

Whitepaper

Is Backup Exec On Its Way Out? And Will It Take Your Backup With It?

Institutions from corporate to education depend on the reliability of their backup application – but if you have Backup Exec, you may be having doubts. What went wrong and what can you do about it?

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Introduction

For a long time Symantec Backup Exec was a standard backup choice for environments with less than 100 servers. But due to a series of major missteps, its popularity is falling fast – for good reason.

If you still depend on Backup Exec for backup, it is time to consider what this means to you. Otherwise you run the serious risk of Symantec being unable or unwilling to support Backup Exec for much longer.

#1 Buggy Backup Exec 2012 Release

Symantec's forums, blog comments, and the Symantec Spiceworks Community report a variety of basic backup and restore problems since the release of Backup Exec 2012. Subsequent service upgrades and patches have not solved much. A few of these widely reported problems include:

- No multi-streaming to exploit high speed storage devices
- Each server needs its own backup job; multiple servers can no longer backup in a single job
- No parallel backups
- Extremely slow backups
- Long click-paths and slow application response
- Backup to tape problems
- Problems with incremental SQL backup
- The SQL Agent causes massive performance issues, rendering SQL applications almost unusable during backup
- Unresolved system crashes

Symantec has invited customers to comment on forums and in-person, but thus far changes to Backup Exec are still down the road. Even in the face of these serious problems, Symantec is moving local support from all over the world to off-shore support call centers. These support personnel may not communicate effectively, or must give scripted answers prior to escalating. This costs users time and frustration and puts their backup environments at risk.

#2 Where is Support for Windows Server 2012 R2?

Backup Exec 2012's major redesign promised new functionality but in the process removed popular features that Symantec is scrambling to put back again. One of the biggest missteps turned out to be inadequate support for Windows Server 2012 R2 – released one and a half years ago.

Symantec acknowledges the problem but announced that they will not be able to release comprehensive support until the third quarter of 2014. Around this time Microsoft will introduce Windows 9 and the associated server

"Ouch.... I appreciate your intentions but, sincerely, 3rd quarter 2014 GA? Is this a joke? ... You've put us in an incredible situation."

([Symantec Forum](#) user in response to delay of Windows 2012 R2 support)

operating system. How long will Symantec take then?

The upshot is that Windows users cannot update to Windows Server 2012 R2 if they want to keep using Backup Exec, and the situation will not change until later in 2014. Symantec's Drew Meyer is the current director of marketing for Backup Exec. "We're late on Windows Server 2012," he said. "I would not classify what we've delivered as timely platform support because it's been out since September [2012] and we don't support it."

#3 Reorganization affects product support

As a publicly traded company, Symantec is under enormous pressure to show profitability. Chairman of the Board Steve Bennett replaced CEO Enrique Salem with the express order of turning around faltering revenue and sub-par share prices. Bennett introduced a sweeping reorganization. The ongoing reorganization makes it very difficult to say with certainty what Symantec is going to do. For example, one of Bennett's major goals is to eliminate 30-40% of Symantec's management positions. This sounds good in theory but could knock the teeth out of Symantec's product management teams as experienced managers are let go.

Other murky areas are product lines like Backup Exec that are faltering in the marketplace. Symantec reported an \$80 million decrease in Backup Exec sales, which translates to the loss of about a million customers. Symantec predicted a further decline in sales of 3-4% by fiscal year-end in March 2014. Publicly Symantec still supports Backup Exec but why is Backup Exec 2012 still so profoundly flawed?

#4 The Failure of Backup Exec Cloud

Symantec announced Backup Exec Cloud with great fanfare in February 2012. But by the end of 2013 Symantec informed channel partners and customers that the company was closing Backup Exec Cloud as of January 2015. It would not be renewing service contracts. Symantec will delete any existing data immediately after the expiration of current subscriptions and at the latest in January 2015. Symantec offered no support for data migration.

Symantec cited Backup Exec Cloud's lack of mobile and content-sharing features, which begs the question: Why didn't Symantec develop Backup Exec Cloud with those features in the first place?

#5 Long-term strategy is NetBackup

While Backup Exec recorded serious losses, the more expensive NetBackup product line recorded a growth of 10%. Symantec lavished love on NetBackup. "We're going to double down on some great point solutions that are leaders like NetBackup," Bennett said on an earnings call to investors.

Bennett attributed Backup Exec's losses to the disastrous 2012 release. "We've made a lot of changes in the team that stubbed its toe on the release of Backup Exec," he said. "So I think we're going to see real progress, but we did dig ourselves a hole."

The pricing and complexity of NetBackup, which Symantec sells to mid-sized and enterprise customers, rules it out as an alternative for most Backup Exec users. Yet the NetBackup team now oversees Backup Exec development.

"Backup Exec has been something of a challenge." (Symantec CFO James Beer in a classic understatement)

Making the Switch

NovaStor's software allows organizations to focus on what they do best while ensuring the availability of important data.

Symantec is hampered by a huge number of product lines, massive layoffs and an uncertain future. As Symantec loses ground in the backup wars, NovaStor is your key to backup and recovery success.

Award-winning backup and recovery.

NovaStor provides backup services across a large span of environments so customers can scale their backup as they grow. NovaBACKUP® v15 protects PCs and laptops, Windows servers including 2012 R2, application servers including Exchange, SQL and virtual machines, and multi-server networks with NAS. And NovaStor NovaBACKUP® DataCenter and xSP offer enterprise-level cross-platform backup and restore for local networks, private cloud networks and data center environments.

All-inclusive Solution.

NovaStor's software is hardware agnostic, and includes all features and plugins from day one – without additional cost. This flexibility makes it an excellent choice for the discerning network administrator, allowing them the freedom to change their network environment without the fear of disrupting data protection.

Technical support.

Local technicians are located in multiple times zones to support you at no additional cost. NovaStor engineers have in-depth knowledge and understanding of customer infrastructures including education IT environments, and can use remote access to problem-solve.

Risk-free Change: Moving Over Clients Is Easy

In the past year, numerous reseller partners have come to us with the request of moving their Symantec Backup Exec customers over to NovaStor. Because of this, we've streamlined the process to create worry free migrations using a simple proven process:

5 Easy Steps	Description
Step #1: Analysis	NovaStor experts analyze your environment and suggest the optimal NovaBACKUP product for you.
Step #2. Preview	NovaStor previews your solution in their Demonstration Center.
Step #3. Testing	NovaStor deploys and tests the installation to your satisfaction.

Step #4. Training	NovaStor training is fast and simple, usually lasting only a day.
Step #5. Start-up Support	NovaStor support engineers work closely with you during the start-up phase, and remain available whenever you need them.

NovaStor is an established manufacturer of software for data backup and recovery with 100% focus on backup & restore. As the choice for a wide range of U.S. and European institutions, NovaStor has a proven track record of success.

About NovaStor

NovaStor® is Backup for the Rest of Us™ - providing powerful, affordable, all inclusive licensing that supports Physical, Virtual and Cloud environments. NovaStor provides data integrity solutions for both Small and Medium Business (SMB) as well as Enterprise markets that support best practices and protect data residing on Both Sides of the Cloud™ - Local, Remote offices and Data Centers are all capable of being managed from a Centralized Management Console. NovaStor's #1 rated SMB solution NovaBACKUP® is for businesses that understand they require critical data protection for their servers, VMware, Hyper-V or NAS environments but may be unsure of exactly what is required, or lack the resources to research and implement such a solution. NovaStor' Setup Assistance™ is an industry first where NovaStor provides backup experts to take on this complexity for the customer and recommend, install and support the solution that best suits their environment – all for no additional charge. NovaStor's Enterprise solution NovaBACKUP DataCenter™ brings F500 references, scalability, reliability and speed to the mid-market at an extremely disruptive price point. A single product manages both physical and virtual servers helping organizations meet RPO's and RTO's, save time, eliminate risk and dramatically reduce capital and operational costs. NovaStor is management-owned and has been profitable from the beginning. NovaStor currently has over 5,000 partners and hundreds of thousands of distributed product worldwide. NovaStor's global headquarters are located in Zug, Switzerland, has offices in Germany (Hamburg) and the USA (Agoura Hills), and is represented in numerous other countries through partnerships.



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