), software, and systems and management tools. And we provide services to help you implement these tools in multi-site and multi-vendor environments. IBM Systems Director tools can help automate many previously manual processes, greatly improving IT responsiveness to changing user requirements. You can use IBM Systems Director tools to manage both IBM and non-IBM systems. Count on us to help you reduce administrative complexity so that you can speed up the introduction of new applications within your organization.
IBM believes that taking a comprehensive view of IT operations is the best way to help you transform your business into a more agile operation and bring strategic advantages to your business. With the solutions we offer today, you need no longer feel forced into a single platform. You can be freed from the need to respond to constant changes in already-ambiguous technology roadmaps. IBM can offer solutions for your business needs that are open, easy and green. Investigate a flexible choice of systems from the industry’s richest and most scalable portfolio of server and storage offerings.

Summary
As you make strategic decisions for change to your existing systems and storage, look for solutions that offer security, reliability and scalability. Investigate the network of support you will receive, including access to local, vertical industry expertise and the level of channel partner support; it’s the best way to ensure high levels of integration, performance, reliability and time-to-value.

It’s no secret to CEOs and IT professionals that as the future unfolds, chaos won’t be the enemy—instead, real business value will lie in the nuanced and confident management of tomorrow’s rich, chaotic information environment. Integrated systems and storage solutions can accelerate that endeavor and drive organizational success.

Only IBM and our network of IBM Business Partners provide a range of solutions to help mid-sized companies ensure operational excellence, financial health and outstanding customer value. We deliver the kind of systems, storage, software, services and financing that position your organization for success. We help you create a consolidated, resilient platform for today—and help position your organization for continued growth in the years to come.

For more information
To learn more about IBM System Storage, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following Web sites:

- [ibm.com/systems/migratetoibm/index.html](ibm.com/systems/migratetoibm/index.html)
- [ibm.com/systems/bladecenter/index.html](ibm.com/systems/bladecenter/index.html)
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