Product Brief

Catalogic ECX

Copy Data Management

July 2020

Evaluator Group

Making the best decisions for Information Management

Catalogic ECX

Overview

Catalogic Software was spun out of Syncsort in 2013 to focus on adding copy data management (CDM) to its data protection software. Its core product, Catalogic ECX, automates the creation, deletion and orchestration of copy data including clones, replicas and snapshots. ECX integrates with HPE Nimble arrays, IBM Spectrum-based storage systems, NetApp ONTAP arrays, and Pure Storage FlashArray. In addition to being sold by Catalogic, ECX is OEM'd as IBM Spectrum Copy Data Management.

Catalogic ECX creates a centralized metadata catalog for copy data across core data center, edge data center and cloud environments. This catalog serves several functions including:

- Data search.
- Policy-driven data protection and governance (e.g. shifting from test to production, deleting copies that are no longer needed, and adhering to specific compliance requirements and data protection service levels).
- Reporting purposes (e.g. understand opportunity for copy deletion).

Highlights

- Copy data management that leverages production systems' copy data (e.g. snapshots).
- Close integration with IBM and other storage OEM partners (HPE, NetApp, Pure Storage).
- Integrates with Catalogic's DPX, Kodo and vProtect data protection software.
- Automated database cloning and recovery.
- Self-service, automated provisioning.
- Heterogeneous storage environment support.

ECX can simplify the creation, orchestration, and lifecycle management of copy data, and also reduce the number of copies that need to be created – saving the organization both money and time. The product's core differentiator compared to competing solutions such as Actifio, Cohesity and Rubrik is that in addition to allowing for replication of data to a secondary device, it also allows customers to leverage the copies such as snapshots that are created by the primary storage device. This "in place" approach eliminates impact to host performance and the need to introduce additional storage hardware. It can accelerate restore time because data does not need to be copied or moved over the network. The approach does require technical integration with the production storage system, which Catalogic works to achieve (e.g. by taking advantage of vendors' APIs).

ECX addresses the key use cases for CDM software, including protection and disaster recovery (bolstered through a suite of complementary products including Catalogic's DPX, Kodo and vProtect software), automating infrastructure provisioning and management for test/dev and DevOps, database cloning and recovery (Microsoft SQL Server, Oracle and SAP HANA are supported), and integrating data stores with cloud compute (for instance, for analytics). It can also be used to automate/streamline management and report across heterogeneous (from multiple vendors) storage arrays.

Usage and Deployment

Catalogic Software ECX is copy data management software that creates a metadata catalog of heterogeneous storage systems to facilitate data protection and governance as well as data reuse (e.g. database cloning). Leveraging the production systems' copy data helps to control costs and accelerate recovery and provisioning times.

- Characteristics
  - Catalogs and tracks volumes, snapshots, VMs, datastores and more.
  - Searchable snapshot catalog.
  - Leverages data reduction and replication features of the production array.
  - Recovery options:
    - Data-level (mounting/mapping read/write snaps to systems over iSCSI or FC). System-level (spins up full recovery stack in a pre-defined sequence).
  - Integrated log management for point-in-time recovery of databases.
  - Multi-tenancy
  - Oracle RMAN integration
  - Documented REST API interface (allows for integration with popular DevOps tools like Puppet, Chef and Jenkins).
- Applications
  - Copy data governance and orchestration across heterogeneous storage systems.
  - Data protection
  - Database access control, cloning and recovery
  - Streamlined test/dev and DevOps ("infrastructure-as-code") with integration into data masking/scrubbing routines
- System Environments
  - HPE Nimble arrays
  - IBM Spectrum-based storage systems
  - NetApp ONTAP arrays
  - Pure Storage FlashArray
- Deployment and Administration
  - Pre-defined template-based provisioning for automated self-service and management.
  - RPO/RTO compliance reporting (e.g. if a snapshot was missed or failed).

Evaluator Group Opinion: Differentiating Elements for Catalogic ECX

Copy data management solves a number of key problems for the enterprise, including controlling the number of copies that exist, overseeing the creation and deletion of copies for cost optimization, security and compliance, and facilitating faster access to data for end users such as application developers and lines of business via self-service and automation. The latter can also streamline management duties for IT.

For its part, Catalogic differentiates its ECX CDM offering as being more cost-effective than competing solutions by allowing customers to utilize the capabilities such as snapshot and replication that are already natively built in to their production storage platforms. Faster recovery, faster access to data and faster performance with the recovery data being hosted on the same primary storage infrastructure supports ransomware recovery as well as data reuse use cases such as DevOps. Catalogic's July 2020 addition of support for HPE Nimble reflects its ongoing efforts to broaden its addressable market and solution applicability, building from its strategic alliance with IBM as well as its work with NetApp and Pure Storage. Catalogic has worked to make its platform more extensible, meaning that support for additional arrays is expected and in a quicker fashion. This will help Catalogic to access more customers and to expand its footprint in existing environments (considering that most storage environments today are heterogeneous, with arrays from multiple vendors). With partners accounting for $10 million of Catalogic's FY19 revenue, the company is also actively working to further its work with channel partners as a critical go-to-market arm.

Information that is more detailed is available at **http://evaluatorgroup.com**

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