

IDC: "The Future of Storage is Software Based"

Written by Marco Attard
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Global file- and object-based storage (FOBS) revenues will reach \$23 billion in 2013 before growing to \$38bn by 2017 IDC reports, with the shift to FOBS driving growth in the overall enterprise storage systems market.



"FOBS solutions are much more versatile and will quickly outpace more rigid, hardware-based options," the analyst says. "Scale-up solutions, including unitary file servers and scale-up appliances and gateways, will fall on hard times throughout the [2012-2017] forecast period, experiencing sluggish growth through 2016 before beginning to decline in 2017. On the other hand, scale-out file- and object-based solutions— delivered either as software, virtual storage appliances, hardware appliances, or self-built for delivering cloud-based offerings— are forecast to show robust growth with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 24.5% from 2012 to 2017."

According to IDC FOBS solutions will find more diverse use cases as versatility increases-- meaning vendors must make platforms compatible with server and desktop virtualisation, in-place analytics (what IDC calls "Compustorage") and NoSQL databases as FOBS solutions dominate applications such as archiving and eDiscovery.

The 2012-2017 period will also see commercial solutions garnering strong demand even as DIY storage becomes more prevalent. Meanwhile storage traffic outside the datacentre undergoes a "dramatic shift" towards IP-based storage resource consumption due to the growth of mobile, social and cloud.

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Unitary host-based file server revenues should shrink as the market moves to purpose-built platforms, and object-based and object-oriented file system storage solution (for public and private cloud archive environments) growth will continue to outpace the market.

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