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Coho Data Exits Stealth To Tout Scalable Pay-As-You-Go Storage At Amazon-Like Prices [1]

by [Joseph F. Kovar](#) [2] on October 15, 2013, 5:37 pm EDT



Storage startup Coho Data on Tuesday emerged from stealth mode with its introduction of a private storage cloud solution that scales both capacity and performance with the addition of nodes.

The goal, said Coho Data CEO and Co-founder Ramana Jonnala, is to enable the building of a storage service for virtualized workloads that costs similar to what Amazon offers on a per-GB basis but with double the price-performance ratio of all-flash storage arrays.

"We came up with a solution that was cloud-inspired but designed for on-site data centers," Jonnala said.

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Coho Data's solution is based on the company's 2U Coho DataStream storage appliance, which combines Coho Data's software with industry-standard hardware. Each appliance features 40 TB of capacity, including about 3.2 TB of Intel SSDs and about 36 TB of spinning disk.

Each appliance provides up to 180,000 IOPS, which can be allocated to various workloads depending on requirements, Jonnala said.

"Version one of the appliance is primarily targeting virtualized workloads," he said. "These are extremely difficult workloads. Our software looks at the application. If the workload needs 60,000 IOPS, it gets a lot of flash. If it needs 500 IOPS, it gets more disk. You can run an app that needs total performance side-by-side with a less-demanding app."

Both capacity and performance scale on a linear basis with the addition of more Coho DataStream appliances.

The appliances also come pre-packaged with an OpenFlow software-defined networking [4] switch. Jonnala said the company expects the appliances to work with any SDN-capable switches starting next year.

Coho Data has the right concept and a lot of the right pieces to succeed, said Aaron Cardenas, CEO and founder of P1 Technologies, a Hermosa Beach, Calif.-based solution provider and early partner of the storage vendor.

"I like their approach," Cardenas said. "I'd like to see them tighten their offering and develop their software stack. It's not so much that Coho is missing any thing. But, any new storage offering takes time to get 'Jacks or better' features like replication and global management together."

Cardenas said he likes how Coho Data is approaching object storage [5] and its bundling of OpenFlow SDN technology.

"They're putting a lot of intelligence in the switch and tying it to storage," he said. "They're capitalizing on a few trends happening in the market, ... which are now unavoidable."

NEXT: Selling The Appliance, Recruiting Partners

The Coho Data DataStream appliance with 40 TB of capacity and 180,000 IOPS of performance lists for \$130,000, including the SDN switch.

That, Coho Data's Jonnala said, is a starting price of about \$2.50 per GB before deduplication and compression. He compared it to traditional arrays that list at \$5-plus per GB, as well as to Amazon Elastic Block storage, which lists at \$6 per GB and provides 2,000 IOPs per 1-TB volume, and Amazon's all-flash storage [6], priced at \$20 per GB.

Coho Data currently has gone through a seed funding round and a Series A funding round for a total investment in the company of \$11.3 million. Jonnala said more funding is expected in the future.

The company is recruiting channel partners that have experience building customer solutions and can work with a pay-as-you-go storage model, he said.

Because the Coho Data DataStream appliance features the company's software on commodity hardware, solution provider can get high product margins in addition to offering their own services, he said.

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