

ESG SHOWCASE

Modern Data Governance with Iron Mountain

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ABSTRACT: Too many people think Iron Mountain is all about tapes in a vault. That is a very outdated view. The vendor has now come out with new technology-agnostic offerings that are more than just innovative; they are here at the right time and place to help businesses better manage and protect their data.

Data Is the Business ... So Protecting that Data Is Crucial

We are taking our first steps toward a data-centric future. Already, data has become the core of many businesses. According to ESG research, 52% of IT decision makers expect that their organizations will develop and offer new data-centric products and services within the next two years.¹

Concurrently, however, the business of IT itself is becoming more complex. In fact, nearly two-thirds (64%) of ESG survey respondents believe IT is more complex compared to two years ago. The most-cited reasons for that complexity increase? Higher data volumes, along with an evolving security and privacy landscape (see Figure 1).²

These cyber exposures and stringent new regulations pertaining to the use of data are having a very immediate, direct effect on many organizations. Perhaps that is why backup and automation are both top data center modernization investment priorities for 2020.³

During the current health crisis, protecting data is especially vital. Twenty-six percent of IT managers surveyed by ESG reported that their organizations will be spending more on data protection going forward. It has become evident that unprecedented times reinforce the value of technology to a business, with 60% of respondents saying that the pandemic will make them and their organizations more reliant on IT.⁴

Not surprisingly under such circumstances, cloud usage has also become pervasive. Nearly all organizations surveyed by ESG (94%) use public cloud services today, and 67% reported that they are currently using infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) platforms in 2020.⁵

¹ Source: ESG Master Survey Results, [The Evolution from Data Backup to Data Intelligence](#), February 2020.

² Source: ESG Master Survey Results, [2020 Technology Spending Intentions Survey](#), January 2020.

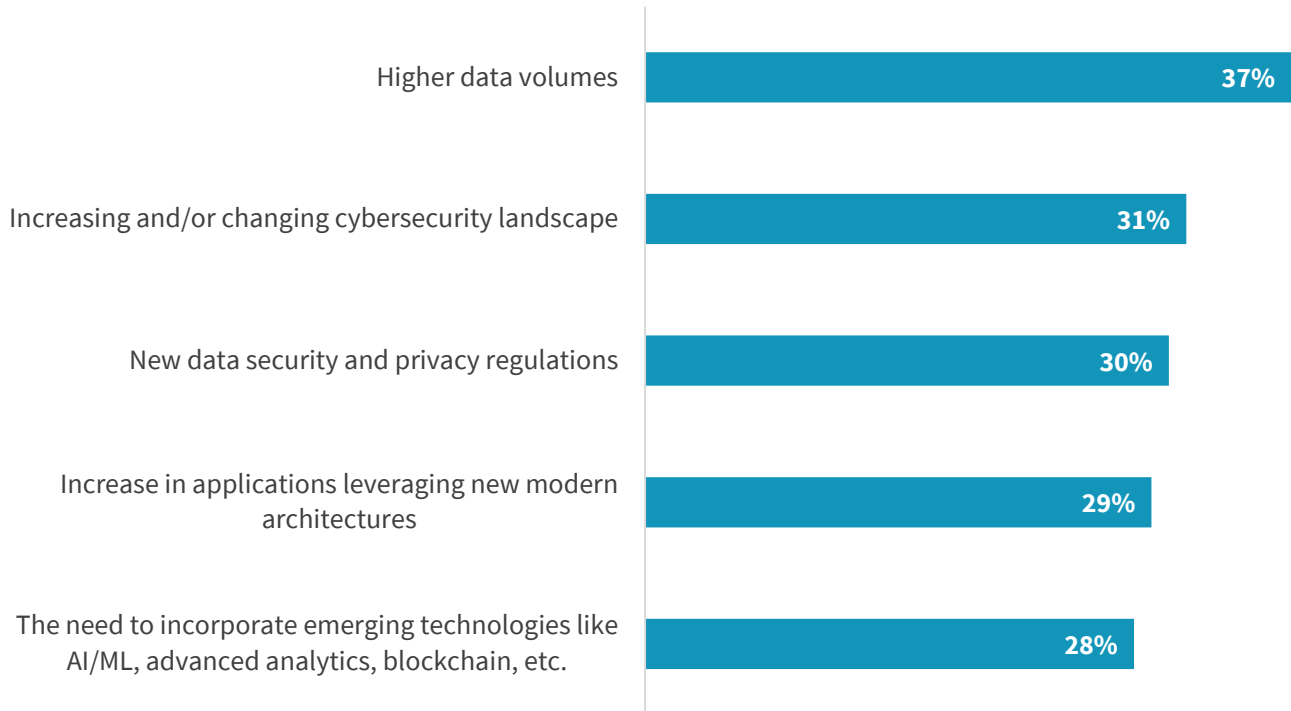
³ Ibid.

⁴ Source: ESG Master Survey Results, [Technology Impact of COVID-19: IT Decision Maker \(ITDM\) View](#), May 2020.

⁵ Source: ESG Research Report, [2020 Technology Spending Intentions Survey](#), February 2020.

Figure 1. Top Five Key Drivers of IT Complexity

What do you believe are the biggest reasons your organization’s IT environment has become more complex? (Percent of respondents, N=420, five responses accepted)



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group

The Key Success Factors for Strong Data Governance

Clearly, governing data properly is more important than ever right now. Based on quantitative research and expertise, ESG has identified the five key areas organizations must consider as they modernize their data protection and data governance infrastructures—taking into account today’s tight IT budgets, high data growth rates, and increased cyber threats. Adhering to these pillars will result in achieving a successful information/data lifecycle.

Handling Costs at Scale

Data growth places pressure on IT budgets. More data needs to be stored and retained for long periods, and that costs money. Organizations need a tiered approach to protection storage: Tiering helps to optimize costs for a lower TCO. Handling protection-storage costs at scale correctly also must entail implementing processes, policies, and practices that support the integrity of the data while optimizing and easing day-to-day operational management.

Delivering on Data Protection Mandates

Backup and recovery have never been more crucial, but protecting that secondary data comes with its own specific set of metrics and mandates—for example, SLAs for RPO and RTO.

A business’s resiliency is predicated upon being able to recover data successfully when needed, especially when disaster strikes. It is therefore key to combine the right technologies and infrastructure, often including leveraging an ecosystem of partners. Many options exist, but a mixed approach that combines multiple media (e.g., disk and tape) and destinations

(e.g., on-premises and cloud with S3) should enhance operational efficiency and flexibility because costs and storage tiers will both be optimized.

Achieving Long-term Retention

Long-term data retention brings both challenge and opportunity. Globally, many compliance-driven requirements exist that relate to retaining data for varying lengths of time, sometimes for many years.

Those rules force a complex set of requirements upon organizations. When should they keep data? When should they retire or delete it? How often will archived data need to be accessed? Will it be easily auditable? Will it be totally secure? The cost of storage and management compound these uncertainties. That's why partnering with the right partner is key. Look for a solution with multi-tiered storage capabilities, including tape and cloud options, combined with expertise in moving large amounts of data at the best possible cost with the least amount of bandwidth.

In general, view long-term retention as an intentional strategy, not an afterthought. Craft a plan for secure, fully documented data disposition when retention periods expire. Approaching long-term retention in this manner will lower costs and improve compliance.

Leveraging the Cloud

Many IT assets are now shifting to private and public cloud infrastructures, and leveraging the cloud for data management has become a key requirement within modern IT organizations. The cloud provides a destination as a content repository, and it facilitates intelligent management and better reuse of data assets.

The key is to make use of different cloud storage tiers to optimize costs while preserving data for long-term retention and disaster recovery to and within the cloud.

Additionally, it's going to be important to leverage cloud storage to provide a backup destination for SaaS applications, such as Office 365.

Handling Ransomware Threats

Ransomware is now rampant. When an attack succeeds, the organization is essentially faced with a "data disaster" requiring recovery. Even worse—cyber criminals have not only become more prolific, but they are also targeting backup data now, equating to a significantly heightened data-loss exposure.

Implementing strategies that follow best practices for keeping multiple copies of data and air-gapping those data sets has become necessary. Organizations should deploy isolated recovery solutions and maintain "gold copies" of key data while shielding that data from cyber criminals.

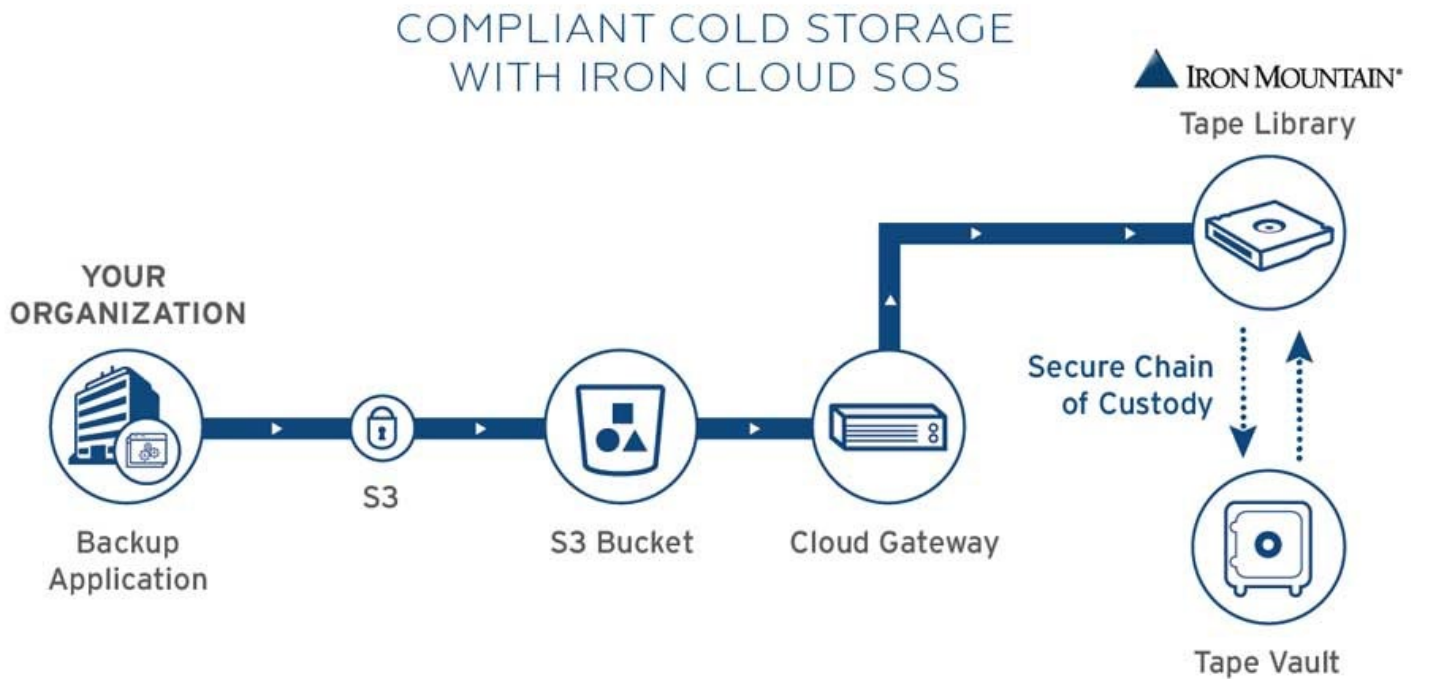
Lessening the Impact of Ransomware with Iron Cloud Secure Offline Storage

[Iron Mountain](#) Iron Cloud Secure Offline Storage (known as SOS, an aptly named solution) is a multi-tier data management service that offers very low-cost storage-as-a-service for infrequently accessed data and long-term archival retention.

With SOS, data is stored on reliable tape media and is kept offline for additional air-gap protection. Organizations use their existing S3-compatible backup solution (e.g., Veeam, Rubrik, and many more) to manage the data stored offline.

For ransomware remediation and isolated recovery, Iron Cloud SOS with Vault Lock safeguards a gold copy of backup data as an enhanced offline solution providing secure, validated restoration capabilities. Through multi-factor authentication, unauthorized access to offline data is impossible—even if the credentials for the backup application are compromised.

Figure 2. Iron Cloud Secure Offline Storage (SOS) with Vault Lock



Source: Iron Mountain

The Bigger Truth

Recent rises in cybercrime, combined with ever-increasing data volumes, have created a perfect storm. The situation is placing increased cost pressure on organizations to store and adequately protect their data.

Further leveraging that data is also becoming a necessity in an age in which data is the business. Businesses not only need to control costs, but they have to do so while digitally transforming their operations. To accomplish these feats simultaneously, they'll need strong solutions for each stage of the data lifecycle.

Iron Mountain has built an extensive portfolio of modern data-focused solutions that work at scale and reflect the company's extensive information management experience. The product combination is unique, highly differentiated, and innovative. Specifically, Iron Mountain is the only vendor offering comprehensive end-to-end solutions for migrating data to the cloud, providing secure offline storage, modernizing processes from tape to cloud, and facilitating secure disposition of IT assets. With the recent introduction of Iron Cloud SOS, Iron Mountain is adding a crucial tool to address long-term data retention and ransomware remediation, complementing its existing archiving and recovery solutions.

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