

Xpresstransfer Online Backup Suite v5.0 Whitepaper – Backup speed analysis

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1 Introduction

This document contains results of the tests carried out for measuring backup speeds for the backup operation between Xpresstransfer Offsite Backup Server (OBS) and Xpresstransfer Online Backup Manager (OBM).

It serves as a reference for customers in planning their hardware and network capacity.

Please note that the following hardware configurations were setup in a lab environment and do not imply the configuration of the actual live backup servers

2 Testing Configuration and Setup

2.1 Hardware and Software Setup

The list of hardware and software is shown in the following table.

Hardware		Software
Backup Server (Backup destination)	Intel Xeon 2.8GHz CPU 2GB ram	RedHat Enterprise Linux AS4 Offsite Backup Server v.5.0.1.4
Client Workstation (Backup source)	Intel Pentium Dual- Core CPU 3.2 GHz 2GB ram	Windows 2003 Server Online Backup Manager v.5.0.1.4

2.2 Test Scenarios

In the test, there are 4 file backup sets, each contains files of different numbers and sizes as described in the following table.

File Backup Set	Average file size	Total number of files	Number of folders	Total Size (GB)	Compressed Size (GB)
Small files	2Kb	1903685	1007	2.45	1.96
Medium files	200Kb	10000	1010	2.38	1.90
Large files	20Mb	100	10	2.44	1.95
Huge files	200Mb	10	1	2.44	1.95

2.3 Test Cases

All the 4 backup sets were configured with the following settings:

- Transfer block size is 128 Kb
- “In-File Delta” option is turned off
- Encryption is enabled (AES – CBC mode)

Different network bandwidths (uplink) for each of the backup set has been tested. The network constraint was achieved by limiting the bandwidth of the particular backup account with the following assumptions:

1. ADSL and SDSL have a down/up bandwidth up to 1.5Mbps/640Kbps and 2Mbps/2Mbps respectively. From trace route, they have gone through 12 routers/networks before reaching the Backup Server
2. T1 has a bandwidth up to 1.544Mbps
3. LAN has a bandwidth up to 100Mbps
4. The average compression ratio of the files is 80%.

The results are outlined in the next section.

3 Results

3.1 Upload Time

The time required for the backup operations with different network bandwidth are summarized below: Please note that only changes are backed up so for example if your total data storage is 10GB you may only backup 200-300MB per day or if it was 300GB you typically would backup 1.8GB-2.5GB per day. This very much depends on how many new files are generated and how many changes are made to existing files. The above 2 examples are from customers who currently subscribe to our secure online backup service.

Test Case	Network Bandwidth (down/up)	Compressed Size (GB)	Time taken (HH:MM:SS)	Transfer rate (MB/min)
2.45 GB of small-files (each approx 20kb)	ADSL (1.5Mbps/640Kbps)	1.96 GB	15:12:17	2.2
	SDSL (2Mbps/2Mbps)	1.96 GB	05:22:41	6.22
	T1	1.96 GB	05:22:09	6.23
	LAN	1.96 GB	00:55:38	35.23
2.38 GB of medium-files (each approx 200kb)	ADSL (1.5Mbps/640Kbps)	1.90 GB	13:04:31	2.48
	SDSL (2Mbps/2Mbps)	1.90 GB	04:23:38	7.38
	T1	1.90 GB	03:10:22	10.22
	LAN	1.90 GB	00:49:37	39.21
2.44 GB of large-files (each approx 20MB)	ADSL (1.5Mbps/640Kbps)	1.95 GB	13:12:23	2.52
	SDSL (2Mbps/2Mbps)	1.95 GB	04:29:07	7.42
	T1	1.95 GB	03:05:14	10.78
	LAN	1.95 GB	00:31:24	63.6
2.44 GB of very large-files (each approx 200MB)	ADSL (1.5Mbps/640Kbps)	1.95 GB	13:38:22	2.44
	SDSL (2Mbps/2Mbps)	1.95 GB	04:25:11	7.53
	T1	1.95 GB	03:12:11	10.39
	LAN	1.95 GB	00:59:57	33.31

3.2 Observations

For a backup set with a large number of small files, there is not much improvement in the backup speed even though the bandwidth has been increased. The bottleneck is thus on client workstation where the files are being processed and encrypted.

For a backup set with an average number of medium-sized files, increasing the uplink bandwidth does improve the backup speed by a significant amount. This reflects that, with lesser number of files, the bottleneck is switched to the network instead. In other words, the larger the number of files, the more processing is required on the OBM machine.

And for a backup set with smaller number of large files, similar patterns are observed. Namely, the backup speed is significantly improved when the uplink bandwidth is increased.

3.3 Conclusion

The time required for a backup (or backup speed) depends very much on the backup set's constitution. Other than uploading a large number of files (over 2 million files) in a single backup, network latency is the major constraint on the backup speed.

In general, for a large number of small files (e.g. File system backup), the uplink bandwidth is relatively less important as the stress would be on the CPU of the source machine. In this case, a more powerful OBM machine could improve the backup speed. On the other hand, with smaller number of big files (e.g. MS Exchange, MS SQL backups), the available uplink bandwidth would have bigger impact on the overall backup speed.

At the planning stage, system administrators should choose the most cost-effective bandwidth in their situations. Following are some of the factors that they might need to consider:

- Type of backups
- Anticipated data volume
- Backup frequency
- Performance criteria
- Budget constraints
- Trade off between performance and costs
- Expected growth in data volume