Zen and the Art of Disaster Recovery
Eight Steps to Enlightened Data

The Zen of Disaster Recovery (DR) is "being at one" with your data. You know where it is in the information life cycle and, as a result, what tier of storage it should reside on. The Art is knowing not only how to resuscitate your data center after an emergency, but also what you will have once it is resurrected.

So if you combined the Dalai Lama, Marc Andreesen, and MacGyver together to produce the ultimate IT Zen Master, what would his guiding principles be?

1. **Many Paths, One DR Destination** – Every journey has a destination. In the world of DR this should not be a surprise. Your DR plan should have the flexibility to deal with a variety of scenarios, but always bring you back to the same place: a fully functional data center.

2. **Know Thy Data** – The IT Zen Master knows what is important, and how to find and retrieve it in just the right instant. Tiered Data Protection (TDP) provides an efficient way to "be at one" with your data. It enables you to know where your data is, where it should be, and exactly how to get it back—without wasting resources.

3. **Not All Data is Created Equal** – Classify your data and store it on the right tier of storage. Know what you are keeping, how long you need to keep it, and how fast you need to restore it. Don't be overly retentive if you don't have to.

4. **WWMGD (What Would MacGyver Do)** – Even MacGyver needed a Swiss Army knife, some twine, and duct tape to escape the bad guys. Build your tool chest with the most flexible RAID, nearline, VTL, and tape solutions on the market.

5. **Timing is Everything** – When recovering from a disaster, the priority is speed. But it is not enough to bring data back online; the data must be restored in order of priority. So classify your data based on its value to your company, and then ensure your DR plan has a great sense of timing.

6. **Be Like A Squirrel** – Mark Twain once said "Put all your eggs in one basket—and watch that basket!" However sage, this advice does not apply to DR. Instead, you need to be like a squirrel with stashes of data on-site as well as off-site.

7. **Encrypt Off-site Data Like a Riddle** – To protect your company from other types of legal and regulatory disasters, you must be sure the data you store off-site is encrypted. Security of the physical device (disk and tape) is vital —you not only have to keep the data, you must keep it safe and secure.

8. **The Yin and Yang of RTO and RPO** – RTO (Recovery Time Objective) is a Servie Level Agreement that outlines how fast you need the data back. This helps determine the type of technology you use for backup. RPO (Recovery Point Objective) is what point-in-time you need to be able to return a system to. Again, different technologies address different RPO needs. A solid Tiered Data Protection strategy measures and balances RTO and RPO requirements.

No organization can cost-effectively protect all of its data with just one technology. Less-critical data may require a simple tape backup, while business-critical data may require more complex disk-based capabilities. Using one technology to meet the protection needs of both types of data will result in either excessive risk of data loss, or excessive cost. The most effective approach combines multiple technologies into a Tiered Data Protection infrastructure that delivers the most appropriate levels of protection to data based on its value to the organization.

Tiered Data Protection appliances gracefully move and manage data from Disk-to-Disk-to-Tape with leading technologies—such as RAID 6, Virtual Tape Libraries, and deduplication—that shrink the burdens and costs of DR and increase the accessibility, integrity and security of data. Overland Storage® offers a diverse portfolio of Tiered Data Protection solutions that make it simple and cost-effective to build a DR plan, guiding you through an IT "death" and into the recovery afterlife.

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