

# All Flash Arrays: Market Clarity and Acceleration

There was quite a stir with the 800 pound gorilla entering the all-flash array market. This was a significant event as EMC, the disk storage market share leader, endorsed the potential of all-flash arrays (AFA) to replace performance-focused storage arrays (disk, hybrid, or tiered). With this, more of the market has been clarified and likely accelerated.



## Flash Market Clarity

No one challenges the performance inherent within flash; however, the storage industry has splintered into two camps. One group views flash as ideal for Tier-0; where performance and availability is the focus. The second group seeks to deliver flash to the exponentially larger Tier-1 market by delivering performance and availability along with storage savings. Vendors like Violin Memory, IBM TMS and FusionIO comprise the Tier-0 camp, where as Pure Storage and EMC are squarely in the Tier-1 camp.

Vendors being vendors spent a lot of time inundating the wire focusing on the value of their AFA architecture and performance capabilities. From my perspective this positioning was the least interesting element of EMC's entry into the market. The introduction of a storage efficient all-flash array by EMC is a clear sign that EMC is following the direction set by Pure Storage. Offering AFAs at the price point that is often less than that of a spinning disk array is a market disrupting initiative.

## Market Acceleration

The expansion of the storage efficient and thus economically priced AFAs in the Tier-1 market shouldn't be scoffed at. While many will focus on Tier-0 as an elite market, there is reality as to the size of the market. Tier-0 pales in comparison to the size of the Tier-1 market. For example, *the market purchases many more BMWs than Ferraris.*

EMC's decision to enter the the Tier-1 storage-efficient AFA camp, versus the Tier-0 all performance camp, validates the viability of flash as a replacement for mechanical disk arrays. This move will likely accelerate the adoption of all-flash arrays. As a byproduct we may also see the size of the Tier-0 market diminish as application needs are reclassified based on the capabilities of Tier-1 all-flash arrays.

# Flash In Closing

Clearly the adoption rate of all-flash arrays is exceeding the expectations of nearly everyone including customers, analysts, partners and even many storage vendors. Broad market adoption is underway and customer perceptions are changing. Many no longer focus on which Tier-0 applications deserve flash but rather which disk, hybrid or tiered storage array should be retired first and thus bring the benefits of flash to their Tier-0 and Tier-1 environments!

The post appeared first on [The Virtual Storage Guy](#).

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