



Business challenge

Organizations are struggling to modernize their legacy data protection environments in the face of growing demands around new infrastructure, new applications, and budget consolidation.

Transformation

Cobalt Iron uses IBM Spectrum Protect to run millions of monthly backup jobs with up to 99.9 percent success rates—helping support rapid growth in customer backups at highly economical pricing.



Richard Spurlock
CEO, Cobalt Iron

Business benefits

Up to 75%

reduction in backup/data protection Capex and Opex annual costs

Up to 80%

reduction in backup management times

Up to 92%

faster restore times

Cobalt Iron

Delivering modern data protection with cloud scale backup from Cobalt Iron and IBM

Based near Kansas City, Cobalt Iron has over 20 years' experience with IBM® Spectrum Storage™ technologies. As a leading developer of cloud scale data protection solutions, Cobalt Iron has worked with IBM for three years to create and support its own software-defined enterprise cloud backup solution.

“We can now trust our backups are accurate and the data is ready when we need it.”

— Doug French, Fidelity—a client of Cobalt Iron

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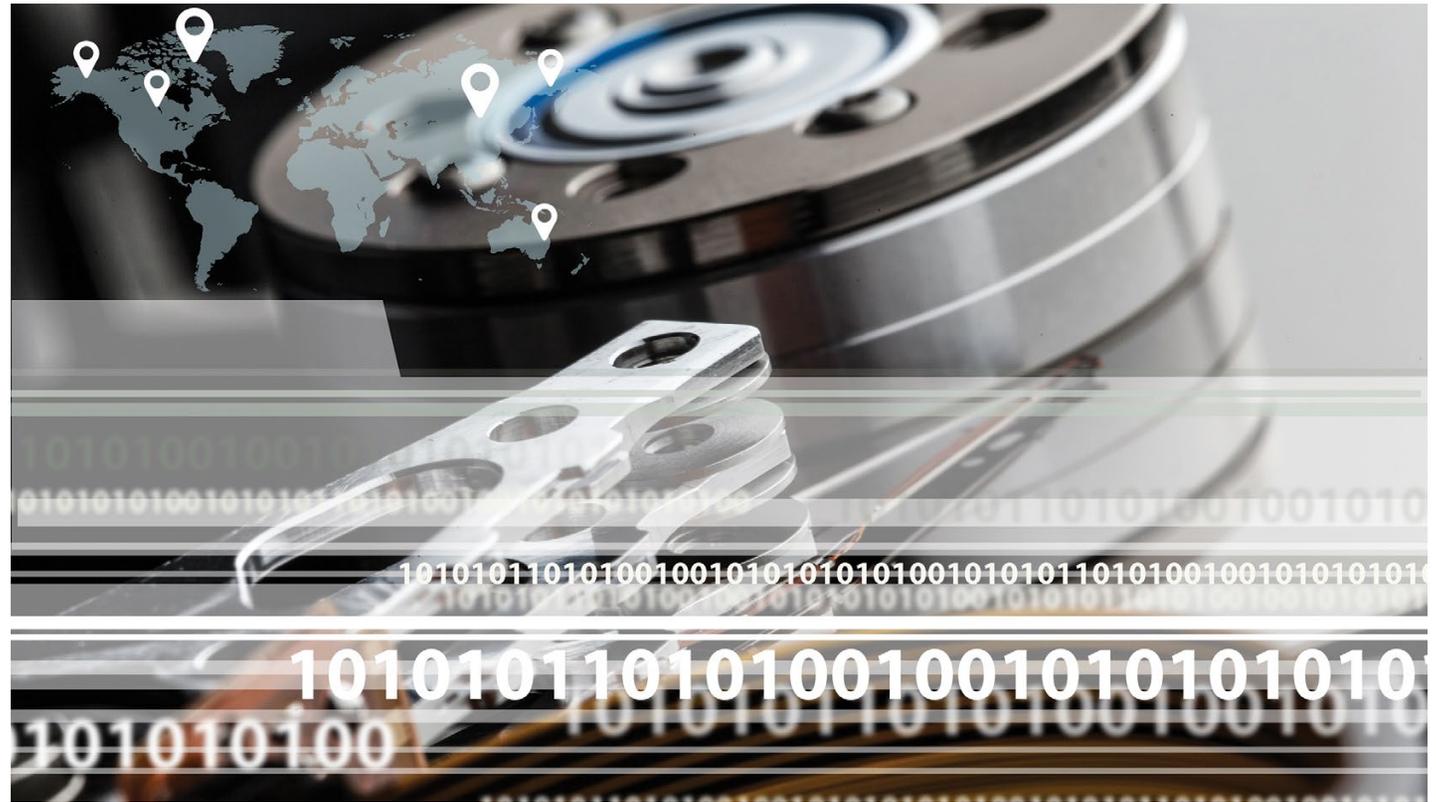


Uncontrolled growth

Virtualization and modern application development processes have significantly outgrown legacy backup architectures. In response, infrastructure teams have created multiple backup solution types to handle the varying SLAs (performance, scale, cost) required by their business sponsors. However, the sheer number and variety of solutions in this uncontrolled expansion creates huge amounts of work, threatening to overwhelm the IT team in many organizations.

Today, developers may add new applications and virtual server instances by the hundreds per day without accounting for the restrictions of the existing backup infrastructure. They leverage the cloud for immediate compute and storage resources, yet rarely communicate succinctly with corporate IT to ensure that the appropriate data protection services are in place.

The challenge that businesses are facing is to adequately protect exploding volumes of data in a cost-effective way. Historically, the enterprise IT team has been forced to adopt multiple approaches to backup involving multiple vendor solutions. As well as being very time-consuming to manage and update, using multiple backup solutions requires personnel with



domain-specific expertise and regular investment in training. Most importantly, performing backups correctly in the first place is tough—and high failure rates add to the overall cost and complexity of managing an enterprise backup and recovery solution.

“Our customers have been challenged by the large number of pieces and parts it requires to deploy comprehensive backup and recovery capabilities. Successful deployments

have traditionally taken a lot of time and engineering expertise,” says Richard R. Spurlock, CEO & Founder, Cobalt Iron.

Enterprise service from a hybrid cloud

To help enterprises to solve these challenges, Cobalt Iron developed a hybrid cloud approach to data protection using IBM Spectrum Protect as a core embedded application.

IBM Spectrum Protect is a key component of Cobalt Iron backup solutions. Spectrum Protect enables Cobalt Iron software-defined backup to protect practically any environment—including Microsoft Windows, IBM AIX® and Linux—either from physical machines or virtualization platforms such as VMware or Microsoft Hyper-V.

The Cobalt Iron solution delivers two distinct layers of backup capabilities. The first is the management layer, which delivers a clear view of all data protection policies, activities, operations, scheduling, and reporting. The management layer also delivers on-going updates, upgrades, monitoring, and analytics. The second layer, Performance & Scale, delivers the engine for enterprise backup and recovery acceleration, and provides a bridge to cloud architecture and economics.

“In the past, customers looking for a managed backup solution essentially had to choose between low-cost consumer-grade offerings with a limited range of capabilities or enterprise-class systems that delivered advanced features but with a substantial price tag and painful complexity,” explains Spurlock.

Strong partnership

“We have been IBM Spectrum Protect experts for more than 20 years,” says Spurlock. “We see that the IBM development team is genuinely passionate about IBM Spectrum Protect. That team is only a call away when we want to discuss new features, functions and scale. We are confident that our relationship with IBM’s development team, IBM Strategic Outsourcing and



IBM Business Partners is delivering new capabilities for our mutual customers.”

Faster backups, lower costs

“For example, one of our customers—a leading banking group in the United States—reduced the time spent on backup management by 80 percent,” comments

Spurlock. “Such large time-savings are quite common; another of our customers in the medical services space reported a weekly saving of 12 hours on administration tasks alone, which is a testament to the value of our ADP Business Intelligence management application.”

“The other leading solution we considered would have been more expensive and would have required more time managing the backup solution.”

— Travis Cooper, Capital City Bank

“It’s a common expression that people don’t want to back up their data—they want to restore. We can deliver both rapid backups and lightning-fast restore times—and all at a compelling price point.”

— Richard Spurlock, CEO,
Cobalt Iron

The Cobalt Iron ADP v3.2 management platform provides real-time data protection analytics, including: discovery of unprotected instances, failed backups, missed recovery SLAs, charge backs, and backup instance performance by SLA category. ADP v3.2 also maintains a historical data protection performance archive to assist management in appropriately matching instances to SLA protection levels. Clients have found this feature to be enormously valuable to IT as they work with business owners to deliver the optimal data protection coverage at the lowest cost.

“Cobalt Iron customers are achieving an average backup success rate of 99.9 percent—something that simply wouldn’t be possible without a modernized data protection architecture,” continues Spurlock. “Better yet, our solution enabled one customer to

restore their data 90 percent faster. It’s a common expression that people don’t want to back up their data—they want to restore. We can deliver both rapid backups and lightning-fast restore times—and all at a compelling price point.”

He continues: “Cobalt Iron’s use of data compression and data deduplication capabilities, powered by IBM Spectrum Protect, enable clients to reduce the amount of data stored by 55 percent or more—contributing to storage cost reductions of up to 90 percent.”

Spurlock concludes: “By continuing our close collaboration with IBM, we are in a perfect position to expand our IBM partnership by integrating SoftLayer and new IBM object storage solutions such as Cleversafe and IBM Spectrum Scale™.”

Solution components

- IBM® Spectrum Protect™
- IBM Spectrum Storage™

Connect with us



Take the next step

To learn more about IBM Spectrum Protect solutions, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website: ibm.com/systems/storage/spectrum/protect/