MARKET NOTE

Commvault GO 2019: Commvault Accelerates its Pivot to Cloud, Containers, and SaaS to be Ready for the Next Chapter of Digital Transformation

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EXECUTIVE SNAPSHOT

FIGURE 1

Executive Snapshot: Commvault Accelerates its Pivot to Cloud, Containers and SaaS

Commvault's corporate vision and its priorities unveiled at Commvault GO 2019 — such as software-as-a-service (SaaS) data protection, delivering cloud-like pricing and user experience, container management, software-defined infrastructure, unification of storage management and data management, and strengthening ecosystem and partnerships — represent its strong intent to remain a critical "data force" in the next chapter of data-led digital transformation.

Key Takeaways

- Already a busy year with a new CEO and its first-ever acquisition, Commvault — at its fourth annual Commvault GO event held in October 2019 — unveiled a slew of new solutions and upgrades including Metallic (a SaaS backup and recovery service), new features to its newly acquired Hedvig software-defined storage (SDS) architecture, and upgrades to its flagship solutions including Commvault Activate and Commvault HyperScale.

- Commvault also announced engineering updates to deliver cloud-like pricing and user experience across its solutions and the strengthening of its technology alliances.

- Commvault's accelerated foray into the new multicloud, container, and SaaS world from a technology and innovation standpoint is well-timed and well-aligned with enterprise needs. Its next biggest effort needs to be to transform its channel ecosystem to ensure its new strategy and vision yields positive results.

- All eyes are on its new leadership team on how quickly and how well it executes on its vision of unified storage and data management to claim a strong stake in the dynamic data-driven digital transformation.

- Commvault exhibited renewed vigor and a culture of innovation at the event. It needs to keep up this momentum and clearly communicate its joint value to technology partners and channels for everyone in the value chain to reap benefits.

Source: IDC, 2019

This IDC Market Note assesses data management vendor Commvault's fourth annual Commvault GO 2019 event held in Denver, Colorado, on October 15 and 16. This year has been a significant for Commvault as it welcomed its new CEO Sanjay Mirchandani and made its first ever acquisition – Hedvig. This report analyzes Commvault's new products, strategies, and vision outlined at the event and its implications on end users.

IDC'S POINT OF VIEW

Launch of Metallic

Metallic is a new business unit within Commvault delivering SaaS backup and recovery for core workloads, SaaS applications such as Office 365, and endpoint protection. Its services are yet to launch in Europe, but it represents how Commvault has fully embraced cloud as a delivery model. It is also building on SaaS opportunities because at its core, Metallic has a scalable, cloud-native architecture, not just a SaaS makeover on an existing, traditional solution.

Commvault has also identified a few key partners to take this to market in the first phase. IDC believes its approach of rolling out Metallic in phases is a good strategy, helping Commvault gather partner feedback and iterate quickly before rolling out widely. Channel response can make or break SaaS solutions. As Commvault extends Metallic to new regions such as Europe, it needs to clearly convey the value proposition to the channel, or else they will see it as a competing solution that undermines their integration efforts.

Hedvig Integration and New Capabilities

Commvault's acquisition of software-defined storage start-up Hedvig gave it entry into rapidly growing, high-potential markets and differentiation from its traditional data protection competitors. At Commvault GO 2019, it highlighted its ongoing engineering efforts to unify storage and data management. It also revealed new Hedvig capabilities such as a container storage interface (CSI) support to manage container orchestrators including Kubernetes, data services such as erasure coding, and multicluster monitoring and management to scale SDS environments.

IDC predicts that by 2023, as a pillar of their IT multicloud approach, 70% of IT organizations will implement a strategic container/abstraction/application programming interface (API) playbook to enhance application portability and hosting flexibility.

According to IDC's *European Multicloud Survey* in August 2019, containers, microservices, and APIs are immediate next-gen IT priorities for 51% of organizations. It found that 60% of respondents cited best-of-breed container-defined storage or shared storage services as the preferred option to meet persistent storage needs in their new cloud-native environments. Leveraging Commvault data protection and Hedvig container support could help Commvault address this emerging need more successfully.

Enhancements to Commvault Activate

Commvault Activate was used by its customers to analyze their data and use that insight to optimize storage infrastructures, reduce risks around sensitive data, and improve compliance and data governance postures. At the event, Commvault added features such as redaction functions when exporting files, file access controls for file storage optimization, and a flexible licensing scheme on a per-user or per-terabyte basis. It has also improved the user experience of Commvault Activate by consolidating dashboards into the Commvault Command Center for easier management and reporting.

Data governance remains a key challenge, and Activate's compliance-related features such as search and discovery, workflow tracking, as well as deletion from the Commvault backup platform can boost organizations' confidence in audit reporting and compliance.

These enhancements will be embraced by organizations that are looking to scale their GDPR compliance initiatives beyond just "minimum viable compliance," which was the tactical approach organizations adopted in a hurry to meet the deadline in 2018.

Ecosystem and Partnerships

Many of Commvault's technology partners such as NetApp and HPE shared their joint vision and engineering capabilities to help enterprises navigate through the data-related complexities of multicloud environments, data growth, and pressure on cost efficiency.

New Horizon for New Commvault

In the era of multicloud and data silos, organizations want to protect "centers of data" and not "datacenters." Data protection needs to realign to become application-centric and depart from being infrastructure-centric.

Commvault's corporate vision and its priorities unveiled at Commvault GO 2019 – such as SaaS data protection, delivering cloud-like pricing and user experience, container management, software-defined, infrastructure, unification of storage management and data management, and strengthening ecosystem and partnerships – represent its strong intent to remain a critical "data force" in the next chapter of data-led digital transformation.

In IDC's *Multicloud Survey*, 2019, Commvault was ranked third in terms of customer confidence around vendor capabilities for multicloud data protection. First and second ranked vendors are broad infrastructure vendors with wide portfolios. With the Hedvig acquisition and Commvault HyperScale appliance features, the vendor is foraying into primary storage, secondary storage, and multicloud storage management opportunities. IDC believes its focus is steered in the right direction given customer confidence in vendors offering both infrastructure and data protection solutions.

Emphasis on SaaS and SDS represent its intention to extend beyond core backup, recovery, and data management software.

As IDC highlighted in its report on the Hedvig acquisition, a departure from incremental product evolution opens multiple opportunities for Commvault. It represents a bold step from a long-standing data protection vendor that is keen to stay relevant in the dynamic and fast-evolving multiplatform and data-driven mandates.

In the SDS world, Hedvig is a well-known name in Europe serving multinational European brands. In Western Europe (where there is cautious adoption of public cloud over regulatory and sovereignty concerns), SDS is seen as a viable alternative that brings a public-cloud-like experience to on-premise infrastructure modernization. IDC forecasts accelerated growth of 21% CAGR for software-defined storage software in Europe until 2023, presenting Commvault new growth opportunities.

In IDC's opinion, Commvault is doubling down on its data protection heritage and diversifying in highly complementary areas. It has come a long way from a technology innovation and pricing standpoint. But it also brings a shift in Commvault's corporate culture and identity. Until now, it had a clear swim lane, and its alliances with storage vendors and ISVs were complementary. With the Hedvig acquisition and SaaS backup, Commvault will need to significantly invest in nurturing its technology alliances and channel ecosystem. Underestimating the ripple effect of its new company direction could slow down the returns and undermine the new vision.

One of its big tasks will be to transform its channel community in the regions where partners may still be operating in legacy business models, a far cry from the new Commvault.

All eyes are on the new CEO Sanjay Mirchandani and the new team combining Hedvig and Metallic talent on how well it executes on its technical and go-to-market vision to claim a strong stake in the data protection and SDS markets. After all, data management architecture forms the bedrock of a data-driven organization.

The company's engineers, customers, and some partners exhibited new vigor and spirit, indicating the potential of the new Commvault. As it rolls out its new services in Europe, Commvault needs to establish effective two-way communication with local partners and customers to execute successfully.

The possibilities, if well-executed, are massive.

LEARN MORE

Related Research

- *Commvault Acquires Hedvig as Entree into New Markets* (IDC #lcUS45481419, September 2019)

Synopsis

This IDC Market Note analyzes Commvault's new products, strategies, and vision outlined at its Commvault GO 2019 event held in Denver this month and its implications on end users. 2019 has been a significant year for Commvault as it welcomed its new CEO Sanjay Mirchandani and made its first-ever acquisition, Hedvig.

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