



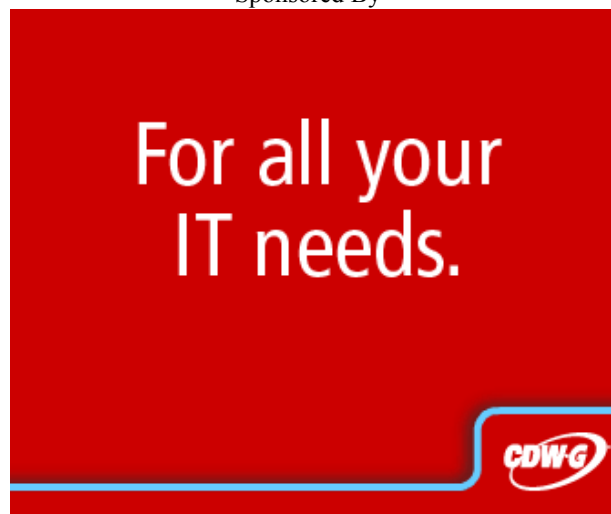
## Virtualization's costs, travails offset by greater efficiencies

04/02/08

By Wilson P. Dizard III

Virtualization technology imposes costs and management stress on data center managers in addition to boosting the complexity of

Sponsored By



the installations, according to senior information technology managers. And many information technology executives who have spearheaded virtualization projects note that metrics for the technology often aren't available.

But those same executives also have learned — and have convinced their customers in other parts of their enterprises — that overcoming the virtualization headaches ushers in a brave new world of data center performance. After a virtualization project matures, data center managers can benefit from dramatically reduced power consumption, supercharged system performance and increased thermodynamic functions.

In addition, said IT leaders speaking today at the FOSE Conference and Exposition in Washington, virtualization projects routinely unleash the processing power that figuratively lies asleep in servers and other redundant data center gear and speed the process of deploying new applications and completing failover actions. Virtualization technology also helps managers improve IT staff allocations and continuity-of-operations performance by reducing commutes, they added.

A FOSE conference panel that featured Shawn Landry, architect of the Army Program Executive Office's (PEO) consolidated data center for the Pentagon, and Bajinder Paul, chief information officer at the Treasury Department's Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), described data center virtualization projects that had transformed the IT infrastructures they manage.

Landry represented the Army PEO on behalf of vendor reVision Inc. He described a virtualization process that shrank a data center that had grown to cover an area as large as 140,000 square feet to a compact zone of 3,500 to 3,600 square feet.

We achieved achieved a space reduction of about 9 to 1 at OCC, Paul said. The bank regulatory agency exec pointed to the critical importance of faster deployment of applications to the office's field contingent of some 1,000 bank examiners who oversee the solvency and regulatory compliance of banks that collectively represent about \$7 trillion of assets. App deployment speed will increase in importance as OCC faces changes prompted by financial turmoil, Paul added

Both IT managers emphasized the importance of virtualization systems provided by VMWare to their projects. Other virtualization specialists at FOSE cited products provided by Microsoft and Citrix, among other vendors.

As for how to assure that virtualization projects will function as planned, Paul noted that after planning the overhaul,

certification and accreditation of the systems became an issue. "The bottom line is that we have to micromanage it," Paul said, referring to the need to groom the details of the new installation.

Landry noted that software licensing became a knotty problem in the Army's data center overhaul. Each of the multiple services, commands and agencies that relied on the data center used separately negotiated software licenses. In other cases, center users had recently purchased costly collections of brand-new hardware and bridled at junking the equipment.

The task of arranging governance structures for data centers such as the Army's that serve multiple clients emerged during the session as a focus of attendee interest. Landry noted in a chat after the formal session that he had gained the attention of the center's clients by issuing a letter to the users pointing out their respective systems' flaws. All of the data center users subsequently attended a meeting about the project.

For all your IT needs.



© 1996-2008 1105 Media, Inc. All Rights Reserved.