



Spectra Stack Library: The Smart Successor to the Dell ML3 Library

Comparison | [Spectra Logic](#)

Beyond the Dell ML3 Library: Discover the Next Evolution in Tape Storage

With the Dell ML3 Tape Library reaching the end of its sales life, organizations seeking reliable and cost-effective tape-based data protection require a next-generation solution to meet and exceed their previous capabilities.

The [Spectra Stack tape library](#) is the ideal replacement, offering superior scalability, broader LTO media support, enhanced management tools, and enterprise-grade features. This datasheet directly compares the Dell ML3 and the modern Stack library to help users plan a seamless transition and long-term investment in secure, high-capacity storage.



Investment Protection When Transitioning from Dell ML3 to Spectra Stack Library



Migrating from the Dell ML3 to the Spectra Stack library preserves and maximizes your existing investment. The Stack library is one of the only systems on the market that allows customers to migrate LTO-5 and newer tape drives — including those from many non-Spectra libraries — into a new Stack library, often with minimal hardware changes. For the Dell ML3, customers can purchase a new drive sled, transition their existing tape drive into it, and install it into the Stack library. Dell ML3 tape media can also seamlessly transition, ensuring continued access to existing archives.

This open, modular approach offers significant financial and operational benefits, enabling organizations to build upon their existing infrastructure while transitioning to a more scalable, modern tape platform.

Tape drives and media often account for over 80% of the investment in an automated tape library. With the Stack library, users can continue to benefit from their prior investment without having to repurchase tape drives and media when moving to a new, more modern tape library.

Comparison Matrix

Features	Dell ML3 Tape Library	Spectra Stack Tape Library
Native Capacity	720 TB per module	2.4 PB per module
Maximum Capacity	5 PB (with 6 ML3E modules)	16.1 PB (with six expansion modules)
Drive Types	LTO-6, LTO-7, LTO-8, LTO-9	LTO-5, LTO-6, LTO-7, LTO-8, LTO-9, LTO-10
Number of Drives	Up to 3 half-height drives or 1 full-height drive per module Up to 21 half-height drives or 7 full-height drives total Mix HH and FH drives as needed	Up to 6 half-height drives or 3 full-height drives per module Up to 42 half-height drives or 21 full-height drives total Mix HH and FH drives as needed
Number of Cartridges	40 per module 280 maximum with six expansion modules	80 per module 560 maximum with six expansion modules
Media	LTO-6 LTO-7, LTO-7 Type M LTO-8 LTO-9	LTO-3 – read only LTO-4 LTO-5 LTO-6 LTO-7, LTO-7 Type M LTO-8 LTO-9 LTO-10
Import/Export Slots	5	10
Max. Native Throughput	Up to 22.7 TB/hr. (LTO-9 HH used for comparison)	Up to 45.4 TB/hr. (LTO-9 HH used for comparison)
Scalability	ML3 (3U) and up to 6 ML3E (3U each)	Control Module (6U) and up to 6 Expansion Modules (6U each)
Drive Form Factors	Full-height and half-height	Full-height and half-height
Library Partitions	Not specified	Up to 20 partitions
Management Interface	Standard software support; AME and LME encryption	Touchscreen UI, web interface, REST API
Ease of Use	Standard remote management	Remote and on-site management Install in under 1 hour Hot-swap components in <15 mins
Form Factor	3U per module	6U per module
Chassis	Rackmount or tabletop	Rackmount
Interface	12 Gb SAS, 8 Gb FC	12 Gb SAS, 32 or 8 Gb FC
Additional Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encryption license included, PowerVault TL1000 option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spectra Certified Media with lifetime media guarantee Media Lifecycle Management Library-based encryption key management KMIP key management Two-factor authentication

Enhanced Reliability with Spectra Certified Media

Organizations transitioning from the Dell ML3 to the Spectra Stack library can enhance performance and longevity using [Spectra Certified Media](#). This media undergoes a patented, seven-step certification process to ensure it meets the industry's highest standards for reliability, consistency, and performance. Benefits include faster write times, extended tape and drive life, and reduced risk of errors thanks to proprietary cleaning and calibration processes. Each tape is pre-tested, verified, and embedded with detailed tracking data via its Media Auxiliary Memory (MAM) chip, enabling seamless integration with the Spectra Media Lifecycle Management (MLM) system. Backed by a Lifetime Guarantee, Spectra Certified Media delivers peace of mind and total investment protection — critical for organizations managing large volumes of mission-critical data.

Why Spectra Stack Library Is the Smart Successor to the Dell ML3 Library

As the Dell ML3 library is end-of-sale, the Spectra Stack library is its optimal successor. The Stack library ensures performance continuity and future scalability with greater capacity potential, full-height and half-height drive support, broader LTO compatibility (including LTO-10), and advanced features like REST API integration and Media Lifecycle Management.

Organizations can confidently transition from the Dell ML3 to the Stack library, gaining enhanced reliability, flexibility, and data protection capabilities — all while preserving their investment in LTO infrastructure. The Stack library not only replaces the Dell ML3 — it elevates enterprise tape storage to the next level.

About Spectra Logic

Spectra Logic modernizes IT infrastructures to preserve, protect, and defend data from days to decades, whether on-premises, in a single cloud, across multiple clouds, or in all locations simultaneously. Our cost-effective solutions enable organizations to manage, migrate, and store long-term data efficiently, ranging from terabytes to exabytes, with features that make them resilient against ransomware.

To learn more, visit www.SpectraLogic.com