



PUND-IT RESEARCH

Marketplace Update

Resident Expertise

Gauging the Value of EMC's Residency Services

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May 14, 2007

Overview

Managed service offerings are commonly available for most organizations and from virtually every IT vendor, as well as a wide variety of business integrators, technical specialists, and IT outsourcers. But as technology solutions become increasingly powerful, complicated, and business critical a simple question arises: What type of managed service best fits an enterprise's needs?

At one extreme, companies employ their own in-house IT operational management and staff, and only call in managed service providers whenever a project requires specific skills or expertise. This is normal behavior, but maintaining skilled staff members is seldom easy or inexpensive. At another extreme, companies can decide to forgo many or most of the complexities of IT management by outsourcing part or even all of their IT operational processes. Outsourcing has its benefits, but is not a wise course of action for businesses that prefer to maintain datacenter autonomy. Is there a middle path that offers businesses both regular access to the well-honed skill sets of managed service professionals and full control over their valuable business information assets?

We believe so. Along with a variety of storage management and utility services, EMC provides storage residency options for customers that require higher levels of assistance. In these engagements, EMC professionals work onsite at client datacenters and remotely at EMC facilities to attain specific storage goals and objectives ranging from temporarily augmenting existing storage management and staff to designing and implementing EMC/ITIL best practice solutions. As a result, customers are better able to take full tactical advantage of their storage infrastructures and to effectively implement focused efforts such as an information lifecycle management (ILM) strategy. Overall, we believe that EMC Residency Services offer valuable options for enterprises that need to get the most out of their business information.

Challenges in Leveraging Enterprise Storage Assets

At heart, three essential truths affect the lives of enterprise IT customers: 1) that business information is inherently valuable, 2) that IT solutions continue to evolve and become ever more powerful, and 3) that both technical and business challenges tend to follow the deployment of robust IT solutions.

These issues are particularly keen in the world of information storage, where ongoing growth in disk capacity and performance consistently outpace the processor improvements extrapolated by Moore's Law. But the evolution of storage technologies has real-world implications for businesses of every sort ranging from tangible impacts on total cost of ownership (TCO) and return on investment (ROI) related to employee headcount, training, and retention issues.

At the end of the day, powerful and complex storage solutions require high levels of expertise for a very simple reason; inefficient or ineffective management processes and procedures leave businesses unable to meet essential service level requirements. In other words, without knowledgeable IT staff, the tangible benefits of storage innovation become moot. An enterprise that invests in high quality storage solutions but fails to provide or procure adequate staff and infrastructure support is wasting time and resources on a no-win strategy.

In addition, acquiring storage solutions beyond the ken of IT staff can have long-lasting "domino" effects that tumble across an organization. Struggling to keep up with the demands of new systems, overtaxed operations managers and staff often fail to implement appropriate storage design and planning processes, let alone best practices, leaving new systems underutilized or exposed to potential problems.

The temporary storage resource or skills gaps that naturally occur when a company acquires new IT solutions can also evolve into constant stress points. The calamitous end result of such effects? Businesses are unable to implement latent storage and information capabilities or integrate innovative new storage assets and processes. By not leveraging storage technologies appropriately, such businesses squander the significant investments they make in storage and expose themselves to risks such as lost data, faulty information management, and missed business and sales targets.

Beating the Storage Skills Gap

Most enterprises understand, at least theoretically, the critical need of supporting their IT infrastructures, but companies of every stripe and size are under increasing pressure to make IT do more with less money and manpower. As a result, gaining maximum IT benefits while being fiscally responsible requires organizations to perform a delicate balancing act.

For enterprises that wish to avoid or transcend these problems EMC's Managed Services portfolio provides a range of options from outsourced management of storage infrastructures that improve availability at predictable cost to Managed Utility offerings that allow customers to use and pay for storage and management as required.

The aim of the company's storage managed services is to improve customers' operational processes, speed productivity of assets, and supply storage resources as necessary. In essence, EMC designs and implements managed service solutions to help customers realize maximum returns from their storage investments.

Gaining Resident Expertise the Easy Way

EMC Residency Services offer a variety of particularly compelling solutions for enterprise customers. In such engagements, EMC-certified service professionals work side-by-side with a customer's storage operations managers and staff. Engagements can be designed as anything from short-term consultative engagements (in 30 to 90 day increments) focused on specific applications or hardware platforms to long-term strategic engagements.

Tactically, EMC resident professionals offer clients a wide range of valuable services. They can proactively manage storage assets, thus speeding the optimization of those assets. They can also fill knowledge and/or resource gaps, helping existing operations staff to come to terms with new hardware and software resources. Leveraging up-to-date EMC expertise, tools, and best practices, they can help customers improve the time to value of their storage investments. Perhaps most importantly, Residency Services professionals provide clients direct, knowledgeable access to additional EMC resources if and when they are required.

EMC Residency Services Offerings

While EMC designs service engagements to fit specific customer requirements, its Residency Services cover some general focus and practice areas:

- **Transformational and Managed Residencies** – EMC provides onsite support to improve operational efficiency via specific procedural analysis, design, and implementation of ITIL-based best storage practices. EMC storage professionals work onsite with the customer's storage staff, providing day-to-day support while also evaluating and addressing specific operational issues, and helping to improve storage processes, policies, and management tasks. The goal is the implementation of more efficient and effective processes to improve overall storage usage and operations.
- **Technology Residencies** – EMC's Technology Residencies enable customers to fully leverage new EMC storage hardware and software technologies, improving performance and ROI through better use and processes, or by filling missing skills or resource gaps. By providing clients priority access to residents' in-depth technical knowledge, these services can also help drive best practices in storage product support. These offerings focus on a wide range of storage technologies and on specific EMC solutions including NetWorker, EmailXtender, AutoStart, and Onsite and Designated Support.
- **Infrastructure Residencies** – With Infrastructure Residencies, EMC aims to offer customers assistance in specific storage operations where they lack experience or essential skills. By providing the specific skill sets and experience most needed, EMC's on-site residents can enable customers to focus their energies on critical non-storage operations and issues, facilitate best practices and knowledge practices, or help accelerate issue escalation and resolution. EMC Infrastructure Residencies are available for practices including storage operations, content management, back-up and recovery, messaging infrastructure, and storage monitoring and reporting.
- **Custom Residencies** – EMC's Custom Residencies are designed to assist customers whose needs cannot be fulfilled by the company's other offerings. These services leverage the skills of EMC service professionals to provide highly specific services and training in any combination. For example, Transitional Residents help customers take advantage of newly purchased storage equipment and software, speeding implementation and improving performance and ROI. In other situations, Remote Residents bolster customers' storage management and troubleshooting capabilities outside the boundaries of traditional nine-to-five work schedules.

Who Needs EMC Residency Services?

Commercial offerings are all well and good, but what customers and situations call for the special skills of EMC Residency Services?

1. To reduce costs, improve service levels, and enhance IT operational efficiencies, a company wishes to deploy a best practices- and experiences-encompassing ITIL framework but lacks the in-house skills for implementing the solution. In these circumstances, where do you go?

2. Business growth is always positive. Right? But what happens when an organization is experiencing very quick significant growth that leaves storage management staff struggling just to cover the basics?
3. When enterprises need to significantly improve storage management monitoring and reporting without investing in specialized personnel and new technology, what can they do? Add maintaining service levels to internal customers into the mix and you have Maalox moments stretching as far as the eye can see.
4. How about implementing new archiving processes including leveraging EMC EmailXtender? In such cases, a company needs initial assistance to deploy and manage EmailXtender, while also teaching operations staff how to incorporate the solution into new processes that best leverage the technology's advantages.
5. After a significant technology refresh virtually every company needs to ramp up new skills quickly, and many can profit from temporarily engaging specialists to help with the transition. Businesses benefit most from experts who can effectively impart the knowledge needed to take advantage of new technology investments, but where can they find services like these when they need them?
6. Scenario: A new high priority project takes one of your best storage managers away from daily operations for three months. To avoid migraines and hair-tearing, how about engaging a skilled storage professional for just those three months who understands your storage infrastructure guarantees to meet your SLAs?

EMC Residencies in Action

Theory and strategy are interesting to consider, but how do they relate to the sorts of real world challenges enterprise storage customers face and deal with regularly? While the following EMC customers have requested to remain anonymous, we believe that they offer relevant examples of the benefits organizations can derive from working with EMC Residency Service professionals.

Regional Financial Institution

Since financial organizations are among the most proactive users of enterprise storage, they tend to expect and to reap significant benefits from storage solutions. But even the largest organizations can find themselves in a bind. In this particular case, EMC's financial institution customer was suffering crippling storage operations personnel shortages, compounding the inherent difficulties of educating existing staff on the company's new storage infrastructure. In addition, looking to gain maximum advantage from their storage investments, the company needed comprehensive access to EMC best practices and certified storage expertise.

To assist in this effort, the customer engaged three dedicated EMC-certified Resident specialists to work on-site during the transition to the new storage infrastructure. As a result, EMC's Residency professionals allowed the client to fully leverage the features and advantages of their new storage investment, and also helped accelerate the education and efficiency of existing operations staff members.

Credit Division of U.S.-Based Global 50 Firm

The attractions of Information Lifecycle Management (ILM) are clear to anyone with enterprise storage experience. After all, the value of business information changes, often radically, over time. But while it behooves companies to make sure that information is stored on solutions that reflect its value, there is some distance between recognizing and achieving the benefits of ILM. One example is an EMC Global 50 customer that wished to migrate its critical credit division database environment toward an ILM solution. To achieve that, however, the company also needed to tangibly improve its management of storage assets and costs.

The company engaged EMC Residency Services, who helped them improve cost efficiency by better leveraging their datacenter technologies and improving data mobility automation processes. In addition, EMC residents assisted in enhancing the design, management, and maintenance of the customer's 150+ TB storage infrastructure, a critical step in establishing an effective ILM strategy. Finally, working closely with operations staff, EMC residents helped establish best practices designs and strategies for the customer's Oracle databases. End result? The customer is profiting more from its storage investments and is closer to realizing the benefits of ILM than ever before.

Industrial Manufacturer

The only thing worse for a business than being unprepared for emerging strategies such as ILM is not being able to take advantage of already existing solutions. An industrial manufacturing customer of EMC's found itself in this predicament when it realized that operations staff did not have the product expertise to fully execute the storage resource management (SRM) capabilities available in the EMC solutions it had deployed. In addition, the client wished to customize its mainframe-based business continuity solution to better leverage its EMC storage infrastructure.

To assist with these efforts, EMC Services professionals went to the customer's datacenter and accelerated customization of EMC components. In addition, an EMC Storage Administration Resident helped train the customer's operations staff in a variety of new and updated processes, enabling them to quickly assume full time management of the new infrastructure. As a result of these efforts, the manufacturer was able to achieve faster and more effective deployment of its integrated EMC business continuity solution, and gain the full benefits of SRM capabilities.

Mission Accomplished?

Managed IT service offerings are common, but as IT solutions become increasingly powerful and complex enterprises need to know what type of service offerings best fits their needs. This is particularly the case with information storage, where technological improvements consistently outpace other IT solutions. Ongoing storage evolution tangibly affects a wide range of issues, from impacts on TCO and ROI to employee headcount, training, and retention issues.

As a result, storage managed services provide enterprise customers a wide variety of options for enhancing the performance and returns of their storage investments. In particular, EMC Residency Services provide a middle path for self-sufficient enterprise customers, delivering seamless access to the well-honed skill sets of EMC-certified service professionals and full control over their valuable business information assets.

EMC Residency Services are designed to improve operational processes, speed productivity of assets, and supply critical storage resources as customers require. EMC's resident professionals support a wide variety of general storage and EMC-specific solutions, and Residency Services engagements help customers achieve specific goals and follow client-determined service requirements. Enterprises can enjoy notable benefits including enhanced storage management, optimization of storage assets, improved service levels, and better returns on their IT investments. Overall, enterprises considering storage managed services to enhance the value and performance of their information storage assets would do well to consider EMC Residency Services.

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About Pund-IT, Inc.

Pund-IT emphasizes understanding technology and product evolution and interpreting the effects these changes will have on business customers and the greater IT marketplace. This report is the result of sponsored research developed by Pund-IT, Inc., which believes its findings are objective and represent the best analysis available at the time of publication.