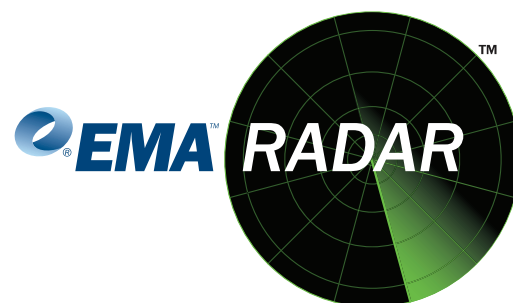


EMA Radar™ for Storage Intelligence

Q4 2017: Visual Storage Intelligence Profile

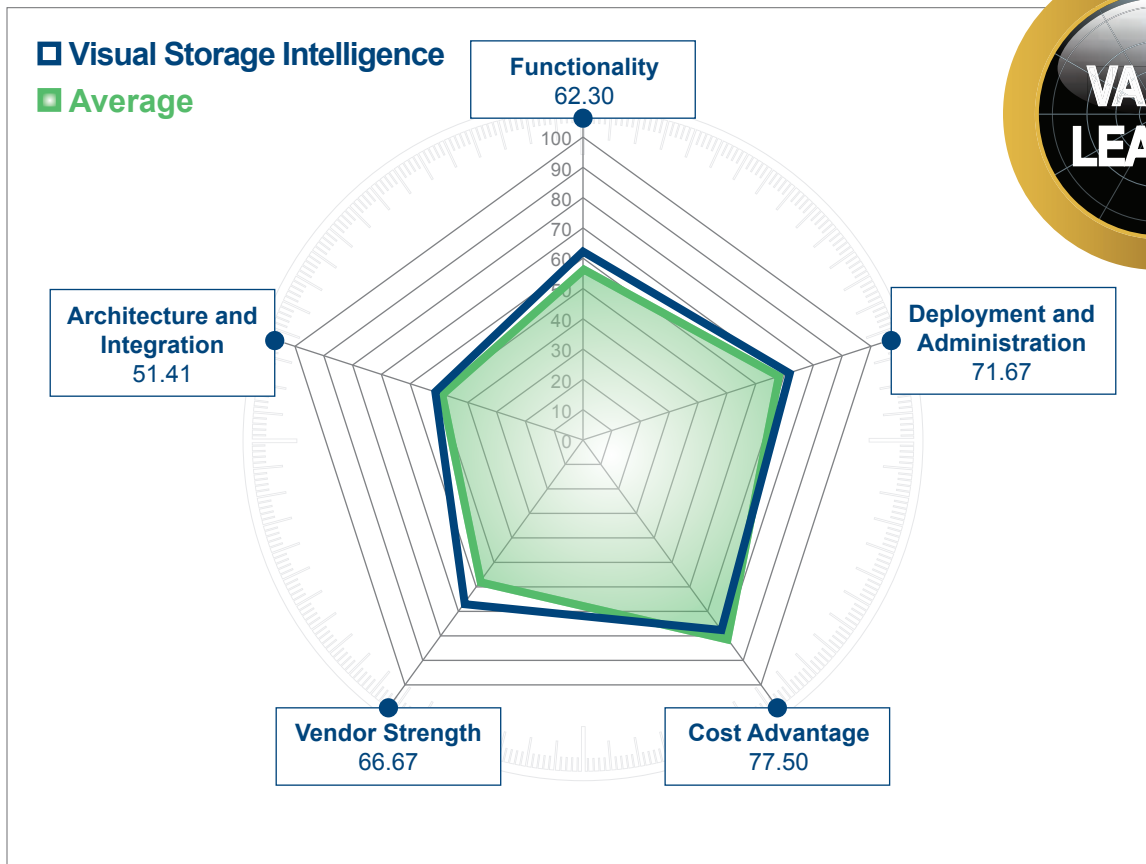
By Steve Brasen
ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES® (EMA™) Radar Report
September 2017



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Visual Storage Intelligence Profile

Visual Storage Intelligence



Introduction

A subsidiary of Clear Technologies, Visual Storage Intelligence provides a platform designed to quickly assess an organization’s storage environment and deliver data-driven solutions that address performance, capacity, and governance challenges. Data collected from multivendor storage resources is injected into a robust set of analytics to rapidly identify health and status data across the storage ecosystem. The resulting information provides a consolidated view of storage conditions across seven levels of reporting: an enterprise storage summary, business unit reporting, application reporting, a data center view, array health, pool and node performance, and host and LUN trending.

Architecture and Integration

Visual Storage Intelligence is an entirely self-contained, cloud-hosted software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform performing data collection, analysis, and reporting, all from a centralized console. Data on a heterogeneous storage environment is collected agentlessly via a command line interface (CLI) and stored in a data repository included with the cloud service. Hosts of analytics—including descriptive, prescriptive, diagnostic, predictive, exploratory, and quantitative analytics—are applied to the collected data to dynamically identify the health, status, trends, and forecasted states of the storage ecosystem. Interviewed customers of the



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platform noted the analytics capabilities of the solution were particularly valuable. Visual Storage Intelligence is able to directly integrate with virtualization platforms (including EMC VPLEX, VMware vCenter, and IBM Spectrum Control) and BDR solutions, IBM Spectrum Protect, and EMC Data Domain. As a cloud service, Visual Storage Intelligence is eminently scalable and able to support organizations of any size or complexity.

Functionality

As the name suggests, the primary function of Visual Storage Intelligence is to collect comprehensive data on the storage networks and report conditions in an easily digestible format. The platform collects details on the hardware, filesystems, physical locations, and virtual configuration of storage assets. Performance and status data is also gathered including packet headers, transmission status, inter-switch link configuration, multipath status, storage processor states, response times, throughput rates, and a wide variety of other IOPS, networking, and disk performance details. Prebuilt analytical reports are provided out-of-the-box to supply key insights into historical trends, workload performance, fault detection, root cause analysis, and both present and predicted capacity of all storage elements. Additionally, custom reports can be created to correlate specific events or conditions. The platform also enables data to be classified to help organizations determine the most efficient architecture to support specific workload placements. Storage infrastructure costs and the costs of cloud storage services (including Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure, and IBM Softlayer/Bluemix) are recorded in financial reports.

Deployment and Administration

As a cloud-hosted SaaS solution, Visual Storage Intelligence is easy to adopt and deploy, requiring no additional on-premises hardware or software installations. Automated data collection processes are provided with the platform, and administrators may individually customize these processes to acquire information from supported storage resources. The cloud-hosted HTML 5 administration console is accessible from any user device hosting a web browser, and access may be customized based on user roles. EMA found the console interface to be very intuitive and easy to use. A number of graphical charts and reports are provided out-of-the-box with the solution, including storage ecosystem maps, workloads, tiered storage services, usage and metering reports, capacity planning and forecasting reports, and financial reports.

Visual Storage Intelligence subscribers have access to live phone and email support during regular business hours, and the vendor offers professional services for onsite training and support. Current customers of the platform revealed to EMA that the solution suite is very easy to use, and the vendor provides outstanding product support and professional services.

Cost Advantage

Visual Storage Intelligence is offered for an annual subscription price based on the number of petabytes of data supported. Maintenance is included with subscriptions, and no additional deployment costs are necessary for acquiring hardware or software components.

Vendor Strength

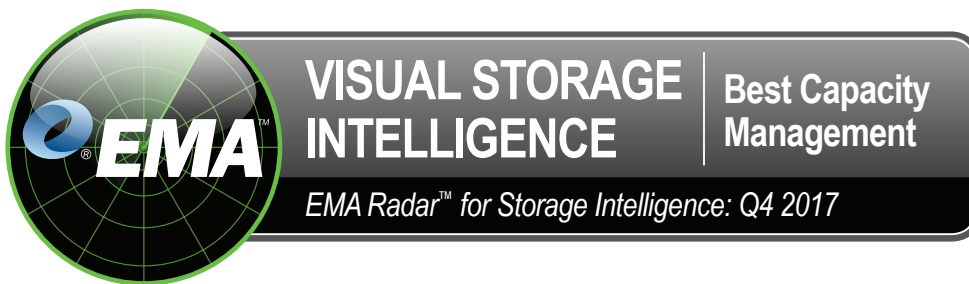
Visual Storage Intelligence's parent company, Clear Technologies, provides technical services to over 300 companies. As a privately-owned company, no financial details are publically reported or accessible. The vendor's vision for Visual Storage Intelligence is to enable organizations to successfully achieve their storage management goals by providing a single view of multivendor storage environments. The company is constantly reinvesting into the platform to extend its visibility and support capabilities. The Visual Storage Intelligence solution is principally offered through sales and channel partners.



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Special Recognition Award

Leveraging a robust set of analytics, Visual Storage Intelligence is able to provide comprehensive details on the state of the storage ecosystem. Of particular note is the platform's ability to identify the available capacities of storage resources and predict future capacity requirements based on historical trends and projected usage rates. EMA's evaluation of the platform determined that the graphical capacity reports are clear and comprehensive. Visual Storage Intelligence customers interviewed by EMA indicated that the capacity management capabilities of the platform were exceptional and enabled them to substantially reduce storage infrastructure costs by accurately preplanning growth requirements. Additionally, Visual Storage Intelligence may be employed to identify opportunities to reclaim unused or consolidate low use storage resources to extend the life and value of existing investments.



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