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FUNCTIONALITY COMPARISON: NORTHERN STORAGE SUITE 2005 – WINDOWS 2003 R2

Northern Storage Suite is shown to offer a significantly wider and deeper feature set than Windows 2003 R2 Storage Resource Manager. The functionalities of Microsoft's SRM package are shown to be quite limited and, most importantly, server-centric; no doubt suited to smaller more price-sensitive organizations which wish to evaluate the benefits of SRM in production prior to investing in a long-term solution.

		NORTHERN STORAGE SUITE 2005	WINDOWS 2003 R2 STORAGE RESOURCE MANAGER
Establish Control Policies Controlling quantity and content in order to reduce TCO. Technical savings include shortened backup/restore cycles, reduced administrator involvement and sustainable growth.	User-based Active Real-time Disk Quotas	+	
	Directory-based Active Real-time Disk Quotas	+	+
	Quota Policies based on Group Membership	+	
	Multiple quota locking mechanisms	+	
	Content Control [file-blocking]	+	+
	Custom Labels for Quotas	+	+
	MS Exchange Mailbox Quotas	+	
	Delegated Permissions	+	
	Automatic Policy Roll-out	+	
	Central history view of actions and policy violations	+	+
	Central SQL Database for both settings and volatile data [quota use, etc]	+	
	API	+	
	COM	+	
Report & Monitor Transparency of usage patterns and trends enabling both proactive and rationalized infrastructure development. Comprehensive reporting also allows the identification of policy violators and the ability to tune management policies.	Global [multi-server] reports	+	
	Number of Scheduled Report Templates	39	8
	General Usage Reports	+	+
	User focused analysis	+	
	Trending / Growth analysis	+	
	True File-type analysis [header]	+	
	Mailbox Reports	+	
	Drill-down Report Style – from Host Groups to individual Users	+	
	One-time configuration of multi-server reports	+	

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Automation The capacity to automate functions of SRM in order to increase reliability of processes and free-up administrator's time.	Calendar, Timer Events to trigger Actions	+	
	File Events trigger to Actions	+	
	Internet, System Events to trigger Actions	+	
	Automatic / Scheduled File Management Actions	+	
	Automatic / Scheduled FTP/HTTP Actions	+	
	Command Line execution	+	+
Involve Users Spreading solution ownership ensures a pro-active user population.	User-centric Web Portal for self-management	+	
	User-centric Reports	+	
	Automated Quota increase request handling	+	
	Automatic report distribution	+	+
Notifications Ensure awareness of policy implications.	Support for SNMP alerts	+	
	Notifies by Email & Pop-up	+	[No Pop-up]
	Generate Application Log warnings when quota size thresholds are reached	+	+
Cost Distribution The ability to implement systems of billing or factual financial reports for budget analysis.	Turnkey Billing Solution	+	
	Global [multi-server] data extraction	+	
	Granular billing options	+	
	Accounting Reports	+	
	Cost forecasting and projections	+	
Enterprise Architecture The ability to efficiently realize the benefits of the solution across multiple servers/devices.	Global [multi-server] Management	+	
	Mass changes to policies	+	
	Support for non-Windows NAS/SAN devices	+	
	Cluster Aware	+	
	Active Directory integration	+	+

IMPORTANT NOTE: In June 2005 Microsoft Corporation purchased a Global Enterprise License of Northern Storage Suite for internal deployment. The following quotation is taken from Northern's press release related to the order and clearly demonstrates why Northern Storage Suite is the industry leader in the SRM segment: "Customers are looking for easy-to-manage and reliable storage resource management across Windows environments," said Ben Fathi, General Manager, Windows Server Division. "Microsoft is pleased about Northern's focus and 10-year history in developing and delivering complete storage resource management solutions for Windows environments, making it a good choice for Microsoft's internal deployment".

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