



New Commvault CEO: Sanjay Mirchandani Takes the Helm

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IDC's Quick Take

Commvault's new CEO, Sanjay Mirchandani, assumes leadership of a company that has both significant strengths and some serious challenges. To keep Commvault among the leaders of the data replication and protection (DR&P) market, we believe he must leverage Commvault's customer loyalty, breadth of platform and cloud capabilities and combined with his recent experience of the container and cloud-native applications world, to evolve the company beyond 2nd Platform backup/recovery to target and dominate 3rd Platform market segments such as virtual infrastructure, containers and NoSQL databases.

News Highlights

On February 5, 2019, Commvault [announced](#) the appoint of Sanjay Mirchandani as CEO, succeeding Robert (Bob) Hammer. Mr. Hammer had served as Commvault's CEO since its spin-off from AT&T in the late 1990's, guiding its emergence as a public company to become one of the Top 5 data replication and protection software vendors according to IDC Semi-Annual Software Tracker data. He will continue to serve on Commvault's Board of Directors as Chairman Emeritus. Mr. Mirchandani most recently served as President and CEO of Puppet, an open source configuration management software company.

IDC's Point of View

The replacement of Mr. Hammer had been anticipated for some time, with the company announcing a CEO search following activist investor prompting in 2018. In addition, long-time COO Al Bunte recently announced his retirement as of April 1, 2019.

Commvault's new executive leadership takes over a company with some significant strengths:

- **Strong customer loyalty** – IDC research has found Commvault's customers to have high levels of satisfaction as well as brand loyalty
- **Broad portfolio of products** – Commvault has a strong line-up of data protection, DR and orchestration products. Most recently, it announced its HyperScale purpose-built backup appliance (PBBA), aimed at the growing integrated PBBA market segment
- **Strong market position** – IDC data shows Commvault as the number 5 data replication and protection software vendor in the first half of 2018
- **Pivot to cloud** – The company has been working to build its cloud data protection capabilities and has introduced some worthy products in this category, including its Commvault Complete Backup and Recovery as a Service portfolio
- **Consumption-based pricing** – Commvault has been among the most aggressive major "legacy" vendors to shift to a consumption-based pricing model, consistent with the needs and norms of cloud environments.

Nevertheless, the new executive leadership must address some serious challenges:

- **Evolve from 2nd platform to 3rd platform technology** – Commvault's core technology is rooted in a 2nd platform architecture (client/server). Commvault rose to prominence based on its outstanding Windows backup technology (e.g., Windows NT Server) and capable UNIX functionality. However, the company has been significantly outpaced by other competitors in 3rd platform arenas, especially virtual infrastructure. In recent years, Commvault had pivoted to a "data management" emphasis, but has since pulled back to focus on backup/recovery. However, we believe that Commvault must find a fundamentally new technical architecture to address 3rd platform data protection opportunities, such as SaaS applications, containers, and NoSQL databases.
- **Build a strong 3rd platform ecosystem** – Commvault's ecosystem of cloud service providers (CSPs) remains nascent compared to key competitors. Until very recently, Commvault continued to rely on 2nd platform go-to-market methodologies, such as direct sales, distributors and VARs. We believe that a strong CSP ecosystem is essential in the 3rd platform cloud era. Commvault has recently reorganized its sales force to address this issue, but must now catch up with competitors. The good news is that there is plenty of opportunity to do so.
- **Foster deeper technology alliances** – Commvault should continue to invest in deeper integration with hyperscale platforms as well as container application platforms to maintain its relevance in the fragmented multi-cloud and multi-platform era. This is especially important as data management is increasingly viewed from an application lens. It will also help it cement its role in the data migration/movement aspect which is becoming ever more important, particularly for European organizations
- **Dominate future market segments** – Commvault must look to emerging market segments and determine which to dominate. Although virtual infrastructure remains the key battleground, newer market segments mentioned above represent future growth. Commvault cannot get into these markets late and expect to dominate them.

We believe this is a critical juncture for Commvault. While the company could certainly ride for some time on its large installed base and advance its products incrementally, we know the company aspires to more. Data replication is becoming increasingly complex. In a hybrid cloud, software defined world, the challenges that customers face are difficult, and the ROI on solutions to those problems can be tough to justify. This all translates into opportunity for Commvault and for Sanjay Mirchandani. The appointment of new senior management was a necessary move for the company to escape the old formula for success that is no longer sufficient and take a fresh attack on what continues to be a dynamic, growing market in data replication and protection.

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