

WHITE PAPER

Accelerating Data Protection Outcome Success with Dell PSX

An Analysis of Dell Product Success Accelerator (PSX) Services:
An Optimal Combination of Skills and Expertise to Deliver
Comprehensive Backup and Cyber Recovery Solutions

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September 2023

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Market Overview

The Need for Effective Backup and Recovery Capabilities Has Never Been Greater

The rapid move to the cloud has left many companies uncertain when it comes to protecting critical data. While cloud infrastructure providers deliver resilient operational capabilities, few protect critical data, requiring new systems, processes, and skills to ensure data protection and control. Further impeding data protection objectives are increasing regulatory requirements, new and more complex data types, and cloud-based application development cycles that deliver net-new capabilities at an unprecedented rate. Whether organizations are developing the latest apps on premises or in the cloud, data protection should be a priority concern at the forefront and not an afterthought. Organizations are investigating cloud-to-ground functionality and on-prem data protection for added controls and flexibility.

The threat of ransomware and the critical role that backup and recovery capabilities play in response and recovery situations is accelerating the need for more reliable data protection strategies. Recent research from TechTarget's Enterprise Strategy Group reveals that a staggering 79% of organizations have fallen victim to at least one ransomware attack within the past year. Shockingly, a mere 14% of those surveyed were able to fully recover their data post-attack.¹

Cybercriminals are also now targeting backups, causing 87% of respondents to worry about their backup copies being hit by ransomware attacks.² As a result, many organizations are now prioritizing the need for an offline and/or air-gapped copy of their data to protect against potential attacks. The ability to maintain "clean" copies of data has never been more important.

Wanted: IT Cybersecurity Skill Sets

IT leaders rely on many different skillsets across their teams to architect, deploy, and manage their infrastructure and keep the lights on. However, significant shortages in the market today affect key IT areas. This is backed up by yearly research conducted by Enterprise Strategy Group.

Cybersecurity is at the top of the list of areas in which respondents report a problematic shortage of existing skills and has been for many years, which only emphasizes the potential risks many organizations face with ransomware. This is made even more problematic by the fact that 29% of organizations also report that data protection skills are sorely lacking, placing them in an even riskier cyber recovery situation. It is also important to note that organizations report that fundamental IT architecture and planning skill sets are missing (see Figure 1).³ This is why it is key to consider third-party assistance in the form of services and/or solutions that can help compensate for current skill set exposures.

¹ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Research Report, [The Long Road Ahead to Ransomware Preparedness](#), June 2022.

² Ibid.

³ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Research Report, [2023 Technology Spending Intentions Survey](#), November 2022.

Figure 1. Skills Shortages Persist, Causing Many to Explore Third Parties for Help

In which of the following areas do you believe your IT organization currently has a problematic shortage of existing skills? (Percent of respondents, N=738, multiple responses accepted)



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Data Protection Headaches

It is also important for enterprises to prioritize the impact of downtime on both on-premises and cloud mission-critical workloads. As previously discussed, the complexity of technology and the scarcity of IT talent pose significant challenges to data protection, which can lead to service disruptions, downtime, and possible data loss, even without ransomware being the culprit.

Currently, IT operations teams are responsible for managing backup and recovery functions on a daily basis in most organizations. However, only 1 in 10 organizations surveyed can recover 100% of their data on-premises, indicating

a considerable risk of data loss. Therefore, businesses should deploy data protection solutions that can effectively meet service level agreements to reduce this risk.⁴

In light of the current market conditions and trends, IT professionals should take another look at how they handle crucial tasks. They should also look for vendors that can enhance data protection service levels, bolster their recovery strategies against ransomware, and do so in a cost-efficient manner.

Technology Alone Seldom Delivers Desired Outcomes

Against a backdrop of increased complexity and dwindling skill sets, organizations have now realized that technology alone does not solve all IT problems. A combination of people, processes, and technology are required. This is especially true in achieving security outcomes. The fast moving, complex threat landscape facing most organizations today translates into urgency, shining a light on the importance of data protection and cyber recovery SLAs, as failure to meet SLAs puts data and the business at risk, as well as risks regulatory compliance penalties.

Accelerating mitigation strategies requires both proven technology and proven experts able to carefully craft solutions that map to current and future IT infrastructure needs and SLAs. Inadequate planning, deployment, and management inevitably lead to poor outcomes, in our opinion. This may seem like an insurmountable challenge, especially for midsize organizations that may not have access to the scarce resources that could help them architect for success.

Introducing Dell Product Success Accelerator (PSX) Services

Dell Technologies recently announced a new Product Success Accelerator (PSX) service offering to help organizations overcome these challenges. PSX services are designed to streamline the activities needed to plan, deploy, optimize, and operate critical technologies, beginning with backup and cyber recovery.

As an established leader in data protection solutions across the globe, Dell Technologies is well positioned to help organizations architect and implement reliable backup and cyber recovery solutions. Dell can bring their experts in backup and recovery and cyber recovery vault into an organization's environment to rapidly plan and implement an end-to-end solution. The PSX offering distinguishes itself by providing unique skill sets around a specific technology in a fixed-price package that meticulously maps out what is needed for individual environments.

KPI Success Plan Examples

1. PowerProtect Appliance Capacity Status
2. Replication Status
3. Scanning Status
4. Front-end Terabyte Growth Rates
5. Restore Test Rate

The design point for PSX is to deliver predictable and measurable outcomes by combining skilled expertise, proven services methodology, technology, and end-to-end planning, deployment, and operational capabilities. This is different from other service approaches, which offer many advantages but may be too complex, may suffer from "scope creep," and may be too costly for many midmarket or decentralized organizations. Everything in the PSX offering is pre-scoped and documented, which is key, in our opinion.

The focus on outcomes is central to the success of the PSX service model. We particularly like the focus on providing skills training as part of the package and the collaborative planning workshop, where Dell's experts craft an all-inclusive plan to prioritize data, validate deployment design, and provide critical input for an operational runbook, including documented procedures and guidance (which is central to success in an emergency, such as a

⁴ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Complete Survey Results, [Cloud Data Protection Strategies at a Crossroads](#), July 2023.

ransomware attack). It also focuses on outcomes through the delivery of a key performance indicator (KPI)-based “Success Plan,” with a recommended path to achieve the same target outcomes across each of the available PSX service levels.

Standard, Measurable Performance Goals Are Integral to PSX Offerings

KPIs measure performance against established metrics to evaluate a specific set of activities aimed at protecting critical production data for an organization. By establishing and measuring KPIs, organizations can achieve the following objectives:

- Track overall performance to established goals.
- Monitor the performance progress and trends over time.
- Formulate corrective actions as needed.
- Mitigate organizational risks.
- Report and communicate performance status.

A unique aspect of the PSX family of service offerings is choice and flexibility. There are three levels of PSX service offering, each providing incremental levels of capabilities (see Figure 2):

1. The first level, “Ready,” is designed for those who prefer to handle many tasks on their own but need assistance with planning and deployment to ensure that the solution is fully operational and production-ready.
2. The second level, “Optimize,” includes ongoing quarterly assessments to ensure optimal efficiency throughout the year, including assisted restore tests to simulate a real-world event.
3. Finally, the highest level, “Assist,” provides the expertise of Dell Technologies professionals who can handle more of the daily monitoring and operational tasks to meet solution performance objectives, initiate corrective actions, and help with restore tasks as directed by the customer.

The Optimize and Assist levels are year-round, providing a consistent customer experience aligned to predefined KPIs. With every activity mapped out for a specific outcome, PSX assures both cost and delivery efficiencies.

A Comprehensive Range of Solutions

PSX offers a comprehensive range of solutions that cater to all customers, irrespective of their size or type. It sits right in the middle of traditional professional services and fully managed offerings to provide varied levels of services.

This service offering integrates multiple capabilities, enabling customers to purchase their own hardware and software, together with a single PSX service offering, which includes consolidated activities aimed at achieving a specific outcome.

Figure 2. Dell’s PSX Service Options: PSX is Designed with 3 Levels to Cover the Spectrum of Expertise Required



Source: Dell Technologies.

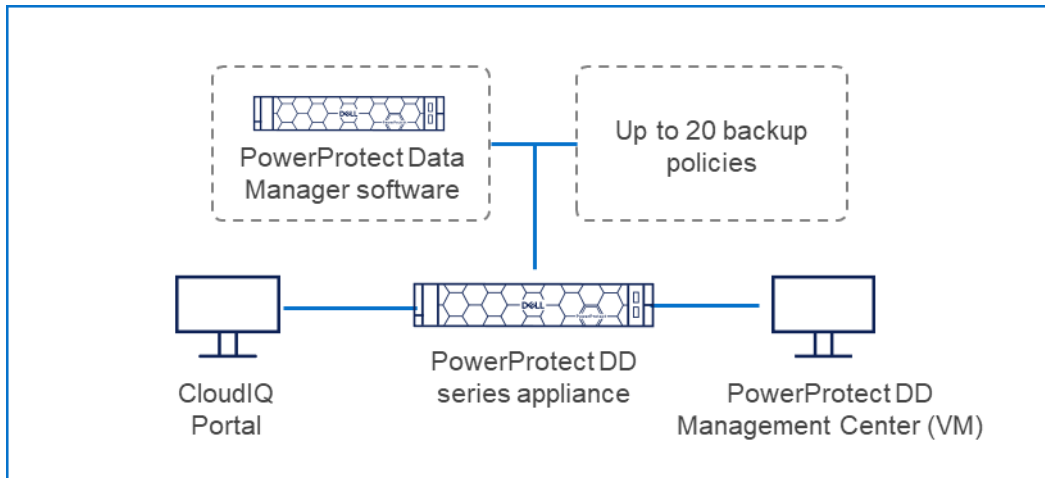
Product Success Accelerator (PSX) for Backup

Dell Technologies offers a vast portfolio of innovative, proven software and appliance solutions, including the PowerProtect DD series appliance, PowerProtect Data Manager software, and accessibility via the CloudIQ portal and PowerProtect DD Management Center.

The services offered by PSX for Backup align to specific hardware and software components at the solution level. This service includes initial planning, installation, configuration, and enablement as well as assessments and operational assistance, depending on the level selected. It is up to the end user to determine the needs and capabilities required, as the service is tailored to their data protection backup environment. Quarterly assessments and assisted restore testing are available with the Optimize level, providing assurance that operational objectives can be met.

Dell PowerProtect DD solutions, coupled with PSX for Backup, help eliminate sprawl across locations, tools, and technologies, consolidating data for improved operations. This not only streamlines administrative tasks but is also a prerequisite in setting up a secure, isolated cyber recovery vault.

Figure 3. PSX for Backup



Source: Dell Technologies.

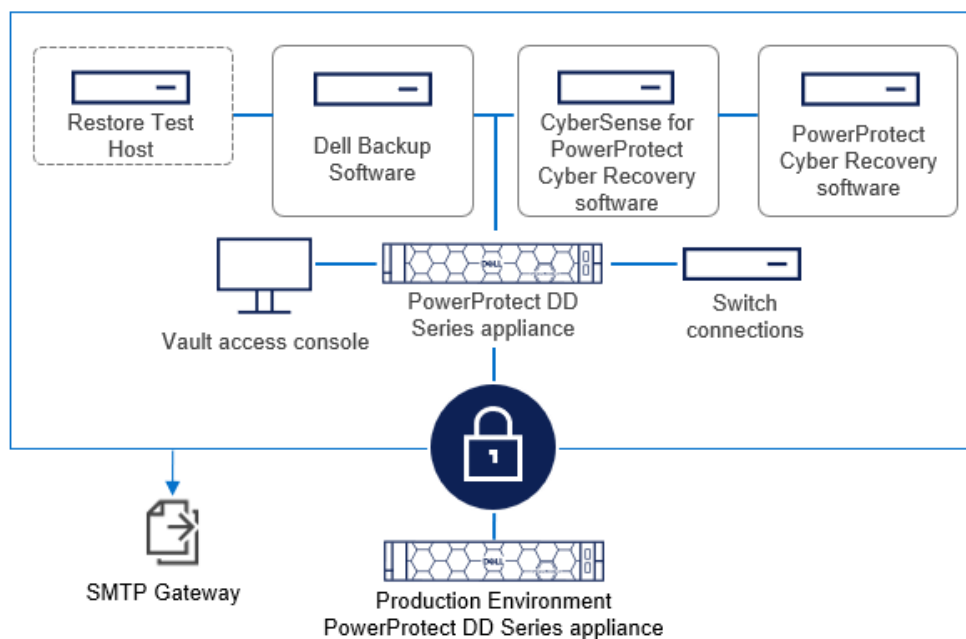
Product Success Accelerator (PSX) for Cyber Recovery

Dell PSX for Cyber Recovery is a key solution to have in one’s arsenal to fend off cyber attackers and improve cyber resilience. It includes a recommended design and flexible configurations for a cyber recovery vault. At every level, the PSX service is aligned with the vault components, such as PowerProtect DD series appliance and CyberSense software, which scans for suspicious activity within backup data. In addition, the PowerProtect Cyber Recovery software manages the replication of critical data from the production environment into the vault.

Other components of the solution include a choice of Dell backup software in the vault (PowerProtect Data Manager, NetWorker, or Avamar), an optional restore test host to support in-vault testing, and a vault access console for remote access to the vault.

With the highest service level (Assist), PSX can help customers with administration and operations, as well as expansion of the vault configuration. The service includes the configuration of software on physical or virtual servers (Dell PowerEdge or VxRail).

Figure 4. PSX for Cyber Recovery



Source: Dell Technologies.

Conclusion

The growing threat landscape facing most organizations is driving urgency in strengthening backup and recovery capabilities. Yet many struggle to acquire the resources and expertise needed to architect, implement, and operationalize these critical risk mitigation strategies. Implementation alone is not enough, as operationalizing assessment and testing to ensure SLAs is critical to success. This requires a highly measurable approach, with clear KPIs and well-defined outcomes. Across the industry, we see a variety of traditional service offerings and engagement models, often expensive and requiring complex, multi-step configurations. With so many options, the procurement process can be unwieldy and unnecessarily complex.

Dell's expanding family of Product Success Accelerator services addresses this complexity head-on and is designed to simplify and streamline business challenges associated with implementing and operationalizing critical technologies, beginning with discrete service offerings focused on backup and cyber recovery.

PSX represents Dell's continuous drive to simplify lifecycle services and enable faster adoption and increased efficiency while meeting budget requirements. Product Success Accelerators strike a perfect balance between highly skilled expertise in deployment, measurable outcomes, proven methodologies, and cost.

PSX also provides excellent prospects for Dell's partners to stand out and offer outcome-based solutions in the high-demand areas of backup and cyber recovery solutions. This is achieved without the need to hire subject matter experts, as PSX utilizes Dell's expertise throughout the engagement to deliver a comprehensive and standardized approach to end customers.

Enterprise Strategy Group recommends exploring highly optimized service offerings from proven experts like Dell to accelerate risk mitigations strategies.

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