Mike Nelson – SSV article

Microsoft Makes VMware to Hyper-V Conversions Really Easy

Recently Microsoft released a version 1.0 piece of software called the Microsoft Virtual Machine Converter, or MVMC as they call it, which is a standalone converter for migrating VMware vSphere virtual achiness to Hyper-V. What is even more interesting is that they also introduced was a vCenter plug-in that goes by the same name and allows for these conversions all within the vCenter client. Let's take a look at the two and see if it really will make our Virtual Administrator lives easier.

Some VMware folks will be having a case of Déjà vu when they read about these product offerings since VMware had their own conversion software pair up until 2010. Back then they had the VMware Converter Enterprise, which was only available as a plug-in to vCenter and to Enterprise customers, and also VMware Converter Standalone, which was available to anyone with a valid VMware account. Now, VMware Converter (they dropped the "Standalone") is free to anyone and Enterprise is now extinct.

I found that both products were very easy to use and understand. The vCenter plug-in and the standalone application are almost identical, except for two additional wizard panes that ask for the vSphere login credentials and selection of the virtual machine. It seems that some software has gotten to the point of being so explanatory and "simple" that it doesn't take much to navigate and master them, and these are examples of that. With the plugin, you simply right-click on an existing machine in vCenter, and in the context menu, select the option to "Convert to Hyper-V virtual machine". You go through a short wizard asking questions such as the powered on state of the virtual and physical machine after the conversion, the "workspace" folder location (the temporary folder), and the final destination Hyper-V server you want the virtual machine to reside on once it's converted. Very simple and easy.

There are notable differences between VMware's Converter and this new offering from Microsoft. The most obvious is that VMware's product can do P2V conversions (Physical to Virtual), whereas Microsoft's cannot. In addition, the Microsoft solution lacks the customization features, in both the conversion wizard and the virtual machine's OS configuration that the VMware solution has. Lastly, the Microsoft converter cannot do a "Cold" Clone, which means that the virtual machine must be powered on ("Hot") in order for the conversion to proceed.

I did find that it would be great of these tools (as it is the same for VMware's Converter product) allowed for you to create the converted disks from VMware's .VMDK format to Hyper-V's .VHDX format (previously .VHD format) without having to actually house them on a target host. This would allow for you to perform the same task that you can do with some other disk format conversion tools, such as

[Starwind's Converter](), inside a single interface. I am hopeful that Microsoft (and possibly VMware) will add this functionality in a later release.

When I first saw the availability of the Microsoft product, I was surely hoping for a more universal type of conversion tool, allowing backwards, forwards, and even sideways conversions of virtual machines. But, that sadly is not the case. Administrators that are hosting separate vSphere and Hyper-V environments in their datacenters (and there are many of you) will appreciate this tool and it's functionality. But, for the rest of us, it sure will be a great day for Administrators when these vendors decide one day to finally get along with each other and start making our lives easier and more productive rather than harder and more confusing. Whoever (and maybe it won't be these vendors) makes the "one tool to do it all" will win our gratitude and our budgets!