komprise

CASE STUDY

Leading U.S. Academic Health System Saves Millions Annually on Storage with Komprise Self-Service Tagging & Showback

Overview:

A large U.S.-based academic health system consisting of a school of medicine, several hospitals, thousands of researchers and dozens of labs was running into the too-common problem of unstructured data overload. The IT organization decided they needed an effective cost-cutting plan that reduced central IT overhead and engendered buy-in from researchers, clinicians and faculty by including them in the process of actively managing their data.

The objective was to accelerate the tiering of cold data that is no longer needed to dramatically lower costs. Central IT needed control over the execution yet wanted departmental users to collaborate on data management decisions to expand the tiered footprint beyond age-based tiering policies. The mechanism needed to be easy and automated for both parties with clear incentives for the users, namely researchers, to participate.

Key Stats

Industry: Healthcare

Storage: Isilon, NetApp, Azure Blob

Data Analyzed: 12PB

Data Moved: 8PB

Use Cases: Cold Data Tiering, Departmental Showback/Chargeback

Results: $4 million a year in savings and growing; 3x larger data volumes tiered after departmental involvement.

Solution

The IT executive team and the head of storage IT selected **Komprise Intelligent Data Management** as the solution of choice. The decision came down to two primary factors:

- Komprise offered **flexible tiering that was storage agnostic**; the organization could move petabytes of data from any NAS to any other NAS or cloud storage platform with tiering schedules that suited their needs.
- **Komprise Transparent Move Technology (TMT)™** meant that there would be zero disruption to users if they needed to access their tiered data.

> “The time to build a query and run it has been really fast,” said the head of storage.

IT started by analyzing the 12PB of data to understand usage patterns and see where they could save money and avoid buying more storage. The storage director found that a large volume of data, around 70%, is not being accessed or used regularly—opening up a great opportunity to save on primary storage costs.

IT then created policies in Komprise for automatic tiering of all data over one year of age to Azure Blob. Employees can still access the tiered data by clicking on the link at the original file location. This non-disruptive access resolved any reluctance researchers and faculty members had about the initiative.

Next, IT created Komprise user accounts so department heads could see analysis on their data. Using Komprise Deep Analytics, they could see how much data they have, how fast it’s growing, how much is active or “hot” versus cold and more. With that knowledge, they could select inactive data sets—such as files from research projects that had completed – and tag them as “ready to tier.” On a frequency selected by IT, Komprise would tier data that was recently tagged.

As an incentive to participate in the tagging program, IT created a chargeback program that billed for data stored on-premises only. Any data that Komprise tiered was stored at no cost to a department. The chargeback report was produced by Komprise and sent to the department heads monthly.

The incentive worked. In a few months, departmental tagging resulted in the tiering of 3x more data than was tiered over the previous 7-month period. Now, more than 100 departmental managers are using Komprise to view and tag their data for tiering. Thanks to departmental collaboration and communication, the savings have catapulted – while creating a mutually-beneficial relationship between IT and the departments. Beyond managing data storage, the health system’s IT organization is now delivering valuable data services to researchers, furthering their productivity and cost savings.

Benefits

- **IT-departmental collaboration on data management:** Since the health system began creating read-only user accounts, departmental data stakeholders now have more control over how their data is managed. They can designate which files to keep on active storage and which files to send to archives, resulting in lower storage bills from IT. The IT organization benefits by boosting overall savings in data storage and freeing on-premises capacity for the most current and active data.

- **Cost savings:** Since deploying data tiering with Komprise in 2021, the health system has tiered nearly 8 PB of data. The annual cost savings is nearly $4 million and growing. The implementation of user-based tagging for tiering accelerated the archived footprint to the tune of $800,000-$1 million in additional projected savings annually.

- **Positive user experience:** Data tiered to Azure Blob is still accessible for users simply by clicking on the standard symlink (called **Komprise Dynamic Link**) in the same location as before. Users do not have to hunt for their data that has been tiered if they need to access it again.

- **Accelerated data tiering schedule:** By allowing researchers to tag their own data, such as completed projects, the amount of data tiered increased by roughly 300%.

- **Showback Reports:** Department heads can schedule and download Showback reports from Komprise to review their data footprint and costs before and after tiering. They can also customize Komprise report templates, email reports directly from Komprise, and set up a schedule for a report to run.

- **Reduces IT overhead:** The automation in Komprise and IT’s ability to allow users to tag their own data for tiering has reduced the management burden on IT.

- **Deep Analytics for researchers:** With **Komprise Deep Analytics**, IT is now delivering a rich array of data services to departments. Authorized users can search for specific files and folders of interest across their entire data estate without IT assistance. These users can enrich the metadata of their files through tagging (such as by project keywords), making their data more searchable for feeding big data and AI tools. "The time to build a query and run it has been really fast," said the head of storage.

- **Smart Data Workflows:** The healthcare system also plans to integrate Komprise Smart Data Workflows technology into its unstructured data management strategies as it implements AI programs for clinical decision-making and chronic disease research. Included in the Komprise Intelligent Data Management platform, Smart Data Workflows delivers an easy UI to search, tag and classify, confine sensitive data and move the right data sets to new storage and locations for AI--with auditing capabilities for data governance.

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"I'm working on reorganizing and cleaning up data on our NAS and with Komprise I can see details within the folders and shares, such as who's using the data and who created the data," said the storage director. "This visibility has been invaluable to find the cold data, tag it and execute automated plans. Also, Komprise support has been super responsive to our changing needs. That Komprise could support how we wanted to deploy this management process and that we did not have to bend to meet the limitations of Komprise was huge."

ABOUT KOMPRISE

Komprise is a provider of unstructured data management and mobility software that frees enterprises to easily analyze, mobilize, and monetize the right file and object data across clouds without shackling data to any vendor. With Komprise Intelligent Data Management, you can cut 70% of enterprise storage, backup and cloud costs while making data easily available to cloud-based data lakes and analytics tools.

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