

Product Brief

## QLogic Stacks up FC Switch Win-With HP

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**Abstract:** QLogic has expanded its OEM relationship with HP to include stackable FC switches that are fully integrated with HP Simple SAN Connection Manager. Combine that with HP servers and storage, and HP can now offer highly available, rapidly scalable, end-to-end 8 Gb FC SAN solutions to support physical or virtualized server environments. This should place HP in a very good position to address pressing IT priorities and could help elevate QLogic's standings in the FC switch market.

### Overview

QLogic announced expansion of its OEM relationship with HP in the Fibre Channel switch space. More specifically, this announcement highlights:

- **Expansion of HP's portfolio of QLogic FC switches.** The H-series, which already contains a QLogic entry level switch, the HP StorageWorks 8/20q, will now include the enterprise-class QLogic 5800V and 5802V Series 8Gb FC switches. Branded as the HP StorageWorks SN6000 Stackable 8Gb FC Switches, these switches have an innovative stackable architecture enabled by dedicated high speed 10 gigabit per second (Gbps) FC stacking (ISL) ports, which can be easily upgraded to 20 Gbps performance. The SN6000 also provides a choice of single or dual power supply models.
- **Full integration of QLogic HBAs and stackable switches with HP's Simple SAN Connection Manager (SSCM).** QLogic collaborated with HP to ensure the SN6000 would be included in its integrated suite of simple to use installation and monitoring tools contained within a single management console used exclusively with HP's H-series switch portfolio.
- **Complete end-to-end solutions available from HP.** The SN6000 has been qualified for use with HP's server and storage portfolios, including HP BladeSystem Virtual Connect, HP StorageWorks Modular Smart Array (MSA), and HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Array (EVA) systems.

The HP StorageWorks SN6000 switches are now available from HP distribution channels.

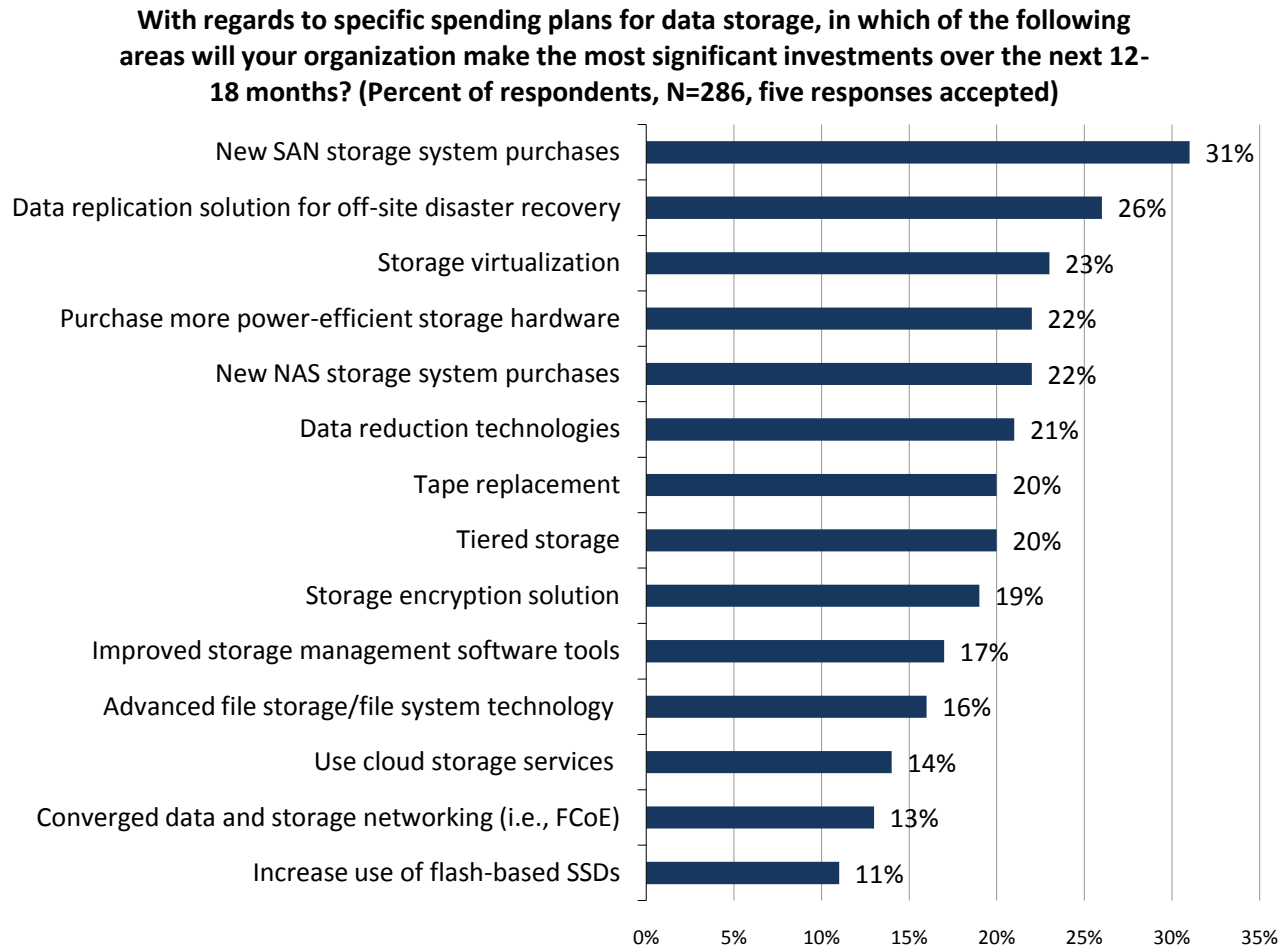
### Analysis

This announcement is well timed; the solution should resonate with end-users as they execute against their top IT priorities in 2010. Specifically, this QLogic-powered solution should benefit end-users because:

- **Virtualized server environments continue to grow and mature.** According to ESG research,<sup>1</sup> the number one IT priority for 2010 is to increase the use of server virtualization technology. It was also the number one priority in 2009 as well—for many obvious reasons. It helps to drive down costs and provide greater flexibility and availability; however, in order to achieve those benefits, the virtualized server environments need to be supported by networked storage. This relationship is also clearly reflected in ESG's research and is illustrated in Figure 1.

<sup>1</sup> Source: ESG Research Report: 2010 IT Spending Intentions Survey, January 2010.

Figure 1. Top Data Storage Priorities for 2010



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, 2010.

- The complexity has been removed.** Users that need to build networked storage environments to support virtualized server initiatives no longer need to be FC experts. HP, working closely with QLogic, has simplified SAN implementations and management. The technology was proven with a simple starter solution centered on the HP StorageWorks 8/20 FC switch and has now evolved to satisfy larger, more demanding environments. HP claims that, in less than 35 minutes and in only three steps, an HP SAN (with QLogic-powered HBAs and switches) can be configured and made operational without any prior SAN experience. For organizations creating their first FC SAN, this capability should be well received.
- Networked storage environments need to scale to accommodate growth.** Several years ago, server virtualization environments only occupied a small portion of the IT infrastructure. Now, it is not uncommon to hear about companies that are 20 - 50% virtualized heading toward a goal to be 100% virtualized. As organizations increase the use of server virtualization technology and deploy more production applications in this environment, it will be more critical to have solutions that can seamlessly scale in place. The QLogic stackable switches provide the scalability and can integrate seamlessly with any existing HP "b" and "c" series branded switches. The SSCM should make it easier to adopt and scale HP SAN solutions as it will not require an experienced SAN architect.
- Changing market dynamics have created opportunities for more competitive solutions.** Acquisitions and strategic partnerships among storage switch vendors have opened the door for other entrants. QLogic is taking advantage of these opportunities to expand its position as a legitimate third supplier of data center switching technology. This does not happen by going direct, but rather by working closely with OEM partners to supply customized and integrated solutions like the one in this announcement. This competition will drive greater innovation and provide more robust solutions.

## More to be Done

This announcement holds a great deal of potential for HP (and QLogic), but in order to gain real traction in the market, HP needs to:

- **Really drive the economic benefits of stackable switches to the market.** QLogic claims stackable switches can help end-users build a scalable SAN in less time and with less money. HP needs to train its sales staff on these benefits so they can be effectively articulated to their customers. This would include getting channel partners up to speed as well—all twenty thousand of them!
- **Continue to expand the support matrix for the Simple SAN Connection Manager.** As more organizations continue to build out their virtualized server environments and move more production applications on to virtual machines, HP should consider including its high end XP arrays. Another useful step would be to create blueprints or wizards in the SSCM software for help users scale from two, to three, to four switches (and beyond).

## The Bigger Truth

QLogic understands the opportunity it has to increase its market share for data center switching technologies in general and FC switches in particular. This announcement highlights its dedication to improve its position by collaborating with its OEM partners, in this case HP, to deliver innovative solutions to the market at a time when it could really use them. Although not taking a direct approach to the market, its OEM focus could prove to be quite successful as major technology vendors strive to deliver complete end-to-end solutions.

HP's Simple SAN Connection Manager—with its integration of QLogic HBAs and switches and HP servers and storage—has enabled HP to create an end-to-end solution for organizations looking to build out virtualized server environments supported by scalable SAN solutions without the cost and complexity normally associated with FC SANs. Organizations of any size should welcome reduced costs, non-disruptive scaling, and the ability to quickly and easily create or augment an environment without having to burden skilled storage architects. HP is definitely on the right track and, based on ESG's research, should be well positioned to take advantage of growing virtualized server and SAN markets with its QLogic-enabled solutions.