SAP System Refresh vs SAP Client Refresh

Whether to refresh the whole system or only a client within a system is not a decision that basis teams need to consider very often. It's common to perform whichever you're most familiar with or to make this decision based on the tools you have at your disposal. Would you choose differently if you had the tools that allowed us to choose either option?

Assuming you could pick freely, consider these differences between system copies and client copies. We are adding Data Sync Manager for comparison because it includes benefits of both approaches.

	SAP Client Copy	SAP System Copy	Data Sync Manager
Copy Speed	Slow	Medium when using backup/restore or some snapshot technology	Fast. Optimized for performance on large databases
Scope of copy	Client-dependent tables only	All tables	Choose between client-dependent tables with the ability to exclude tables OR cross-client tables only (for new system builds)
Post-processing effort for basis team	Medium. Repository is not copied so RFC's, printers etc. are not affected. BDLS required.	High. Lots of post-processing required including BDLS	Low. Repository is not copied AND individual tables can be excluded (ALE profiles, variants etc.). No BDLS.
Reduce size of target client/system	No	No	Yes. Time-slice transactions and include/exclude company codes
Scramble sensitive data during copy	No	No	Yes
Schedule in SM37	Yes	No	Yes
Choose data copy profile (customizing, master, transactional)	Yes	No	Yes
Choose between file or RFC	No	No	Yes

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