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# BEST PRACTICES

AWARDS

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BEST  
2020 PRACTICES  
AWARD

# Acronis

**2020 NORTH AMERICAN DATA PROTECTION  
NEW PRODUCT INNOVATION AWARD**

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## Background and Company Performance

### *Industry Challenges*

Today's hypercompetitive business environment requires not only maintaining the highest levels of system availability, but capitalizing on unique differentiators such as data. For most businesses, data—whether customer, research-driven, or market-based—is a concrete asset that is being leveraged in new and different ways, in activities such as product development and marketing. Businesses are also storing more data than ever before, whether for revenue-generating activities, or as a result of activities like backup.

At the same time, regulations surrounding data, from the European GDPR to US-based HIPAA regulation and HITRUST certification, require data to be handled with extreme care. When companies lose data, it costs approximately \$150 per record lost, with the average data breach costing businesses \$3.9 million, according to CyberCrime magazine.

As a result, businesses are placing greater importance on data backup and recovery. According to Frost & Sullivan research, 81% of companies expect that their move to cloud will enable them to better manage their data, while 79% expect to improve their disaster recovery capabilities.

These statistics highlight a key shift that is currently taking place among IT vendors as well as enterprises. Some forward-thinking vendors are taking a new approach to overall data management, bringing to market offerings that integrate numerous services, from backup to disaster recovery to general storage and analytics, under a single management platform. This enables their customers to focus on a core asset—their data—rather than on individual tasks such as storage, or backup, or disaster recovery. Frost & Sullivan is tracking the convergence among markets including backup and recovery; security and compliance; and sometimes data aggregation and analysis. The resulting services reflect a holistic, data management approach.

Acronis has enhanced its traditional backup and recovery services with features and tools to handle security, compliance, archival storage, and even disaster recovery capabilities. The result is a highly functional, comprehensive solution that manages every aspect of caring for enterprise data.

### *New Product Attributes and Customer Impact*

Acronis is no stranger to the backup and recovery industry, having launched its first data protection services in 2003. Today, the company has launched its new Acronis Cyber Protect offering which holistically protects enterprise data both within the data center and at the edge and endpoints.

#### **Criterion 1: Matched to Needs**

Acronis Cyber Protect—one of the first integrated data protection and cybersecurity solutions on the market—is a robust offer that combines data backup, disaster recovery, and restoration with AI-powered anti-malware, cybersecurity and endpoint management features such as vulnerability assessment and patch management, URL filtering, drive health control, and forensics capabilities for a single comprehensive cyber protection tool. In a time when many customers want a single pane of glass to

manage their data, Acronis delivers an easy, efficient and secure integrated solution unlike others in the market.

Acronis Cyber Protect can manage all of the backup and recovery tasks formerly handled by the company's Acronis Cyber Backup product. In addition, it greatly expands on those capabilities with disaster recovery, security and endpoint management features. The service supports protection of:

- Windows and Linux servers and virtual machines (VMs)
- Eight major hypervisors
- PC, Mac, iOS, and Android mobile devices
- Microsoft on-premises applications (Sharepoint, Exchange, SQL Server)
- SAP HANA
- Oracle databases
- Microsoft 365
- G Suite
- Video conferencing solutions like Zoom, Slack, WebEx and Microsoft Teams
- VPN clients from Cisco, SonicWall, Fortigate, Sophos and others
- Websites

On top of that, Acronis Cyber Protect monitors that the latest patches are installed and defends remote workers from common and advanced hacker techniques.

Backups can be stored to Acronis' own cloud, Google Cloud Storage, Microsoft Azure storage, third-party off-site storage, local networked storage, or to Acronis Cyber Infrastructure—a software-defined scalable, premises-based storage solution.

Unlike competitive offerings, Acronis Cyber Protect provides enhanced protection against malware and ransomware. The product integrates anti-ransomware, anti-cryptomining, and a full-stack anti-virus solution by leveraging artificial intelligence-based detection as well as a behavioral engine that identifies unusual processes behavior. Additionally, the service also includes URL filtering, vulnerability assessments and patch management.

Overall, Acronis Cyber Protect provides customers with a streamlined offering, enabling them to handle the full spectrum of data protection, cybersecurity, and IT management tasks without having to integrate separate services from multiple vendors.

### **Criterion 2: Quality**

Acronis Cyber Protect is a well-planned, well-engineered service that guarantees high levels of cyber protection for customers. The company has factored in several aspects of data protection, cybersecurity, and IT management currently unavailable within a single platform from competitors in the market. The result is a high-quality product that gives users a streamlined and efficient interaction with the service.

### **Criterion 3: Innovations**

Acronis Cyber Protect integrates backup, disaster recovery, anti-malware and management features. This integration creates capabilities that are not available bundled solutions, even best-of-breed:

- **Continuous Data Protection.** Define the list of critical apps for every device that users are working with most often. Acronis' agent monitors every change made in the listed applications. In case of a malware infection, you can restore the data from the last backup and apply the latest collected changes, so no data is lost.
- **Safe Recovery.** The OS image or applications in the backup can have vulnerabilities. Patching the machine and applying the latest anti-malware definitions allows users to restore the OS image with the latest patches, reducing the chance of a reoccurring infection.
- **Malware Scans in Acronis Cloud.** Scanning full disk backups at a centralized location helps find potential vulnerabilities and malware infections – ensuring users restore a malware-free backup.
- **Smart Protection Plan.** Acronis CPOCs monitor the cybersecurity landscape and release alerts. Acronis products automatically adjust protection plans based on these security alerts. This approach can result in more frequent backups, deeper AV scans, specific patch installs, etc. Protection plans will be restored when the situation is back to normal.
- **Fail-safe Patching.** A bad system patch can render a system unusable. Patch management rollbacks have limitations and can be slow. Create an image backup of selected machines before installing a system or application patch.
- **Include Backup Information for Forensic Investigation.** By activating a special "Forensic Mode" in the product, memory dumps and full HDD images on a sector level can be collected.
- **Data Compliance Reporting and Data Protection Map.** Use automatic data classification to track the protection status of important files. IT will be alerted as to whether the files were backed up or not.
- **Global and Local Whitelists from Backups.** Improved detection rates may lead to more false positive alerts. Traditional, global whitelisting does not support custom applications. Acronis Cyber Protect scans backups with anti-malware technologies (AI, behavioral heuristics, etc.) to whitelist organizationally unique apps and avoid future "false positives".

#### **Criterion 4: Positioning**

Acronis Cyber Protect holds a unique position in the market, integrating multiple service types within a single platform and providing functionality previously only available through separate services. With the Acronis platform, the enterprise can manage its data holistically, rather than having to apply governance policies to multiple infrastructures manually.

Acronis Cyber Protect is one of the first cyber protection offerings on the market to support and secure remote workers. Features include: default templates with secure protection plans for remote work devices, native VPN capability, remote access to office computer desktop, secure file sync and share integration, and remote data wipe.

Enabling such features provides remote employees with immediate and secure access to their devices and data.

#### **Criterion 5: Customer Purchase Experience**

Today, Acronis Cyber Protect is available through channel partners. The process for partners to access and subscribe to the service is simple: partners can either press a “request access” button on their partner portal, or call their sales representative to request access to the service—both for their own use and to provide to customers. The service can be turned on in minutes for partners to begin propagating data.

#### **Criterion 6: Customer Service Experience**

Partners are fully supported through the launch of Acronis Cyber Protect and beyond. Acronis technical teams are available to walk through end-customer onboarding, configuration questions, or to help with best practices to ensure that the service is a success for the partner.

#### **Criterion 7: Brand Equity**

Acronis has built strong brand awareness as a data backup leader since its launch in 2003, especially among companies in Europe, where it maintains five of its 30+ global offices. The company’s strength and popularity is increasing in the U.S., with offices to support customers in both Massachusetts and Arizona. Partnerships—and subsequent advertising—with large sports organizations in Europe and the U.S. such as Arsenal Football and the Boston Red Sox is increasing the company’s awareness.

Customers know Acronis as a strong leader in data backup and management with a focus on research and innovation. The company’s innovative move to securing data will serve to further burnish its brand equity.

### *Conclusion*

Cloud-based cyber protection services that integrate backup and recovery, migration capabilities, security, and compliance into a single platform are an optimal way for businesses to safeguard data across more endpoints and locations than have ever been protected before. Acronis is quickly showing itself as a prime player in the data management and endpoint protection markets, with innovative products that integrate key features necessary to ensure the protection and leverage of corporate data.

With its strong overall performance, Acronis has earned Frost & Sullivan’s 2020 New Product Innovation Award.

## Significance of New Product Innovation

Ultimately, growth in any organization depends on continually introducing new products to the market and successfully commercializing those products. For these dual goals to occur, a company must be best in class in three key areas: understanding demand, nurturing the brand, and differentiating from the competition.



## Understanding New Product Innovation

Innovation is about finding a productive outlet for creativity—for consistently translating ideas into high-quality products that have a profound impact on the customer.

### *Key Benchmarking Criteria*

For the New Product Innovation Award, Frost & Sullivan analysts independently evaluated 2 key factors—New Product Attributes and Customer Impact—according to the criteria identified below.

**New Product Attributes**

- Criterion 1: Match to Needs
- Criterion 2: Reliability
- Criterion 3: Quality
- Criterion 4: Positioning
- Criterion 5: Design

**Customer Impact**

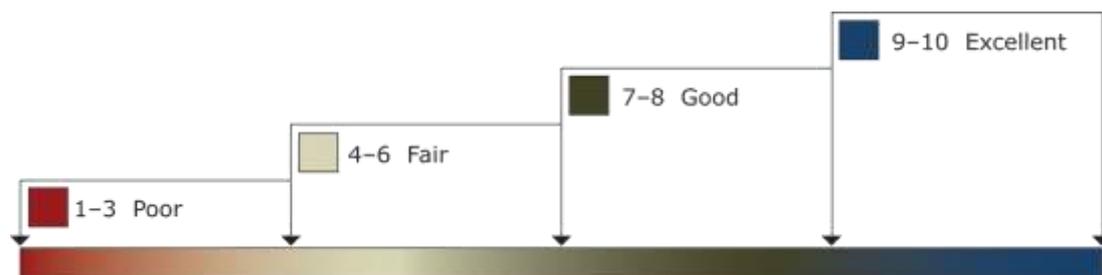
- Criterion 1: Price/Performance Value
- Criterion 2: Customer Purchase Experience
- Criterion 3: Customer Ownership Experience
- Criterion 4: Customer Service Experience
- Criterion 5: Brand Equity

**Best Practices Award Analysis for Acronis**

*Decision Support Scorecard*

To support its evaluation of best practices across multiple business performance categories, Frost & Sullivan employs a customized Decision Support Scorecard. This tool allows research and consulting teams to objectively analyze performance according to the key benchmarking criteria listed in the previous section, and to assign ratings on that basis. The tool follows a 10-point scale that allows for nuances in performance evaluation. Ratings guidelines are illustrated below.

**RATINGS GUIDELINES**



The Decision Support Scorecard considers New Product Attributes and Customer Impact (i.e., the overarching categories for all 10 benchmarking criteria; the definitions for each criterion are provided beneath the scorecard). The research team confirms the veracity of this weighted scorecard through sensitivity analysis, which confirms that small changes to the ratings for a specific criterion do not lead to a significant change in the overall relative rankings of the companies.

The results of this analysis are shown below. To remain unbiased and to protect the interests of all organizations reviewed, Frost & Sullivan has chosen to refer to the other key participants as Competitor 1 and Competitor 2.

Measurement of 1-10 (1 = poor; 10 = excellent)	
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<b>New Product Innovation</b>	New Product Attributes	Customer Impact	Average Rating
<b>Acronis</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
Competitor 1	8	7	7.5
Competitor 2	8	8	8

### *New Product Attributes*

**Criterion 1: Match to Needs**

Requirement: Customer needs directly influence and inspire the product’s design and positioning.

**Criterion 2: Reliability**

Requirement: The product consistently meets or exceeds customer expectations for consistent performance during its entire life cycle.

**Criterion 3: Quality**

Requirement: Product offers best-in-class quality, with a full complement of features and functionalities.

**Criterion 4: Positioning**

Requirement: The product serves a unique, unmet need that competitors cannot easily replicate.

**Criterion 5: Design**

Requirement: The product features an innovative design, enhancing both visual appeal and ease of use.

### *Customer Impact*

**Criterion 1: Price/Performance Value**

Requirement: Products or services offer the best value for the price, compared to similar offerings in the market.

**Criterion 2: Customer Purchase Experience**

Requirement: Customers feel they are buying the optimal solution that addresses both their unique needs and their unique constraints.

**Criterion 3: Customer Ownership Experience**

Requirement: Customers are proud to own the company’s product or service and have a positive experience throughout the life of the product or service.

**Criterion 4: Customer Service Experience**

Requirement: Customer service is accessible, fast, stress-free, and of high quality.

**Criterion 5: Brand Equity**

Requirement: Customers have a positive view of the brand and exhibit high brand loyalty.

### Decision Support Matrix

Once all companies have been evaluated according to the Decision Support Scorecard, analysts then position the candidates on the matrix shown below, enabling them to visualize which companies are truly breakthrough and which ones are not yet operating at best-in-class levels.



## Best Practices Recognition: 10 Steps to Researching, Identifying, and Recognizing Best Practices

Frost & Sullivan analysts follow a 10-step process to evaluate award candidates and assess their fit with select best practices criteria. The reputation and integrity of the awards are based on close adherence to this process.

STEP	OBJECTIVE	KEY ACTIVITIES	OUTPUT
1 <b>Monitor, target, and screen</b>	Identify award recipient candidates from around the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct in-depth industry research</li> <li>• Identify emerging industries</li> <li>• Scan multiple regions</li> </ul>	Pipeline of candidates that potentially meet all best practices criteria
2 <b>Perform 360-degree research</b>	Perform comprehensive, 360-degree research on all candidates in the pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview thought leaders and industry practitioners</li> <li>• Assess candidates' fit with best practices criteria</li> <li>• Rank all candidates</li> </ul>	Matrix positioning of all candidates' performance relative to one another
3 <b>Invite thought leadership in best practices</b>	Perform in-depth examination of all candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm best practices criteria</li> <li>• Examine eligibility of all candidates</li> <li>• Identify any information gaps</li> </ul>	Detailed profiles of all ranked candidates
4 <b>Initiate research director review</b>	Conduct an unbiased evaluation of all candidate profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorm ranking options</li> <li>• Invite multiple perspectives on candidates' performance</li> <li>• Update candidate profiles</li> </ul>	Final prioritization of all eligible candidates and companion best practices positioning paper
5 <b>Assemble panel of industry experts</b>	Present findings to an expert panel of industry thought leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share findings</li> <li>• Strengthen cases for candidate eligibility</li> <li>• Prioritize candidates</li> </ul>	Refined list of prioritized award candidates
6 <b>Conduct global industry review</b>	Build consensus on award candidates' eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold global team meeting to review all candidates</li> <li>• Pressure-test fit with criteria</li> <li>• Confirm inclusion of all eligible candidates</li> </ul>	Final list of eligible award candidates, representing success stories worldwide
7 <b>Perform quality check</b>	Develop official award consideration materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform final performance benchmarking activities</li> <li>• Write nominations</li> <li>• Perform quality review</li> </ul>	High-quality, accurate, and creative presentation of nominees' successes
8 <b>Reconnect with panel of industry experts</b>	Finalize the selection of the best practices award recipient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review analysis with panel</li> <li>• Build consensus</li> <li>• Select recipient</li> </ul>	Decision on which company performs best against all best practices criteria
9 <b>Communicate recognition</b>	Inform award recipient of recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announce award to the CEO</li> <li>• Inspire the organization for continued success</li> <li>• Celebrate the recipient's performance</li> </ul>	Announcement of award and plan for how recipient can use the award to enhance the brand
10 <b>Take strategic action</b>	Upon licensing, company is able to share award news with stakeholders and customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate media outreach</li> <li>• Design a marketing plan</li> <li>• Assess award's role in strategic planning</li> </ul>	Widespread awareness of recipient's award status among investors, media personnel, and employees

## The Intersection between 360-Degree Research and Best Practices Awards

## Research Methodology

Frost & Sullivan's 360-degree research methodology represents the analytical rigor of the research process. It offers a 360-degree view of industry challenges, trends, and issues by integrating all 7 of Frost & Sullivan's research methodologies. Too often companies make important growth decisions based on a narrow understanding of their environment, resulting in errors of both omission and commission. Successful growth strategies are founded on a thorough understanding of market, technical, economic, financial, customer, best practices, and demographic analyses. The integration of these research disciplines into the 360-degree research methodology provides an evaluation platform for benchmarking industry participants and for identifying those performing at best-in-class levels.

### 360-DEGREE RESEARCH: SEEING ORDER IN THE CHAOS



## About Frost & Sullivan

Frost & Sullivan, the Growth Partnership Company, helps clients accelerate growth and achieve best-in-class positions in growth, innovation, and leadership. The company's Growth Partnership Service provides the CEO and the CEO's growth team with disciplined research and best practices models to drive the generation, evaluation, and implementation of powerful growth strategies. Frost & Sullivan leverages nearly 60 years of experience in partnering with Global 1000 companies, emerging businesses, and the investment community from 45 offices on 6 continents. To join Frost & Sullivan's Growth Partnership, visit <http://www.frost.com>.