Big Data applications in healthcare, energy, media & entertainment, and more, push up shipments of high-capacity, environmentally friendly, LTO tape over the 225 million mark

SILICON VALLEY, CALIF. — (Sept. 4, 2013) — The LTO Program Technology Provider Companies (TPCs), HP, IBM and Quantum Corporation, announced today that the adoption rate of LTO Generation 6 tape cartridges is faster than that of the prior generation.

The upward trend in shipments comes as more storage managers, content developers and information technology professionals turn to LTO technology for a safe, reliable and cost-effective storage solution amid the rapidly-growing amount of data and content that is being generated in the digital era. According to Coughlin Associates, the required digital storage capacity used in the entertainment industry alone is expected to increase by more than 500 percent by 2018.

"Big Data is affecting every organization, regardless of size. However, its impact is even greater in such industries as healthcare, energy exploration and broadcast producers," said Bina Halman, Vice President, IBM Storage Systems Product Management. "The massive data volumes generated, shared and stored in industries like these require even greater reliability, security, and accessibility. The LTO Program has been on the forefront of providing technology that offers a cost-effective method for protecting, archiving and easily retrieving large amounts of data to help organizations mitigate risk, enhance resiliency, and improve productivity."

LTO technology also continues to lead the tape data storage industry as it surpasses new milestones. According to a recent study by IDC,** more than 44.4 million LTO drives have been shipped since the beginning of the program (through year-end 2012). Another milestone was reached as the 225 millionth LTO cartridge was shipped, according to Santa Clara Consulting Group.**** The aggregate capacity of these cartridges represents the potential of more than 90,000 petabytes of data protected and retained using LTO technology.

Despite the increased uptake in the newest generation of LTO tape, the previous LTO Generation 5, introduced three years ago, remains popular as drive shipments maintained double-digit growth over the prior year. "LTO technology continues to be, by far, the strongest performer in the tape industry," said Joel Tax, Santa Clara Consulting Group. "With the recent introduction of LTO-6 technology, we anticipate this trend to continue. LTO-6 products have been available since fourth quarter last year and support a tape cartridge storage capacity of up to 6.25TB,***** which is more than twice the compressed capacity over the previous generation. LTO-6 drives and tapes also feature data transfer rates of up to 400MB**** per second, translating to more than 1.4 terabytes of compressed data per hour. As with previous generations, LTO-6 drives provide backward compatibility with the ability to read and write LTO Generation 5 cartridges and read LTO Generation 4 cartridges, helping to preserve media investments and ease of deployment.

In addition, the LTO Ultrium Generation 6 format includes a partitioning functionality, first introduced in LTO Generation 5 technology, enabling users to present a tape-based file system with the use of the Linear Tape File System (LTFS). With continued support for hardware-based encryption and WORM (Write-Once, Read-Many) functionality, LTO Ultrium Generation 6 tape technology is designed to provide an optimal balance of performance, capacity, compatibility and cost control and to support a broad range of safe, secure and portable data storage options for backup and archival that are easy to use and address a vast majority of storage needs.

Added Halman: "When new applications for the use of data continue to be introduced at a rapid pace, LTO technology is the one constant when it comes to a cost-effective, reliable and compatible solution to retain and protect the data." The LTO Program will be presenting and demonstrating LTO technology to a broad range of data managers at IBC in Amsterdam, SEG in Houston, Texas, SNW Fall in Long Beach, California, and Supercomputing in Denver, Colorado. Find conference dates and information at www.lto.org. Learn more about LTO technology, LTFS, exciting user stories and a variety of compelling storage white papers at www.lto.org/whitepapers.

How to License LTO Ultrium Technology

The LTO Program has historically offered several different license packages – from enhanced packages that provide additional allocations and licenses to manufacture LTO Ultrium products, to basic packages providing LTO format specifications.

Buyers seeking LTO Ultrium format-compliant products should look for the LTO Ultrium format compliance verification trademarks on both tape drives and data cartridges. Storage and media manufacturers interested in licensing LTO formats may obtain information by contacting the LTO Program at https://www.staging10.fso.org/contact-us/.

About Linear Tape-Open (LTO)

The LTO Ultrium format is a powerful, scalable, adaptable open tape format developed and continuously enhanced by technology providers HP, IBM Corporation and Quantum Corporation (and their predecessors) to help address the growing demands of data protection in the enterprise-class server environments. This ultra-high capacity generation of tape storage products is designed to deliver outstanding performance, capacity and reliability combining the advantages of linear multi-channel, tape-on-tape form factor with enhancements in enhancing tape technology, data compression, track layout, and error correction.

The LTO Ultrium format has a well-defined roadmap for growth and scalability. The roadmap represents intentions and goals only. There is no guarantee that these goals will be achieved. Format compliance verification is vital to meet the free-interchange objectives that are at the core of the LTO Program. Ultrium tape mechanism and tape cartridge interchange specifications are available on a licensed basis. For additional information on the LTO Program, visit www.lto.org.

** Source: IDC Worldwide Tape QICKs, IDC, April 2013
*** Source: Santa Clara Consulting Historic data
**** Assuming a 2.5:1 compression achieved with larger compression history buffers
***** Source: HP, Quantum, and IBM. LTO-6 Ultrium tape storage products are compliant with various Flashanan Associates and are offered in the US and other countries.