

## Re: Dell SC430 servers

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- *From:* dmh <fake@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Mon, 06 Feb 2006 20:21:40 +1000
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Hi Leonid,

Thanks for going to the trouble of expanding on your views regarding software assurance. The telling point maybe the size of shop you mention. I think (in my case anyway) that our views are clouded by both our current and potential client base.

Big city + big wages + higher support costs + potential growth = I need to consider SA

Small city / regional areas + low wages + good cheap support = Cheapest deal that works.

I fall into the latter category in a place where many businesses are run from the garage and larger firms tend to be branch offices with support from head office.

In this scenario the small server with SBS2003 on special works.

Also thank you for the cost comparisons. The prices in the States are certainly attractive.

I commented earlier that I couldn't get a HP price to compete with Dell. I thought I'd outline the price difference here for your information. I've converted the costs to US\$ to make them more meaningful.

DELL SC430  
3 GHZ  
2 x 160 SATA  
1.5GB Ram  
SBS2003 STD 5CL  
KB/Mouse/Floppy/CDRom  
3 Yr next business day On-site Warranty  
3rd party SATA Raid controller  
Cost AU\$ 2296.00 US\$ 1722.00

HP ML110 G3  
as above with 1GB Ram  
Also HP do have a SATA raid option included  
Cost AU\$ 3274.00 US\$ 2455.50

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Thanks again  
David

The initial cost of software is a small piece of the total cost of ownership puzzle. You would find it far less troublesome to be able to freely move the license between hardware. With the OEM license, your initial investment is tied to the hardware and legally can't be moved from it to newer equipment. This makes the upgrade license chain more complicated than it should be. You wouldn't want to have to repurchase all of your CALs for Cougar anyway, and yet that's the scenario you'll be looking at in a couple of years. With the enhancements that are being done in Cougar (next SBS), you'll want it. What this means is that in late 2007, when Cougar is likely to be released, you'll be looking at your upgrade options. OEM customers always have more headaches when the time comes to upgrades. :-) Not to mention that that you have to live with the silly decision to use 12GB C: drive partition that Dell lovingly configures its servers with. By the way, Open Value is 3 years of SA, and not 2 as it used to be with Open Business.

So let's see – you have the option to get SBS, SBS R2, and Cougar for a similar price that you will pay to Dell for each release of SBS and Cougar. You also have the option to split your costs on annual basis. This also covers your CALs. There are other valuable benefits of Software Assurance as well that Microsoft keeps adding to. In addition, in US you get some money back to have a Partner properly implement it. That's a no-brainer decision, if you asked me.

When I create a solution, one of my selling points is that the customers has no need to budget anything for its emergency support for the next three years, though we do have a small maintenance agreement to apply patches (mainly handled through wsus) and such. All servers and workstations are covered with HP onsite support for 3 to 5 years, depending on client's wishes, at no additional cost to the customer and all software upgrades are covered by Microsoft. We just push out the new MSIs and the process of upgrading clients is done. This works best with volume licenses ;-). We find that customers find great value in Office 2003 Pro Enterprise due to Infopath, which you only get through volume license program unless you wish to pay \$200/user for retail package, and the home use program as well.

It's more productive and cost-effective to use volume licensing and Software Assurance makes sense by allowing you to specify a fixed IT budget to stay current with the latest technology. This may not necessarily be a requirement in smallest shops, but it quickly becomes apparent in organizations with more than 10 employees.

Now, to address Dell vs HP – I needed to update my competitive pricing file anyway, so I did a few test configs that I'll share with you here :-)

I am configuring a server for typical server duties (not the \$450 default

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settings :-))

Dell SC430

Slowest CPU (Celeron 326)

(2) SATA drives 160GB each

2GB RAM as 2 sticks (\$12 price difference from 4 sticks)

U320 SCSI controller for that tape drive

3yr basic onsite service

no RAID controller

no OS

Floppy, keyboard, mouse – added. Good luck configuring RAID on Windows without a floppy drive...

This costs \$1159 list, and \$869 if with current promo. That is without OS or RAID controller. I am baffled why Dell won't simply sell you a CERC card for it. That would make the 430 quite a steal with a \$262 upgrade option.

Moving up to SC830 with identical configuration:

With the RAID controller – \$1640 list, \$1230 with current promo

Without the RAID controller – \$1291 list, \$968 with current promo

Mind you, this is not a hot–swap configuration.

OK, now let's look at the next server up the food chain, the SC1420. \$1816 list, \$1362 with current promo.

This includes your RAID controller but also gets you a Xeon CPU (2.8Ghz) and dual–CPU capability.

Without CERC RAID, your price drops to \$1567 and \$1175 respectively.

Still, not a hotswap config.

For hotswap, a PowerEdge 1800 is minimum (unless entry level rack models are considered, which are too limited as far as internal storage is concerned). \$2247 list, \$1685 with promo.

I am not configuring these things with SCSI for this study.

Let's look at HP.

ML110 (roughly your SC430) with RAID controller – \$1695

ML310 (roughly your SC830) with RAID controller – \$2123

ML 150 (Roughly your PowerEdge 1800 with hotswap) – \$2474

There is no model to directly compare with the SC1420, unless it's a non–hotswap ML150

I do not specify servers without hotswap capability. Notice that as requirements begin to increase, prices stabilize.

I like to specify remote management cards for my servers. Dell's DRAC option is \$224, while HP's ILO option is \$119.

This brings both servers that I would minimally start with within \$100 of each other. As those are retail prices, I should be able to provide a

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competitive quote to match Dell's non-discount price.

When specified with a more usable config (6) hot swap drives [(2) 160GB, (4) 250GB], DAT72 tape drive, (5) DAT72 tapes, and remote management cards:  
\$4255/\$3191 from Dell  
\$4140 from HP

It should be noted that HP charges an unreasonable \$670 for a RAM upgrade to 2GB. I'd probably throw in a couple of Crucial modules and save about \$400. The same operation with Dell would save me about \$100.

Dell servers are a great value if the customer can get them on sale, but otherwise we are quite competitive. :-)