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Since the late-70's, when streaming tape technology was developed, there has been no fundamental change in the way data is recorded on tape - that is until VXA Packet Technology. Conventional tape drives all utilize 'track-based' recording technologies, which have served the market well over the years. The IBM VXA-2 tape drive moves beyond track based recording, and takes advantage of packet technology - similar to packet-based networks - offering users higher performance, greater reliability AND lower hardware costs. This session will briefly review the history of tape technologies and highlight the advantages VXA Packet Technology provides IBM and its customers.