



EXECUTIVE WHITE PAPER

# CTERA Global File System

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### Introduction

As IT leaders look to modernize legacy infrastructure, unify hybrid environments, and safeguard enterprise data, the traditional file storage no longer meets the scale, speed, or security needs of today's organizations and their globally distributed workforce. Data is the foundation of digital operations in modern enterprises, but legacy storage systems offer fragmented environments, latency, and security vulnerabilities.



## The Challenges Facing IT Today:

### Organizations are now at a critical juncture:

- The sheer volume of file data is multiplying rapidly, fueled by advances in AI, IoT, and the shift to remote work.
- Traditional NAS and file server setups are compartmentalized, expensive, hard to manage, and inherently lack the ability to scale.
- On its own, cloud storage can't sufficiently address the performance and regulatory requirements at the edge.

### For IT executives, the critical hurdles involve:

- Navigating the sprawl of data across on-premises locations, cloud solutions, and edge devices.
- Ensuring fast and secure file access for teams spread across the globe.
- Balancing cost control with the imperative to modernize infrastructure.

## What is a Global File System (GFS)?

A Global File System (GFS) enables enterprises to centralize, protect, and collaborate on unstructured data while delivering local file access experiences worldwide. Unlike traditional NAS or legacy storage, a GFS spans geographies, clouds, and edge devices, providing a unified view of enterprise data under a single namespace. With this architecture, users can securely access any file they're authorized to, from any location, at any time, with enhanced performance, security, and global consistency.

## Key Requirements

### A successful GFS should address the following:

**Global Namespace:** Ensures unique identification and access to files from any location.

**Distributed Access and Collaboration:** Facilitates reliable access and collaboration without location barriers.

**Security and Compliance:** Implements encryption and compliance measures to protect data both at rest and in transit.

**Scalability and Flexibility:** Supports effortless scaling and accommodates hybrid cloud environments to meet growing data needs.

**Operational Efficiency:** Utilizes techniques like WAN optimization and caching to ensure fast and efficient file access, bottlenecks and massive storage demands.

## The CTERA Global File System

CTERA Enterprise Data Services are delivered through an innovative Intelligent Data Platform that is built on a hybrid cloud architecture. The innovative hub and spoke data delivery model offers a fully integrated, cloud-native GFS solution designed to meet the needs of the modern enterprise. It consolidates unstructured data, delivers high-performance access at the edge, and reduces storage TCO by up to 80%. It provides a unified, secure, and scalable solution that combines local performance with global consistency, military-grade security, built-in compliance, AI-powered protection, and future-ready enterprise intelligence capabilities.

The CTERA Intelligent Data Platform is powered by three core components:

- 1. CTERA Portal:** Facilitates access to cloud storage services, handles data protection and file sync and share services, and is used for provisioning and monitoring global file services.
- 2. CTERA Edge Filers:** Virtual appliances that function as “cloud storage gateways” to streamline cloud storage access for remote sites.
- 3. CTERA Drive:** Endpoint clients that support consistent remote file access and sharing for user workstations as well as mobile apps (smartphones, tablets).

Together, these components allow CTERA to offer true enterprise global file services: files are centrally stored and protected while users can easily access them everywhere; CTERA Edge Filers and CTERA Drive clients guarantee fast and secure file access for remote sites and mobile users; and modern content collaboration services allow users to freely sync and share files. These services are offered with total security, featuring military-grade encryption and full control over data residency.

## Industry Solutions

- **Manufacturing & Engineering:** CAD files accessed across global design centers for fast, collaborative workflows.
- **Media and Entertainment:** Real-time global access to high-resolution and large-scale content archives.
- **Healthcare and Research:** HIPAA-compliant and secure sharing of sensitive medical data across clinics and research sites.
- **Finance & Legal Services:** Access to critical financial data across regions secure file services with audit trails, and data residency for compliance.

## Business Impact for IT Leaders & Strategic Advantage

**CTERA’s GFS delivers measurable results across cost, performance, and security:** 80% Lower TCO: Replacing legacy file servers and backup infrastructure with a cloud-integrated solution, enterprises dramatically reduce CapEx and OpEx.

**Boosted Performance:** Edge caching provides fast local access to frequently used files while ensuring global data consistency.

**Enhanced Security:** Ransomware protection, zero-trust access controls, and robust encryption reduce data breach risks and ensure business continuity.

**Seamless Collaboration:** Global teams can share and edit files as if they’re in the same office, with no VPNs or delays.

**Centralized Management:** IT teams can manage policies, storage, access, and security from a unified dashboard, simplifying operations across hundreds of locations.

As IT teams face growing pressure to modernize and deliver more agility, better security, and greater efficiency, CTERA offers a proven path forward. With hundreds of global deployments and over 50 PB under management, CTERA is trusted by leading enterprises and government agencies looking to modernize their file infrastructure.

## Conclusion

Whether you're starting a cloud journey, scaling global operations, or rethinking edge IT, CTERA provides the technology foundation to future-proof your file services. For a deeper dive into the architecture and technical capabilities, explore the full white paper and see how CTERA's GFS can transform your enterprise's data strategy

Contact us to schedule an executive briefing or technical workshop tailored to your organization's needs.

**TALK WITH US**

Calculate the infrastructure cost savings offered by CTERA in comparison to other file storage alternatives.

**CALCULATE TCO**



Experience the fastest, most secure, and complete global file system.

**REQUEST A DEMO**