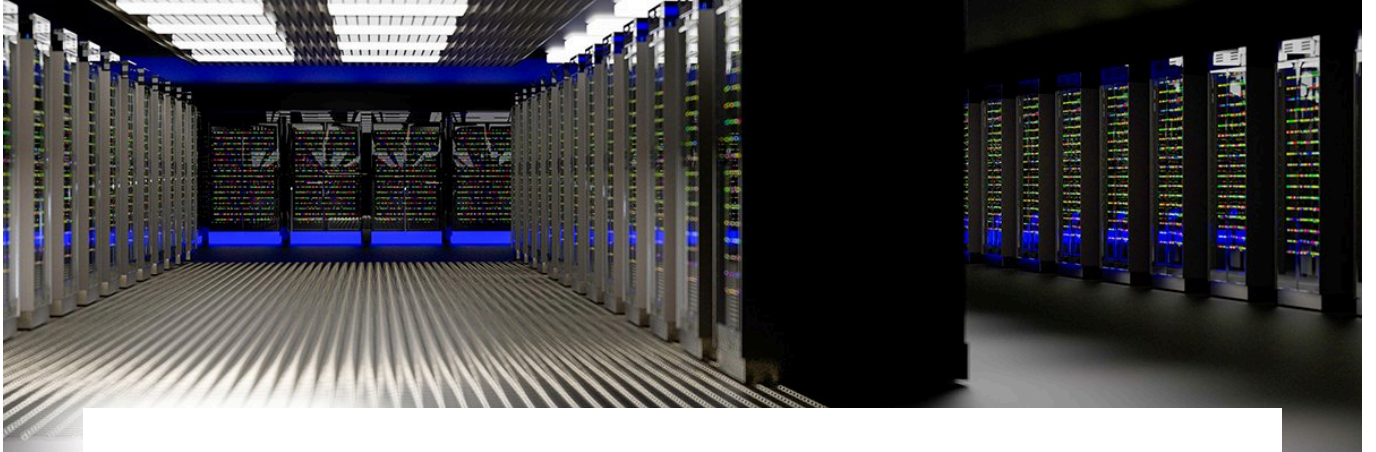


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FEATURE

## Hitachi Vantara: Small part of a big corp and analytics focus

We look at Hitachi Vantara, its storage, its cloud offer, the workloads it targets, and its efforts in containerisation and consumption models of storage purchasing

By **Antony Adshead**, Storage Editor

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In this storage supplier profile we look at [Hitachi Vantara](#), which is a small part of a very big organisation. It plays into the enterprise data storage market, with [block, file and object access](#) and a full portfolio of hyper-converged, cloud and [container-focused products](#), and sits alongside Hitachi's wider ICT offer.

Its storage offer in 2023 is characterised by products that can include the latest NVMe media, but also traditional form factor



[mainframe compute environments.](#)

Hitachi Vantara is the storage, data and analytics division of the giant Hitachi group, which as a corporation is ranked 113th in the Forbes Global 500. Formed out of the Hitachi Data Systems storage group, Vantara was created in 2017 upon a merger with the group's Pentaho business intelligence operation and the Hitachi Insight Group (IT services and consulting).

Hitachi Vantara is a small part of the parent Hitachi corporation, whose consolidated revenues for fiscal year 2020 were \$78.6bn, with 871 subsidiaries and approximately 350,000 employees worldwide.

The name "Vantara" is a bit of a mystery. It was chosen for being "suggestive", according to executive Brian Householder in [this 2017 clip](#), and is meant to evoke "advantage", a "vantage point" and "virtualisation".

Curiously, Vantara doesn't appear in [Hitachi's 2022 results](#). Digital Systems & Services does, however, and its storage revenues are presumably part of that. Citing soaring semiconductor shortages and other material price increases (but "minor impact" from electricity price hikes), Hitachi's results give a financial year revenue figure for that division of 2,389 billion yen (\$18.4bn) and a rise of 11% year-on-year.

However, Vantara appears to be a relatively small part of Digital Systems & Services. In 2021, Hitachi Vantara was ranked fifth among external OEM storage suppliers by IDC, with revenue of \$338.3m and a 4.9% market share. Of that, UK revenue was [£134m](#).

### **What are Hitachi Vantara's key storage products?**

Hitachi Vantara's flagship block storage array line is the Virtual Storage Platform (VSP) 5000 series, which comes as the 5200 and 5600, with an H-suffix variant to each.

VSP block storage arrays run a common operating system, Storage Virtualization OS (SVOS).

The 5200 offers SAS and NVMe SSD capacity up to 300PB with a 5.1 million IOPS max. NVMe storage class memory (SCM) can be fitted. The ratio of NVMe

to SAS drives possible is about 1:8, with the latter going up to drive sizes of 30TB. Connectivity is Fibre Channel, FC-NVMe, iSCSI and Ficon (mainframe).

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The 5600 model gains much higher IOPS (33 million) and a much higher drive and port count. Throughput is also very much improved over the 5200 (312GBps vs 52GBps). The H variants add large form factor SSD capacity but lower IOPS (5.1 million).

Vantara's E series (590, 790 and 1090) also scale to PBs but lack the mainframe access of the 5000s. They also retain spinning disk HDD capacity.

Hitachi Content Platform is the company's unstructured data – file and object access – platform, which comes as a physical or virtual appliance or as storage software. It can scale to exabytes, and comes in hybrid (ie, with HDDs and flash) and all-flash. The virtual appliance works on VMware and Linux KVM, while software-only works on customer bare metal, in hypervisors or on Amazon cloud. Capacity can be extended from on-premise to all three major cloud – AWS, Azure and GCP – and any S3-compatible cloud.

Hyper-converged infrastructure comes in the form of hardware appliances in its Hitachi Unified Compute Platform, which can be all-flash, all-NVMe flash and GPU-equipped, and can share management with block storage arrays. It uses VMware vSphere as its hypervisor. Node capacity can go from a few TB to the low 100-plus TB range with a maximum of 64 nodes.

### What markets and workloads does Hitachi Vantara target?

The company claims 85% of Fortune 500 companies are Hitachi Vantara customers.

Pentaho is a key plank of the Vantara brand. It provides AI-based data cataloguing across multiple on-premise and cloud data stores, data lakes etc. It allows for metadata tagging, pipeline and workflow tools including ingest and cleanse, with access controls and data protection, plus migration to data warehouses.

Hitachi Content Intelligence is the “solution framework” that can be deployed on physical and virtual servers and in the cloud and promises discovery, and analytics of data held in enterprise storage. It claims to discover structured and unstructured data, and make it available in an indexed central data collection.

### **How does the cloud fit Hitachi Vantara strategy?**

Hitachi Cloud Connect for Equinix can extend datacentre infrastructure to any Equinix location with Hitachi VSP and Hitachi Ops Center hybrid cloud data management tools.

That means Hitachi customers can use VSP adjacent to a public cloud datacentre, and won't see a performance drop when running applications in the cloud.

In 2021, Hitachi joined the Kubernetes storage fray with [Hitachi Kubernetes Service](#) (HKS), which allows customers to manage container storage in on-premise datacentres and the three main public clouds. HKS was built out of IP belonging to Containership in 2019 and allows deployment of Hitachi Unified Compute Platform as a Kubernetes-managed private cloud across local and hybrid cloud environments.

HKS uses CSI drivers to manage persistent volumes directly on Kubernetes nodes, which distinguishes it from the container-native offerings of other suppliers.

### **Consumption models of purchasing**

Hitachi Vantara's Flex plans offer its storage hardware via purchase or lease, as well as two true consumption models. The latter – known as EverFlex Consumption Utility and As-A-Service – differ depending on whether infrastructure is managed and monitored by the customer or Hitachi. Both of these are pay-per-use cloud-like models.

Meanwhile, Hitachi Modern Storage Assurance is available with VSP 5000 and E series, and guarantees upgrade to new storage platforms with claimed zero downtime. The company claims that “most customers will see total cost of ownership savings of up to 30% over the next 10 years”.

Hitachi Vantara’s AIOps offer is based around the Hitachi Ops Center suite, which comprises Administrator, to provision and deliver storage resources; Analyzer, for predictive datacentre capacity and health management; Automator, for template and custom service building plus API integration; and Protector, for backup scheduling and snapshots.

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[Hitachi Vantara expands in hybrid and multi-cloud storage](#)

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