

STEC racks up additional qualifications for enterprise SSDs

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Implications

* Fujitsu is reported to have chosen STEC as its solid state drive supplier * STEC has had success at several storage system providers offering solid state storage for enterprise applications * Prior STEC qualifications include IBM and EMC * STEC is now the leading supplier of SSD for enterprise applications

Analysis

Solid state drives using flash memory are finding their biggest success to date in the enterprise market where their fast read speeds make them very attractive for transaction and other processes where time is literally money. In these applications the speed in transferring data has a much greater value than the cost of adequate storage capacity to support the application. Applications where flash-based SSDs have scored particular successes include transaction processing and content delivery systems, particularly edge servers. For these applications (so long as the required storage capacities are within the capabilities of today's SSDs) one or two solid state drives can replace a whole lot of HDDs that are used together to provide fast performance but sacrificing storage capacity to do so. Thus fast read-out storage services can be achieved at a lower cost with SSDs than would be the case with HDDs.

STEC has led the field on enterprise SSD qualifications since the initial announcements of EMC qualifications over a year ago. Since then

STEC has had many storage companies qualify its enterprise SSDs including IBM and now Fujitsu. STEC provides a very robust product whose performance and reliability match the enterprise market that the company serves. Other SSD companies have products geared towards the enterprise market. Intel has a product qualified at Pillar Data for their storage systems but Intel's products have had limited success elsewhere.

Besides SSDs there are other flash-based enterprise storage solutions in the market. Fusion-IO is offering PCI-express storage that has found some traction in the industry. These products offer very high performance by a unique architecture combined with non-drive interfaces that more directly connect with the memory systems in modern servers. The enterprise storage hierarchy has expanded in the last few years offering system designers more options to achieve the optimal balance of performance, storage capacity and cost.