

## Virtual Server Management Solutions

The slow economy impacts small businesses from many directions which will ultimately impact your company's IT budget. One way to stretch your budget is by virtualizing several servers onto one server. "Virtualization" is the process of installing multiple operating systems for multiple servers onto another server. By virtualizing several servers you will save money on hardware and the cost of building a larger server room.

Of course, the thought of running multiple servers on one server can be a headache in the making when you need to maintain each individual server (software updates, patches, virus scans, and so on) individually—fortunately, three industry recommended corporations that focus on productivity have virtual server management solutions that will allow you to maintain your virtual servers from one central location. The three recommended solutions are as follows:

**Citrix Xen Server-** the only virtual server management solution written with open source code (this means that people outside of the Citrix brain trust helped create this application). Xen's virtualization technology is widely acknowledged as the fastest and most secure virtualization software in the industry.

### Pros:

- Supports Windows and Linux
- Many open-source tools and utilities are available from the Xen community

### Cons:

- Supports only 64 bit servers



- Does not support Clustering or High Availability

**Microsoft Hyper-V-** built on top of the Windows 2008 operating system, Hyper-V is optimized for use within a Windows environment and uses a 64 bit processor to deliver maximum processing power to a virtual environment.

**Pros:**

- Excellent for a Windows-only environment due to inherent compatibility with Microsoft Active Directory and other Microsoft applications.
- Supports Clustering for system redundancy

**Cons:**

- Only limited support for available for virtualized Linux servers
- Only runs on 64 bit processor (64 bit servers can be expensive)

**VMware vSphere-**can virtualize any operating system (including Snow Leopard) and is compatible with a long list of hardware and peripheral devices.

**Pros:**

- The industry leader with the largest market share
- Supports Windows and Linux
- Support for 32 and 64-bit servers (this translates into lower cost of deployment because older servers that are still viable can be used to support a virtual environment.)
- Excellent support for Windows and Linux environments
- Supports High Availability



**Cons:**

- Does not support Clustering
- Expensive to purchase and customize with add-on features

**All three virtual management solutions offer the following:**

- Free tools to convert a server from a physical machine to a virtual machine (called P2V)
- Free trial version—try it before you buy it.

**The three solutions are different in the following ways:**

- Method of managing virtual servers
- Available advanced features
- Hardware requirements
- Operating systems that are supported

While Citrix Xen Server 5.5, Microsoft Hyper-V and VMware ESX all offer excellent virtual server management, each solution has its pros and cons. To learn more about how to choose the best solution for your small business, please call the virtualization experts at All Covered at 866-446-1133..