

DAT — cutting the cost of tape backup



An example of the true cost of ownership	2
DAT: lowest cost of ownership among midrange tape drives.....	2
The 60 to 100GB class cost of ownership in detail	3
DAT: lowest cost of ownership among entry-level tape drives	5
DAT: lowest cost of ownership for low-end server backup	5
Conclusion.....	6
For more information.....	7

The purchase price of a tape drive is only the first part of the overall cost of your ongoing backup solution. Annual purchasing of tape cartridges can quickly overtake the initial outlay and give you the true cost of ownership. The good news is that with both a low-cost drive *and* low-cost media, DAT continues to provide the lowest cost backup solution available today.

Few organizations dispute the value of their data—losing it would be catastrophic for their business. Tape backup is a vital part of a reliable data protection solution and the most cost-effective means of offline storage.

When purchasing a tape drive, it is tempting to compare the cost of one drive with another. However, studies have shown that on average each tape drive uses eight new data cartridges per year. With data cartridge prices ranging from \$5 to more than \$100, the difference in ongoing costs becomes significant.*

An example of the true cost of ownership

The following example shows how media costs affect the overall cost of a tape backup solution.

	Travan 40	DAT 40
The cost of an internal tape drive:	\$475	\$799
Cost of drive plus eight pieces of media in the first year:	\$846	\$869
Cost of drive plus eight pieces of media for four years:	\$1,958	\$1,109

(Source data: Storage Trax Independent Pricing Report, October 2003)

The cumulative cost of Travan media over four years is more than three times the drive price. By comparison, the low cost of DAT media means that the year 1 cost of the DAT 40 is approximately the same as Travan 40 when eight pieces of media are included. The cumulative cost of DAT becomes significantly less than Travan as the years go by—a saving of \$849 over four years compared with Travan 40. In other words, customers would save more on media than the initial cost of the DAT drive.

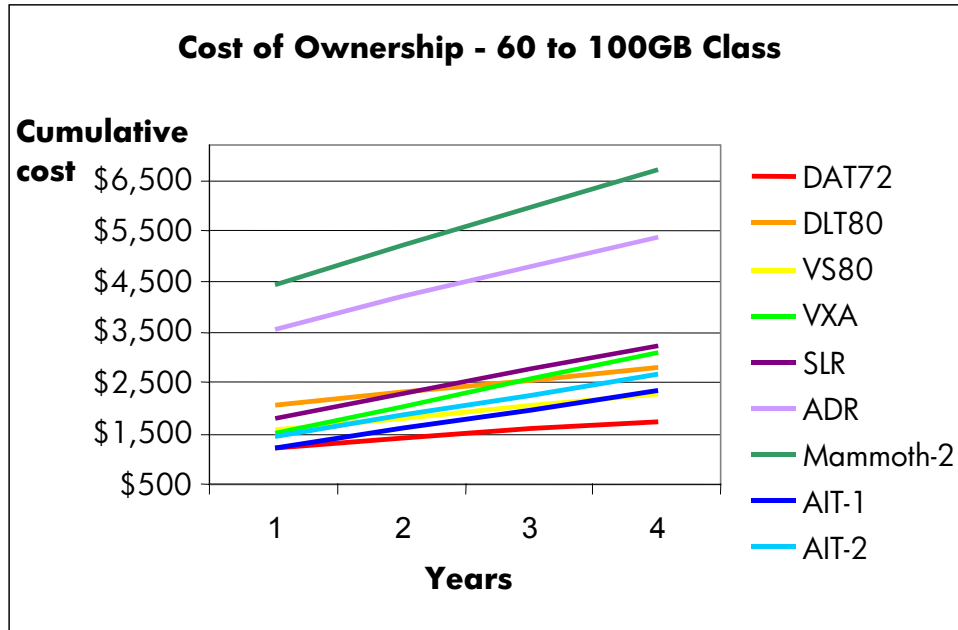
When we look at this true cost of backup, it is not surprising that DAT remains the most popular backup solution for small and medium business environments with entry-level and low-end servers.

DAT: lowest cost of ownership among midrange tape drives

The technologies in the midrange tape market storing between 60 and 100GB of compressed data are numerous. Although they have roughly the same capacity, DAT 72 is far less expensive to purchase initially and continues to maintain a strong differential over years 2, 3, and 4 due to a much lower cost of tape media. The following charts show an overview of this differential, followed by a more detailed comparison by technology.

*The source data used for the following analysis has been taken from *Storage Trax Independent Pricing Report*, October 2003. Updates were made where lower prices have been found on www.cdw.com on December 1, 2003.

Figure 1.



The 60 to 100GB class cost of ownership in detail

Figure 2.

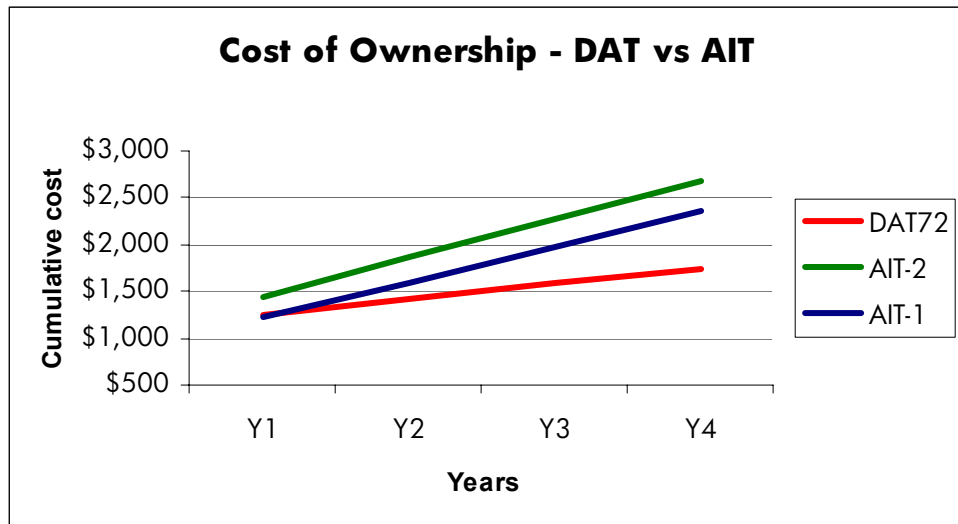


Figure 3.

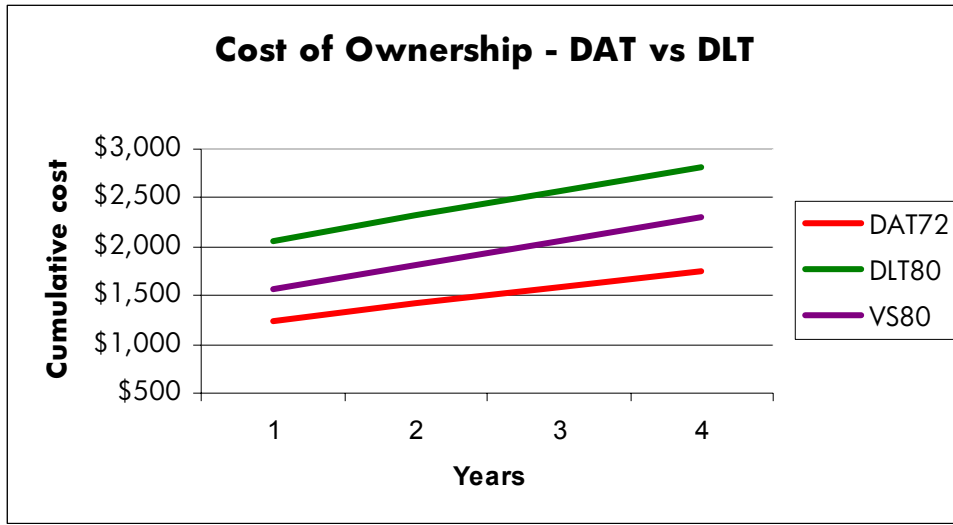
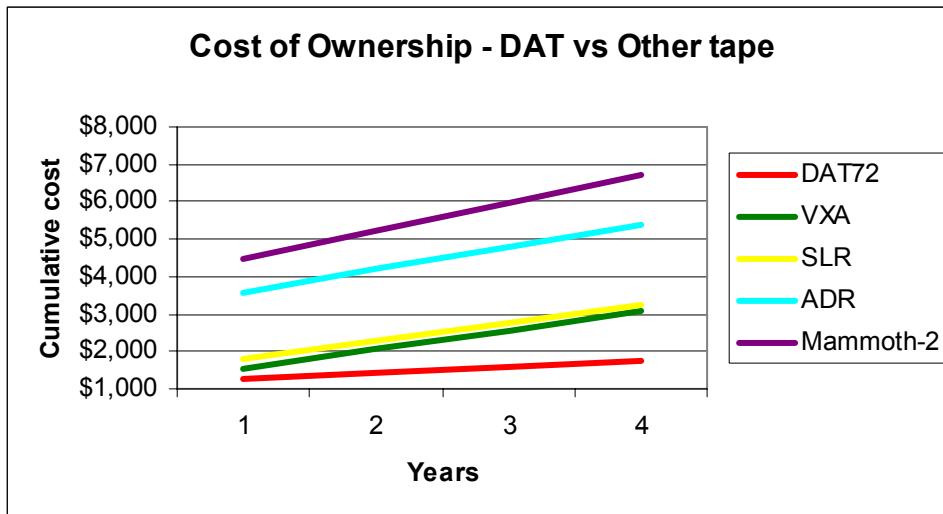


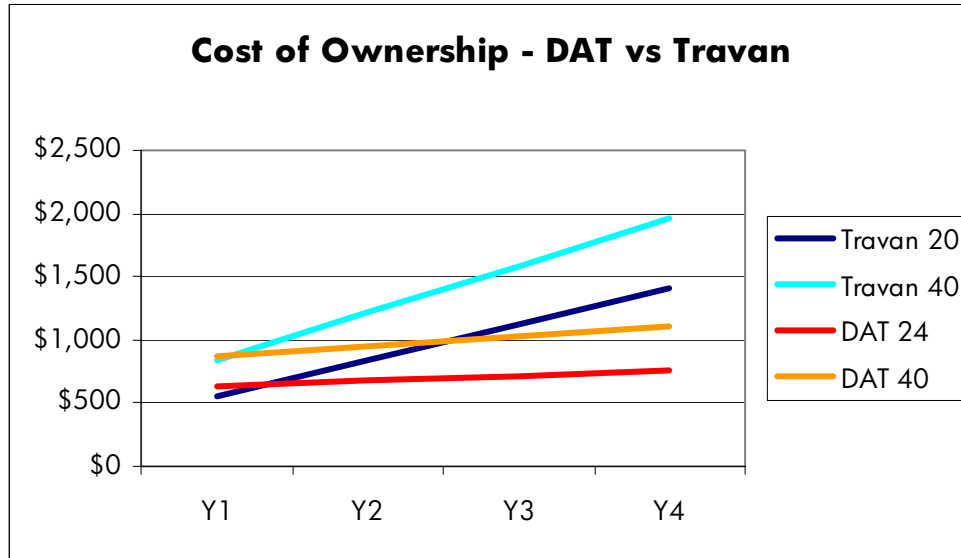
Figure 4.



DAT: lowest cost of ownership among entry-level tape drives

Both DAT 24 and DAT 40 provide lower cost of ownership over four years than the comparable Travan 20 or Travan 40 drives.

Figure 5.

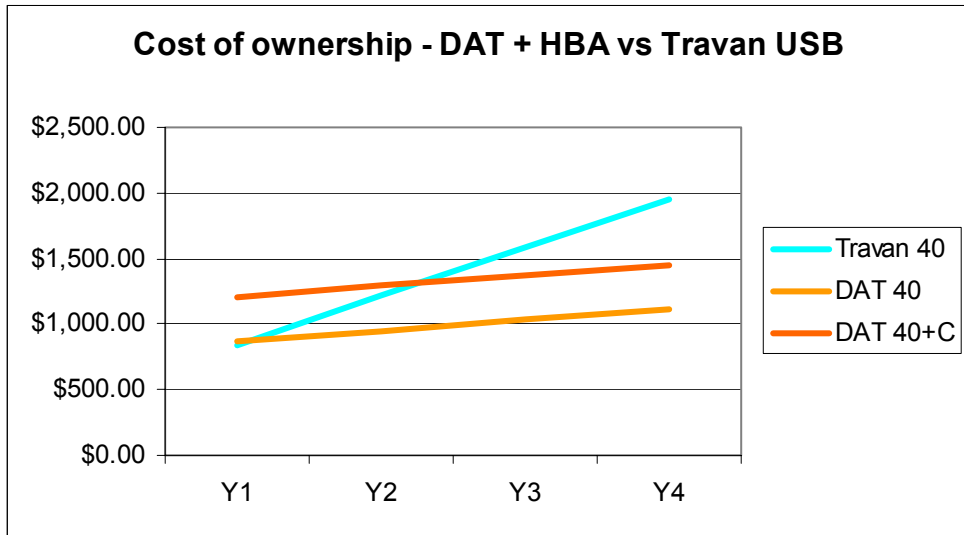


DAT: lowest cost of ownership for low-end server backup

HP DAT drives come with standard SCSI-2 interfaces. Although most business systems come complete with SCSI interface ports, customers with PCs and low-end servers may prefer to attach their tape drive to a USB port. To do this with a DAT drive, a host bus adapter (HBA) is needed. The cost of an HBA is incremental to the initial purchase price of a DAT drive.

Even with an HBA included in the initial purchase price, DAT can break even with a USB Travan drive in the second year of operation because the media cost provides an overall lower cost of ownership for DAT.

Figure 6.



Conclusion

DDS/DAT continues to be the unit volume market leader in the tape drive market, accounting for almost half of all tape drives shipped according to Gartner Dataquest in their report for 1H 2003. This remarkable tape family continues to flourish because it meets the needs of a substantial segment of the small and medium business market for cost-effective, reliable backup.

For more information

www.hp.com/go/tape

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