

HP and Certance Commit to Extend Roadmap for Volume-leading Tape Technology for Small and Medium Business Customers

9 August 2004

Continued DDS/DAT development delivers capacity and performance boosts, protects the investment of more than 6 million users worldwide

HP and Certance today extended their roadmap for Digital Audio Tape (DAT) technology investment and innovation to continue to meet the data protection needs of small and medium business (SMB) customers as well as to protect the existing investments of the technology's more than 6 million users worldwide.

The extended product roadmap runs through 2010 and includes three future product generations beyond the current, fifth-generation product called DAT72. SMB customers rely on the volume-leading DAT format for backup and restore of critical business data to ensure protection and availability in the event of problems with primary disk storage systems.

"Users in the SMB market place value on technologies and vendors that have staying power," said Fara Yale, research vice president, Gartner. "These customers are also extremely price conscious and select storage solutions, including tape drives and media, that meet their budget. Tape remains a sustainable and cost-effective way for SMBs to store information."

The open standard DAT technology provides simple, affordable and reliable tape backup and data protection solutions for SMB customers or the smaller, remote sites of larger companies. As agreed to by the DAT Manufacturers Group, future DAT product generations will feature backwards compatibility to protect customers' existing technology investments in Digital Data Storage

(DDS) and DAT, as well as higher capacity and performance to meet the growing backup and restore requirements of SMBs.

"HP will continue to focus on the tape market to provide customers with affordable, reliable, easy-to-use storage solutions that meet the data backup and protection demands of their businesses as they grow and evolve," said Bob Schultz, senior vice president and general manager, Network Storage Solutions, HP. "HP conducted extensive research in preparing this roadmap to ensure that next-generation products will continue to help SMB customers get more from their technology investments."

"Certance's commitment to continue with new generations of DDS/DAT technology will support user requirements for efficient total cost of ownership solutions that provide simplicity, affordability and reliability," said Howard Matthews, president and chief executive officer, Certance.

Reliable and affordable data protection for SMBs

Since its inception, DDS/DAT technology has been a mainstay of SMB customers because it is a reliable, low-cost, easy-to-use solution for long-term data protection. Customers typically use DAT technology to back up and restore critical data such as sales records, inventory information, accounting and engineering work, office documents and other information necessary to the business and to ensure it is protected and available in the event of problems with primary disk storage systems. The negative consequences of not backing up data can be an inability to conduct business and the resulting adverse financial impact.

Introduced by HP and Certance in 2003, DAT72 has been endorsed by all leading system/server manufacturers. DAT72 has a compressed capacity per cartridge of 72 gigabytes (GB) and a transfer rate of up to 7 megabytes (MB) per second.

The extended roadmap details performance and capacity increases of up to 600 GB compressed capacities per cartridge and transfer rates up to 32 MB per second. These advancements will help SMB customers meet growing data storage requirements and shrinking backup windows by enabling them to store and retrieve more data at a faster rate without increasing the amount of space taken up by their existing systems.

eLinear, an integrated technology solutions provider of security, Internet Protocol (IP) telephony and network and storage solutions infrastructure, uses DAT technology to provide small- to medium-size businesses with an affordable solution for long-term data storage.

"It's critical that vendors commit to long-term, future generations of the leading formats already in use and provide a low-cost, reliable solution to the SMB market," said Kevan Casey, chief executive officer, eLinear. "We look forward to the continued support of this vital technology that many companies have come to rely on for their data protection needs."

Surpas Resource Corporation, a Houston-based debt collection firm, continues to rely on DAT solutions to manage its storage backup requirements.

"DDS/DAT is a cost-effective, efficient method to back up our critical information. We use tape on a daily basis and it's much more affordable than other options and we still gain the robustness we require," said Jeff Meek, manager, Information Services, Surpas Resource Corporation.

HP introduced DDS/DAT technology with Sony in 1989. Through five generations of product advancements, HP development has resulted in the filing of more than 65 DDS/DAT patent applications and contributed to the technology shipping the largest worldwide unit volume among all tape formats in 2003.(1)

Total worldwide industry unit shipments of DDS/DAT technology among all vendors in 2003 amounted to nearly 1 million units, representing approximately 46 percent of the total tape units shipped for the year among all tape formats. Together, HP and Certance are the industry leaders in total worldwide DDS/DAT unit shipments and market share, combining to represent approximately 75 percent of the format's total market share in 2003.(1)

Additional details on the extended DDS/DAT product roadmap and other information about the open-standard tape technology is available at www.datmgm.com.

1) Gartner, Tape Drive Market Share: Worldwide 2003. March 2004.

APA citation: HP and Certance Commit to Extend Roadmap for Volume-leading Tape Technology for Small and Medium Business Customers (2004, August 9) retrieved 26 September 2021 from <https://phys.org/news/2004-08-hp-certance-commit-roadmap-volume-leading.html>

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