

# Storage Networking Times

## Issue 6

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## Letter From the Chair

*Juergen Arnold, Chair, SNIA Europe, eurochair@snia.org*



The doors of SNW Europe 2007 will open tomorrow at the Congress Centre in Frankfurt and I hope you will be there to celebrate with us! It was ten years ago that a small group of

forward-thinking vendors came together to create an association that would promote the understanding and adoption of networked storage. Since then the SNIA has grown to be represented today around the world with local affiliates such as SNIA Europe, SNIA Japan, SNIA China, SNIA India, SNIA Canada, SNIA South Asia and SNIA ANZ.

This year's conference brings you a comprehensive programme featuring the highest number of sessions to date, including speakers such as Arsenal FC, Swisscom and British Energy. Running under the theme "Information in Motion", the conference will offer a unique opportunity to attend presentations about technology developments, how to address business-level challenges and real-world case studies. Three entire conference tracks will be devoted to your peers and EMEA end-users who will share their experiences of deploying storage-related technologies and services to help address their business challenges.

The technical sessions will cover all the current hottest topics such as information classification, storage management, XAM,

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## European End User Council Update

*Charles Inches, Chair, SNIA Europe End User Council, eurousers@snia.org*



As the Chair of the SNIA Europe End User Council (EUC) I would like to give an update on the status of our activities as representatives of the storage end-user community, and what better means of communication than our newsletter?

Let's start by putting our work into context. When the SNIA Europe Board of Directors decided to embrace not only the vendors but also the buyers and the end-users, this idea received a great welcome from the entire industry. However, the local national

boundaries, which we often map to cultural, religious, linguistic, social, etc confines, seem to be inhibiting a fast and broad adoption of end user members.

As a result, in 2006 the Council decided to take a different approach: we formed a Committee with representatives from ten well-known European companies from a number of different market sectors. After a couple of meetings, we are now in the process of updating our charter, again following international guidelines so that we don't create too many differences with other SNIA end user groups round the globe, yet always in respect of the local

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## Letter From the Chair

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archiving, compliance and green storage. In addition we have secured presentations by well-known organisations such as TheInfoPro, SAP, Oracle and MessageLabs on subjects including deduplication and data retention management with ERP.

So if you would like to learn about how to address your storage challenges, find out about the latest technologies and protocols, hear about real-world case studies or meet with over 50 of the leading industry players, then don't miss SNW Europe.

But it doesn't stop here. Our events committee has also been busy working to bring you the next SNIA Europe Academy dates, which will include Rome, Warsaw, Dubai, Zurich, Moscow, Stockholm and Copenhagen. You can find more information about these events in the 'Academy Spotlight' article and the Regional Committee Update in this issue of *Storage Networking Times*.

Over the next three days SNW Europe 2007 will give you the unique opportunity to learn from the experts, network with new contacts and exchange views with your peers; I look forward to seeing you there!

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## European End User Council Update

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specific differences. Interested in joining? Please drop me an email at [eurousers@snia.org](mailto:eurousers@snia.org).

Last year, for the second time, we ran a survey across a broad base of end-users. Once again this was done in tight collaboration with the SNIA EUC in the US, giving us the possibility to compare US respondents with European ones. As an extract here are a couple of the main results:

Biggest worry: Upgrades:

- End users worry more about upgrades than about integrating new hardware, interoperable management software, and outdated management software;
- Storage management software requires the most frequent upgrades;
- 60% of support-recommended upgrades fix problems; 15% do not;
- 25% of support-recommended upgrades make problem worse.

End users have a strong desire for interoperability:

- 55% would pay more for an interoperable solution;
- 32% would de-select a product that did not offer interoperability;
- 6% weren't sure;
- 7% did not value interoperability.

We are always looking for more end users to join our Council so to become a member or to simply share some thoughts please don't hesitate to email me. Alternatively I will be happy to see you at SNW Europe 2007!

## Spotlight On: IP Storage Initiative

Aad Dekkers, Chair, SNIA Europe IP Storage Initiative (IPSI), [IPSI-Europe-Chair@snia.org](mailto:IPSI-Europe-Chair@snia.org)



Although the summer months are traditionally associated with the holidays and a general slowdown of the business pace here in Europe, looking back I realise that the IP Storage Initiative (IPSI) achieved quite a lot during the June–August timeframe.

To start with, we had our first meeting with a new member of SNIA Europe which is particularly focused on the IP storage space. We spoke to media and industry analysts about hot topics related to iSCSI and its planned growth. In the UK, we organised the first SNIA Europe technology webcast around IP storage technologies and solutions; following its success we are now planning to roll such webcasts out across Europe with multiple topics related to IP storage.

### New Member

We would like to welcome EqualLogic as a new member of IPSI. Being involved in the initiative enables vendors to help us educate the market and gives companies the opportunity to help shape the technology. Therefore I would like to encourage every vendor, distributor and reseller to join us. You can find out more at [www.snia-europe.org/ipstorage](http://www.snia-europe.org/ipstorage).

### Thanks

I also would like to take this opportunity to thank Denise Ridolfo, Wolfgang Singer and Dave Dale for their continuous support and for presenting our tutorials at the SNIA Europe Academy events, SNW Europe and the various Storage Expos. Thanks to highly committed individuals in both the USA and EMEA, IPSI and the IP Storage Forum

(IPSF, based in the US) have been working closely together and have a number of activities planned for the next 12 months.

### Stay Up-To-Date

If you are interested in the latest information around IP storage and iSCSI, please make sure you read Dave Dale's latest article 'The State of iSCSI: Continued Rapid Market Growth and Expansion Beyond Windows Stronghold' at [http://www.snia.org/about/news/farsighted/top\\_stories/article6](http://www.snia.org/about/news/farsighted/top_stories/article6) or the column 'Standards Update' that I wrote earlier this year [www.snia-europe.org/news/e\\_news/mar2007/standards.htm](http://www.snia-europe.org/news/e_news/mar2007/standards.htm)

### SNW Europe 2007

The SNIA IPSI and IPSF teams will be available in Frankfurt at the conference ([www.snweurope.com](http://www.snweurope.com)), where we will give presentations and take questions from end users, vendors and resellers alike, to provide education and guidance on all matters related to IP storage. If you would like to find out more about the technology or would like some help with your IP storage challenges, please don't hesitate to come and meet us at SNW Europe. We look forward to seeing you there!

### Contact Us

IPSI is always looking for more end users to share their views on IP storage. If you would like to ask questions, voice your opinions or raise a concern about IP storage please contact the IPSI team on [IPSI-Europe-Chair@snia.org](mailto:IPSI-Europe-Chair@snia.org) or visit [www.snia-europe.org/ipstorage](http://www.snia-europe.org/ipstorage).

## Analyst Briefing: How Do You Put Value On Data?

Philip Howard, Research Director, Bloor Research, [philip.howard@bloor-research.com](mailto:philip.howard@bloor-research.com)



How do you put a value on data?

Clearly this is difficult to answer. Apart from anything else it depends on context. For example, knowing that you have a stock level of  $x$  is useless unless you at least know what typical turnover for that stock is.

The question, let alone the answer, gets more complicated if you start to involve data over time. That is, how much more valuable is a year's worth of data compared to six months? Or three years' worth? Clearly, in many situations, more data is more valuable. For example, suppose that you wish to forecast sales of one or more items over the Christmas period. The only logical way to do that would be to be able to compare previous Christmases, not just with each other, but with trading patterns in the periods leading up to these Christmases. According to SAS you need a minimum of three years worth data to be able to make meaningful predictions about Christmas trading.

Another problem with estimating the value of data is that the value can be derived from third parties. For example, if you are a Telco and you store call data records (as you have to) you can store these off-line, in near-line storage or on-line. But only on-line storage will enable the police and security services to do real-time searches against telephone records. Now suppose that such a search enables the prevention of a bomb plot. How much is that worth? Actually, that's not quite a rhetorical question: it used to be estimated that a foiled IRA bomb plot was worth £1m. But that was some time ago and inflation needs to be applied to that figure. Moreover, the IRA used to give warnings about their bombs while Al-Qaeda does not, so the potential loss of

life from a successful plot could be much more and the value of thwarting such an attempt all the greater.

However, while we can, of course, all see the benefits of this, there is no direct business value to the Telco who is funding the system per se.

So putting a value on data is very hard. Nevertheless, it should be clear that whenever analysis of data is required, then the more the better.

However, this flies in the face of what most companies have been trying to do for a number of years. As data volumes have grown the emphasis in many organisations has been on information lifecycle management and archival as a means of reducing the costs of keeping data on-line. But it is arguable that this is self-defeating. Certainly you save costs by archiving older data. On the other hand, the insight that you (or third parties in the case of call data records) can gain will be enhanced from being able to analyse more information gathered over a longer time. So the question becomes: how much more valuable is this greater insight and how does that compare with the additional costs of storage?

Moreover, the equation is changing, as new companies enter the market and allow you to store more data on-line at lower cost (and with a lower administrative overhead). This then changes the tipping point between the value of holding more data on-line for deeper analytical insight, as opposed to the cost savings of archival (which become smaller). The truth is that I don't know where that tipping point is, and in any case it will vary not just by industry but by company, but it is certainly something that enterprises should be aware of and considering.

## Education: Best Practices For Deploying A Storage Security Solution

Blair Semple, Education & Alliances Officer, SNIA Storage Security Industry Forum, [securityinfo@snia.org](mailto:securityinfo@snia.org)



In the last several years a number of trends have brought attention to security concerns involving data at rest in storage environments. Billions of dollars have been spent on firewalls, intrusion prevention, and anti-virus solutions, but these systems provide little or no protection against lost/stolen storage media such as disks and tapes and many types of internal threats.

If you are among the many companies undertaking a project to secure your data, consider some fundamental best practices recommended by the SNIA Storage Security Industry Forum (SSIF) ([www.snia.org/forums/ssif/](http://www.snia.org/forums/ssif/)). The SSIF is a consortium of storage professionals, security professionals, security practitioners, and academics dedicated to increasing the overall knowledge and availability of robust security solutions in today's storage ecosystems. They apply their deep body of knowledge and practical experiences in security and storage to produce best practices on building secure storage networks, provide education on storage security topics, and participate in standards development.

### Understand The Drivers

All organizations process data with varying degrees of sensitivity. However, the type and strength of the mechanisms required to protect the confidentiality of this data can vary greatly with the reasons for undertaking the project and an organization's own policies and procedures. It is important, therefore, to understand the reasons your organization is undertaking a storage security project.

Some examples of drivers are:

- **Regulatory**—EU Data Privacy, the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)*, Sarbanes-Oxley, HIPAA, CA 1386 (and derivative privacy laws in more than 35 states in the U.S.), etc.
- **Industry**—Payment Card Industry (PCI), etc.
- **Internal**—Intellectual Property, contractual obligations, legal documents, etc.

Remember also to work with the leadership of your organization to ensure that their requirements are being met as they could have a different perspective on the requirements of your organization.

### Classify And Inventory Your Data

While all the phases of this project are important, this step can be critical. Unless your organization is prepared to simply encrypt all stored data, it is important to look at your data and determine the degrees of sensitivity.

- **Identify the categories of sensitive data**—Different types of data will require differing levels of security to protect the confidentiality, access control, integrity, and non-repudiation characteristics of this data.
- **Identify applications and systems**—Determine the entities that generate, process, transport, and store sensitive data. It is also important to understand the nature of the data itself, such as whether it is structured or unstructured, as this information will influence the selection of any controls you deploy.
- **Include the data owners in the process**—An IT or security group is unlikely to clearly understand the implications of data compromise without input and requirements from the data stakeholders.
- **Perform a risk assessment**—Standard processes exist for assessments such as this. If you don't have knowledge on these systems internally, there are outside consultants that can help fit the process to your organization.

### Review/Create Policies And Procedures

Internal policies and procedures need to stay in synch with decisions being made in this project. For example, once the previous classification/inventory step has been undertaken, there should be a well-defined process for deploying new applications and systems to minimize the risk of data being processed outside the scope of a deployed system.

At this point, you will also determine requirements for certain parameters utilized in the system. Encryption key strength, key granularity and lifetime, authentication mechanisms, etc., are areas that will be evaluated and documented.

Non-technical issues should also be reviewed. Physical security, (for example the strength of locks on doors); employee background checks; administration roles; and separation of duties are just a few examples. Physical, administrative, and technological safeguards will work together to minimize the risks of data compromise.

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## Education: Collaborate To Compete and Comply

Kay Mushens, Chair, SNIA Europe Marketing Committee, euromarketing@snia.org



Organisations have come to realise that information is both an asset and a potential liability. The need to remain competitive, coupled with the ever stronger demands of regulatory compliance, legal discovery, and security risks have created a critical need for organisational transformation and collaboration among records and informa-

tion managers, the IT department, security professionals and business users of information. Failure to respond can expose the company to lost productivity, lost business opportunities, and loss of reputation.

In many organisations, managing risk has taken precedence over value creation as the primary objective of information management practices. This often means that far more resources are dedicated to reducing exposure than to creating new solutions and processes that confer competitive advantage. Collaboration offers a way to regain control and put value creation back on an equal footing. Organisations must do both to survive.

A recent survey ([www.snia.org/forums/dmf/programs/Itacsi/100\\_year/](http://www.snia.org/forums/dmf/programs/Itacsi/100_year/)) conducted by the SNIA (Storage Networking Industry Association) Data Management Forum (DMF) found that:

- Less than 50% of business people believe they get value from their long-term information archive;
- Over 80% of business and IT professionals think the cost of long-term archiving is too high;
- Business management does not value archive work.

This is not surprising. Business users are not usually concerned with their companies' archiving infrastructure; they just need information to be readily available when it's needed. However, improvements in digital archive technologies, and development of a new interface that allows applications to search, access, and migrate fix-content data across heterogeneous storage environments is creating a renewed interest in archive, because of the increased value such capabilities place on data as information.

It is not easy to identify who is responsible for bridging the gap between raw data and valuable information. Who should determine when business records should be purged? What should be preserved? And for how long? The SNIA survey found inconsistent answers to these questions.

The good news is that 14% of survey respondents said that business records information managers (RIM), legal, security and IT collaborate to establish information retention policies. The bad news is that only 14% of businesses are collaborating to establish the value of their information, the starting point of many storage and archiving strategies. Another 14% said they leave the decision to IT. This is where the issue stems from: 95% or more of IT administrators are not aware of the value of the information they are managing, which means those organisations potentially have completely unsuitable data storage and information management policies.

Successful information-based management practices require a new type of collaboration, as information owners and administrators work together to understand and classify the business value and requirements for information. It is crucial that the strengths of all participants, including business stakeholders, IT, RIM, legal and security are understood and brought to bear in establishing best practices for the organisation. These range from establishing guidelines for how the members of the collaborative process work together, to agreeing on uniform methodologies. The following list is a starting point on which each organisation can expand.

- *Corporate information policy formulation*—Information policies cannot be established in a vacuum or by a single group within the enterprise; it is a collaborative endeavour involving all stakeholders. Compliance and governance initiatives are excellent and requisite opportunities for collaborative partnerships to develop, educate, and better meet policy requirements.
- *The tools to implement and measure conformance to information policies*—The collaborative team drives operational requirements, forms the policies that serve as governances over these requirements, and translates policies into processes with supporting management tools. All parties have a resulting stake in putting those tools into daily practice and monitoring the results.
- *Identification of all information and records repositories*—Organisations are struggling to manage the proliferation of information across the entire organisation and need a contribution from all stakeholders to identify all information and records repositories, their contents, and their value and relationship to business processes.

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## Education: Best Practices For Deploying A Storage Security Solution

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Any new policies, or changes to existing policies, that result from this activity must receive signoff at a level that avoids any confusion as to what the scope of the policy actually is.

### Consider The Following When Selecting A Technology Solution

There are a number of areas of consideration when selecting a data security solution including:

- **Vendor Qualifications:**

Consider these factors when evaluating a vendor:

- ✓ Financial stability and long-term viability
- ✓ Leadership position in the market including industry awards and other recognition
- ✓ Commitment to standards bodies, specifically those relating to encryption
- ✓ Industry partnerships
- ✓ Customer references
- ✓ Commitment to independent testing and certification with standards such as the United States' Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) and Common Criteria
- ✓ Appropriate level of support to meet your needs in the areas of:
  - Warranty and hardware replacement
  - 7/24 call center support
  - Training and installation support

- **Data Security:**

Ensure that your chosen system meets the data security requirements of your organization:

- *Encryption*

As processor power increases, today's encryption algorithms will progressively become more vulnerable to breaking. Encryption algorithms such as DES, 3DES and hashing algorithms such as MD5 and SHA-1 are generally considered to no longer be secure. Depending on an organization's unique requirements, it is likely that stored data will require protection for many years to come. Look for products that use the strongest commercially available algorithms such as AES-256.

- *Authentication*

There are many degrees of authentication strength for systems as well as users and administrators. These can range from simple user-name/password combinations through sophisticated hardware or biometric mechanisms.

- *Key Management*

The key management system may well be the single most important component of your storage security solution. It is very likely you will need to maintain keys for many years. You need assurance that the keys are protected from unauthorized access and yet are available whenever and wherever authorized access to data is required.

- **Operational Considerations:**

Carefully evaluate options for security solutions and assess how they could affect this aspect of your operation including:

- *Performance*

Significant financial and manpower resources have been invested to meet the performance objectives of users and applications. Accordingly, there are significant ramifications if you add a security solution that has anything more than a minimal affect on network performance, for example, applications may not respond quickly enough to maintain customer satisfaction, or backup windows may expand beyond a viable point.

- *Availability*

A significant investment has been made to ensure that data will be accessible.

- Single points of failure, either from the security solutions themselves, or from failures in your network causing the security processing to fail
- The solution should support your disaster recovery and business continuity programs, to ensure data is recoverable wherever you need it.

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## Myths Uncovered: What Is In Fact Data Storage All About?

Rostislav Jirkal, Chair, Czech and Slovak Committee, [Czech-SlovakChair@snia.org](mailto:Czech-SlovakChair@snia.org)



There are terms where the meaning does not change with time—; sun, earth, mathematics have meant the same thing for hundreds of years. However, the meaning of other terms has evolved. In the dynamic world of IT for example the term “data storage” has come to indicate data archiving, management, classification and much more.

I have been personally working in the field of data storage for more than fifteen years. Our perceptions of what “data storage” actually means are constantly changing, yet imperceptibly; this is why we also do not notice them on a daily basis.

To refresh my memory, I looked up an article from seven years ago. You can perhaps remember—the booming 90s were behind us, and so were the concerns about Y2K, and the future looked bright. The first disk arrays with a 1TB capacity had just appeared on the market, and we thought that IT budgets were bottomless. So what happened?

That article covered all the issues related to data accessibility and data recovery, protection against loss, and everything was discussed in a strict technical sense. Heterogeneity, connectivity and interoperability were mentioned repeatedly.

Then a few quarters later it looked like the solution to all issues was virtualisation; new flavours of virtualisation engines were hailed as the key to the future of data storage.

Only towards the half of the current decade did data storage proponents realise that the ultimate objective must be the real customer needs. Information Lifecycle Management (ILM) was the first step towards the connection between the data storage infrastructure and the customer’s business requirements. The issues related to data storage were no longer a myth and a subject related purely to technology. Suddenly it was obvious that the business, its processes and

the challenges faced by the organisation have more of an impact on the suitability of a storage infrastructure than capacity, speeds and feeds.

As the focus on capacity, speeds and feeds faded away, then other topics started to appear under the data storage umbrella. The best example of this is security where we started to accept that computer security fell under data storage, including the protection of information, authentication and data encryption.

So what does data storage mean today? It refers to a solution designated to store information and its value as it changes over time. It includes the technical side of storage, how data is transferred between different repositories and how the servers and application layer allows users to visualize it. Besides the physical protection against loss of information or loss of access to this information, data storage comprises all aspects of protection against non-authorized access, possibility of modification or any other misuse of the stored data. And last but not least it allows users to work with information in line with the developing requirements set by the new regulations and legislation created by several bureaucratic entities in the of modern society at both national and international level.

I hope the above will help eradicate the myth that data storage is only about storing and retrieving information. Although this discussion is naturally not exhaustive and it will become more so as data storage evolves, it is clear today that our industry is now a key part of the IT equation, and a critical element of an organization’s ability to be competitive. And the sooner end users understand and embrace this shift, the sooner they can focus on increasing performance, compliance and bottom line.

## SNIA Europe Academy Focus

We have had a very healthy number of end user delegates attending our SNIA Europe Academy events over the past two years, and would like to enlighten those of you who have yet to come along about this series of educational appointments. First launched in 2005, the SNIA Europe Academy program is designed to take on the road the vendor-independent tutorial content at the heart of SNW Europe, to reach a wider European, Middle Eastern and African IT audience. The program has so far visited Eastern Europe and Scandinavia twice and Switzerland, Russia and the United Arab Emirates (Dubai) once with great results and positive delegate feedback.

The Academy's first visit to Italy in late November is detailed within the Italian Committee feature in this issue of *Storage Networking Times* while the schedule for the first half of 2008 published by SNIA Europe and the organisers, Angel Business Communications, sees Academy events planned for Zurich, Dubai, Stockholm, Copenhagen and Moscow.

Topics covered by the tutorials and presentations at the Rome event will include:

- Solving the coming archive crisis
- Storage virtualisation
- Information classification
- XAM
- Virtual storage networks.

The SNIA Europe Academy is free to attend for end-users and qualifying channel partners and combines content from SNIA's extensive tutorial program with local market expertise and sponsoring vendors' own views on the latest technology and market trends. SNIA tutorials are educational sessions developed by participants in the storage networking industry, including vendors, training companies, analysts, consultants, and end-users. They are intended to present technical and business (IT) issues in a fair and unbiased manner and are designed to give a consensus view of particular topics, from the viewpoint of the entire industry or a significant segment.

The SNIA Europe Academy is always very popular and registration will close once our maximum numbers are reached so we encourage you to register online today to secure your place at [www.storage-academy.com](http://www.storage-academy.com).

For a summary of all dates and locations please refer to the 'Events calendar' in this issue of *Storage Networking Times*.



## Industry Events 2007 & 2008

### October 29–31

Storage Networking World Europe  
Frankfurt

### October 30–November 1

Storage Expo  
Jaarbeurs, NL

### November 21–22

Storage Expo  
Paris

### November 30

SNIA Europe Academy  
Rome

### December 3–6

Storage 2007  
Hamburg

### February 5

SNIA Europe Academy  
Dubai

### February 26

SNIA Europe Academy  
Zurich

### February 26–27

DataCentreWorld  
London

### April 1

SNIA Europe Academy  
Copenhagen

### April 3

SNIA Europe Academy  
Stockholm

### April 15–June 10

IDC Storage Roadshows  
Various EMEA Cities

### June 4

SNIA Europe Academy  
Moscow

Full event calendar with weblinks  
on: <http://www.snia-europe.org>

## Education: Best Practices For Deploying A Storage Security Solution

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- *Interoperability and Scalability*

Look for solutions that easily fit into your storage infrastructure, and support the pertinent technologies the organization utilizes. It is also important to factor in how your network may grow and evolve over time and look for solutions that will also evolve to meet these needs.

- *Manageability*

To reduce administrative overhead, solutions should provide robust and usable management functions that integrate with your existing management tools.

- *Auditability*

Logging tools will help to proactively monitor your network and identify suspicious behavior, or reactively investigate the events leading up to a breach.

The value these logs provide is directly related to the integrity of the logs themselves. There should be extra protections on the logs. For example, cryptographically signing the audit log entries will provide an indication if a log is tampered with.

- *Cost*

As with any technology acquisition, you should consider the cost of hardware, software, services (installation, training, support, etc) that will require your investment at the time of deployment, but also over the lifetime of the solution.

### Continuously Re-Evaluate Your Solution

Once you have selected and successfully deployed a security solution, it is crucial that you have an ongoing review process to ensure that the solution continues to meet the needs of your organization. Furthermore, a regular review of the other processes in place involving your people and facilities that help ensure the security of your data should also take place.

## Education: Collaborate to Compete and Comply

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- *Creation and capture of business-related metadata*—The capture of business-related metadata is a critical part of the information lifecycle process, with all parties invested in the who, what, when, why, and how of the metadata capture process.
- *Shared responsibility with regard to risk*—It is critical that all stakeholders acknowledge and understand the risks attached to records. Records originating from both within and outside the enterprise, and formal and informal records of all electronic and physical media types, must be assessed for their value as records as well their risk potential. Specific, measurable actions should be outlined when records are stored, retained, moved, or destroyed.

In summary, to achieve information management compliance within your organisation then collaboration between the data centre, lines of business and key enterprise stakeholders such as legal, security and records and information managers is critical.

One implementation method used by many companies is ILM (Information Lifecycle Management), as a complete information-based management practice.

The Storage Networking Industry Association is currently developing two important standards in this area: the *Storage Management Initiative-Specification (SMI-S)* for ILM services, and the *eXtensible Access Method (XAM)*. *SMI-S* for ILM services, essential for automation of ILM-based practices, will allow heterogeneous services to be instrumented and driven by central ILM management tools and ILM-enabled applications. The first such specifications will appear in *SMI-S 1.2.0*, with more management interfaces to follow in subsequent releases. *XAM* provides applications with a standard interface to storage and with the capability to write metadata relevant to ILM practices.

Although both standards are still in development, there are tools in the marketplace today that can be used to implement ILM-based practices now. For example, building and automating ILM-based practices around vertical applications such as e-mail or database archiving, and implementing and automating tiering, protection, compliance, and archiving solutions using ILM management tools or utilities integrated into virtualisation platforms.

To learn more about how SNIA is working to define open technology standards and best practices in information and storage management for the Information-Centric Enterprise, visit the SNIA Data Management Forum at [www.snia.org/forums/dmf](http://www.snia.org/forums/dmf)

## Regional Focus: Italy

Marco Spoldi, Chair, SNIA Europe Italy Committee, [italychair@snia.org](mailto:italychair@snia.org)



In this, our first regional committee focus, I am pleased to bring you an update on the preparations for the first SNIA Europe Academy in Italy.

Since its inception in 2005, the SNIA Europe Academy has visited a number of countries including the Czech Republic, Denmark, Poland, Norway,

Sweden, Switzerland, the UAE and even Singapore (in collaboration with SNIA South Asia), receiving highly positive feedback in each location. The Italian Committee is pleased to be hosting the next SNIA Europe Academy in Rome on 30 November 2007 at the easy-to-reach Sheraton Hotel in via del Pattinaggio. The aim: to bring the Italian end user organisations to an event where they can learn about the latest data storage technologies and architectures through SNIA-sanctioned tutorials and presentations. For more information go to [www.storage-academy.com/italy/](http://www.storage-academy.com/italy/).

With a proven format and content we trust that all delegates will find the Academy educational, rewarding and enjoyable. Through this event we are committed to bringing you the very best technology training with top speakers from Italy and the rest of Europe. Following end user feedback, the Committee has decided to include XAM, security, SMI-S, IP storage, virtualisation and other key subjects in the sessions. Delegates can expect the association to provide sound guidance thanks to its consolidated expertise

and vision in terms of how the technology will develop and how it can be deployed in the real, heterogeneous world to provide highly-integrated solutions to customers. In addition to the tutorials and presentations you will find an expo area where you can meet with leading industry vendors who are supporting the event.

When we communicated the decision to bring the Academy to Italy to our members, the idea was extremely well received. Five years after its formation, the SNIA Europe Italian Committee has now become the de facto source of vendor-independent education on all matters related to networked storage in our country. Over the past few years, SNIA Europe has already taken part in several shows and expos in Italy, with both technical and marketing presentations. However this is our first opportunity to have an event entirely dedicated to the local end users under our vendor-independent umbrella. And that's why every member of the Italian Committee is 100% behind the Academy.

The SNIA Europe Academy is the place to get the independent information and expert advice you need to better understand and apply advanced storage networking technologies and storage management solutions. It will help you give your company the edge it needs to compete in the on-demand and internet-connected world. We look forward to seeing you in Rome!



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