

# S T O R A G E

Managing the information that drives the enterprise

January 2003

COVER STORY

## best storage products of 2002

COMPILED BY THE EDITORS  
OF STORAGE MAGAZINE &  
SEARCHSTORAGE.COM



Turbulent economic times resulted in a year that was marked by many stops, starts and shifts in product development. Despite a down economy, many new products hit the market, including some that were highly innovative.

**T**HE EDITORS OF STORAGE AND SEARCHSTORAGE.COM SAT DOWN THIS past fall to assess the 2002 crop, with an eye toward helping you choose those products that you have to include on your “A” list for evaluation. From our conversations with storage managers, we knew that innovation—while certainly the hallmark of great new products—wasn’t sufficient to single out such products.

Given tight budgets, short staffs and ever-increasing data volumes, we decided on the following criteria as being most critical:

- Innovation
- Performance
- Ease of integration into environment
- Ease of use and manageability
- Functionality
- Value



And so we solicited nominations from vendors, scoured the market for our own nominations and recruited a panel of judges composed of independent industry experts, storage managers and editors. They reviewed a total of 39 products in five major categories. The results are presented within.

You’ll see products that are simply the best at what you’re doing now, that next step in the evolution of current technology. You’ll see products that are just the opposite—they break the mold and let you go where you’ve been unable to go. None are a panacea—all have to be evaluated as part of your overall storage infrastructure. But we think you’ll agree they all have a mix of valuable attributes that when matched to the right task in the right environment, advance the state of the art in storage.

**>> GOLD:**

**Overland Neo Series 4000**

THE WORDS “TAPE” and “innovative” usually don’t occupy space in the same sentence. But in the eyes of the editors and judges, the Overland Neo Series 4000 tape library couldn’t seem to shake the words. The Neo sparked attention with its superior scalability and failover capabilities.

To get some of the specs out of the way—the Neo LXN4000 series libraries scale from one drive and 52 cartridges to 16 drives and 240 cartridges. The Neo LXN4000 series accommodates DLT8000, SDLT, SDLT320, LTO-1 and recently added support for LTO-2 drives. Clearly, this library option can accommodate enterprises forecasting widespread growth. The Neo also supports 1Gb/s and 2Gb/s FC technology.

So where does the innovation come in? In a couple of areas, the Neo has features not readily available on tape libraries. For instance, the Neo is able to be remotely repaired on the fly. This allows administrators to find an error and fix it without bringing systems down and without tinkering with cabling.



Bob Abraham, President of Ojai, CA-based analyst firm Freeman Reports, says that the Overland series has some upscale features for a midrange product. Freeman points out that the Neo Series is attractive to midsized companies that have their eyes on growth. The Neo Series can accommodate this by economizing floor space with its rack design. This rack-and-stack feature allows anywhere from 4TB to 66TB and can write 115GB/hour to 1,840GB/hour.

Additionally, the Neo has a partitioning option that allows for virtual sublibraries. These sublibraries allow for a centralized point of management. Included

in the ease of manageability is a touch-screen GUI. Software companies participating in the certification of Overland’s Neo tape libraries range from Computer Associates, Legato, Veritas, Tivoli, BakBone, CommVault, Syncsort, Attempo, everStor, and LiveVault.

One of the only setbacks we could find with the Series 4000 was its lack of support for AIT. But for the price—anywhere from \$22,500 for the low end and about \$115,000 for the full boat—and the features you get, it’s tough to top Overland’s Neo Series 4000 for backup hardware needs.

