

Seven Virtualisation DR Myths

WHITEPAPER

Seven Virtualisation DR Myths

As IT departments across the world move more virtualisation and virtual technologies into their datacentres, they face new challenges and often confusion about best practices, particularly around server and data protection for business continuity. New disaster recovery and high availability technologies have emerged based on server virtualisation, and many assert themselves as the best way to protect virtual machines and data. Myths about virtual server and data protection have risen from these virtual technologies, and it is time to debunk at least seven of them.

Myth #1 - Agentless Protection is the Only Way to Protect VMs

Most backup and replication technologies based on physical server technology are agent-based out of necessity. With server virtualisation, agents can be moved outside of the servers being protected to appliances or to the hypervisor. This does provide some benefits, such as being able to protect an entire virtual machines regardless of the internal virtual machine OS and not having to manage agents for each protected server. However, agentless protection limits the flexibility of protection in many ways, including lack of advanced application awareness, lack of granularity of data selection and lack of real-time, transactional integrity for applications. Agentless protection is one kind of protection that may be suitable for some virtual servers, but agent-based protection still offers many benefits that agentless protection cannot.

Myth #2 - Storage-Based Replication is Best for Availability

Storage-based replication, or replication between storage arrays or SANs, has long been an attractive solution for data protection. With server virtualisation, storage-based replication can be used to replicate entire virtual machines and seems like a no brainer. However, storage-based replication still suffers the same pitfalls that it always has. First, it is very inefficient compared to other replication technologies, replicating only at the block-level. Secondly, it always replicates entire volumes, which limits the flexibility of protecting individual virtual servers independently from one another. Third, it only provides true real-time replication in synchronous replication mode over very short distances, which requires a very fast, and expensive, low-latency network. Finally, these replication technologies are vendor specific, locked to the vendor's SANs or arrays or even more expensive virtual SAN technologies. Host-based and Agent-based replication technologies are more efficient, more flexible, and offer true real-time replication across any distance.

Myth #3 - You Can't Protect Across Different Virtual Hypervisors

While this is a reality for many virtualisation-based disaster recovery solutions, particularly agentless solutions, it is not true of agent-based solutions that can protect both servers and data across different combinations of physical servers, virtual hypervisors, or various cloud technologies. As the virtual landscape continues to evolve with new hypervisor and cloud technologies, it is important to have a solution that crosses the hypervisor barrier.

Myth #4 - Backup is Still the Best Solution for Virtual DR

Many virtualisation-based protection solutions still use periodic backup and replication as the “best practice.” The demands for availability in the 21st Century are proving too much for periodic backup strategies. More and more, businesses are finding that data loss and downtime are no longer acceptable for more than a few minutes or even seconds. Real-time replication and failover technologies better meet the availability needs in today's markets. Periodic backup technologies are well suited for data retention and compliance, but don't rely on them for business continuity.

Myth #5 - Virtualisation is a One-Way Trip

There are many solutions that help you migrate to, or protect to a virtual machine. However, once you have migrated to, failed over to or recovered to a virtual machine, if your move to virtual doesn't work out as planned, those solutions offer no path back to the original source, like a physical server or a VM on a different hypervisor. In the modern IT environment, workloads need to be mobile across physical, virtual, and cloud environments. You need a solution that can take you to virtualisation and the cloud and back, between any combination, whenever you need it.

Myth #6 – Agentless Replication Technologies Alone Can Provide Protection for All My Applications

Different types of protection solutions offer different benefits and limitations, and at different costs. At the same time, workloads vary in their availability and protection requirements. Trying to meet all of these demands with a single approach across your datacentre can prove to be impossible. Don't become lured by the simplicity of a single approach when it just won't fit everywhere. A solution that provides the flexibility to customise protection to match the requirements of the workloads will maximise your ROI.

Myth #7 - Agentless Replication Tools Can Be Used for DR into a Cloud of My Choice

While hypervisors have been around for years, the features recently provided for virtual machine protection are not as mature from a product and feature standpoint. The virtual platform providers do an excellent job of delivering hypervisor capabilities, which is their core competency, but are still playing catch-up when it comes to developing the advanced management and monitoring functionality that third-party HA/DR solutions have provided for years. Relying on the same company to provide both hypervisor and protection technologies can introduce a single point of failure into an otherwise well-designed infrastructure.

Summary

Now that we've cleared up these myths about what your Business Continuity solution for virtual servers needs to look like, you won't be lured into using a single disaster recovery method for all your virtual machines. IT datacentres remain complex environments, and you may need to deploy multiple protection approaches, including proven disaster recovery and availability technologies that span physical, virtual, and cloud environments.

Vision Solutions has been providing disaster recovery and high availability solutions for over 20 years across physical, virtual, and cloud environments. Vision Solutions provides both agent-based and agentless protection solutions for virtual machines across multiple hypervisors and provides the most efficient real-time replication across any distance. No one provides more solutions for protecting or migrating physical, virtual, or cloud-based servers than Vision Solutions and no else one can provide the flexibility to protect and migrate across any combination of these technologies.

About Vision Solutions

With over 25,000 customers globally, Vision Solutions is one of the industry's largest providers of business continuity and information availability solutions for Windows®, Linux®, IBM® i, AIX®, and Cloud environments. Vision's trusted Double-Take®, MIMIX®, iTERA® and brands keep business-critical information continuously protected and available. With an emphasis on affordability and ease-of-use, Vision products and services help customers achieve their IT protection and recovery goals, which in-turn improves profitability, productivity, regulation compliance and customer satisfaction.

Vision Solutions also offers the tools and competency needed to migrate complex, multi-layered computing environments. These solutions are designed to eliminate the strain on resources, dramatically reduce server downtime, and offset the risks associated with migrations. Regardless of OS or hypervisor, Vision Solutions offers the technology needed to make every migration a success.

Vision Solutions oversees a global partner network that includes IBM, HP, Microsoft, VMware, Dell and hundreds of resellers and system integrators. Privately held by Thoma Bravo, Inc., Vision Solutions is headquartered in Irvine, California with development, support and sales offices worldwide.

For more information call:
+44(0) 333 1234 200 or visit visionsolutions.com

Also find us on:

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/VisionDoubleTake>
Twitter: http://twitter.com/#!/VSI_DoubleTake
YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/VisionDoubleTake>
Vision Solutions Blog: <http://blog.visionsolutions.com/>



15300 Barranca Parkway
Irvine, CA 92618
800.957.4511
888.674.9495
visionsolutions.com

© Copyright 2013, Vision Solutions, Inc. All rights reserved. All trademarks and registered trademarks are the property of their respective owners.