



Objective

Provide reliable, cost-effective and easy-to-administer backup solution for clients running virtual machines

Approach

Implement HPE VM Explorer at Digital Film Technology GmbH as well as a range of clients with smaller IT environments

IT Matters

- Easy to install and manage
- Supports VMware ESXi free edition servers
- Replicates virtual machines on the fly

Business Matters

- Provides reliable backups and rapid restores
- Features a simple, low-cost licensing model
- Minimizes training requirements

DGRIT recommends HPE VM Explorer to clients

Consultancy uses HPE VM Explorer at international film business and smaller firms



IT consultant Dirk Gruedl, from DGRIT in Germany, helps a wide range of clients administer virtualized computing environments. The organizations he supports include a digital film business with more than 10 TB of data to protect, as well as smaller companies with a few virtual machines using freeware hypervisors. He recommends HPE VM Explorer due to its affordability, usability, and reliability.

The challenge

Growth in virtual machines

Virtualization is a powerful way for organizations to gain greater value from their investments in server hardware. By using software such as VMware® vSphere® and Microsoft® Hyper-V®, they can run multiple operating systems and applications on single physical servers to use more of their computing and storage capacity.

However, organizations need new advanced tools for backing up and recovering file-system data, applications, and entire servers containing multiple virtual machines (VMs). While tools are available, they are often too expensive and complex for smaller business users.

DGRIT needed a practical VM backup solution for clients running a few virtual machines on a single server, through to one of its largest clients, Digital Film Technology GmbH (DFT). DFT runs about 45 VMs on seven physical

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– Dirk Gruedl, Director, DGRIT

servers, which host almost 10 TB in applications and data to power its core business and accounting systems. DFT also has research and development teams that need copies of virtualized Linux servers to be created as safe environments in which to run software tests.

“Our servers are critical to our ability to run our business and support our more than 25 staff at home here in Germany and at our offices in India, the United Kingdom, and the United States,” says Aaron Taylor, Managing Director, DFT.

Solution and benefits

DGRIT regularly implements HPE VM Explorer to meet its clients’ VM backup and recovery requirements. For DFT in particular, it has implemented HPE VM Explorer Pro to manage the backup for the company’s 45 VMs.

DFT is planning to upgrade to HPE VM Explorer Enterprise Edition in order to also use the product to manage backups to tape storage. This will enable the business to retire Commvault Simpana, which it currently uses for the task.

Moving from HPE VM Explorer Pro to Enterprise will give DFT a multi-user interface and Active Directory integration, the ability to manage virtual storage area networks, and encrypted (256-bit AES encryption) backups. The company will continue to benefit from HPE

VM Explorer’s fast and stable web client, which makes it simple to control VM backups from remote locations.

Reliability and performance

HPE VM Explorer has proven to be highly reliable and effective for DGRIT and the clients that it supports.

“It works perfectly—I haven’t had any technical problems with it,” says Gruedl.

Taylor adds that DFT has not experienced any significant server downtime since implementing HPE VM Explorer two years ago.

“In theory virtualized servers provide a wide range of advantages, especially in respect to reliability and reduced costs,” says Taylor. “It might seem risky at first because it’s so abstract, but we’ve been very satisfied with the stability and total cost of ownership of our IT environment since moving to our new solution.”

Fast backup and recovery

According to Gruedl, HPE VM Explorer works quickly because it backs up—or replicates—entire virtual environments in a fast and efficient manner. This is rather than extracting, processing, and backing up data from within servers like traditional backup software.

Customer at a glance

Software

- HPE VM Explorer

“HPE VM Explorer has to be faster because there is no processing of the data; there’s no structuring of the data. It’s hard to compare with another solution,” he says.

DGRIT has had to put HPE VM Explorer’s performance to the test a number of times and found it can restore entire VMs within minutes. Gruedl has also found he can seamlessly back up virtual machines while they are running in order to create duplicates for DFT’s research and development teams to use in testing.

Easy to learn and use

Gruedl adds that HPE VM Explorer is straightforward to implement and easy to use. “It’s really fast to administer and it’s easy to use. It is very well structured. It has no complex or overloaded menus.”

The simplicity of HPE VM Explorer also means Gruedl did not need to complete any specialized training to use the product or be a backup expert. “I do not want to have one week of training to handle a simple backup,” he says. “It was not necessary. If you are able to handle a VMware system, you can fix any problem that appears.”

According to Gruedl, the problems that arise in backing up virtualized servers typically don’t relate to HPE VM Explorer itself. “HPE VM Explorer has no problems. The problems are usually on the VMware side or somewhere else,” he says.

Affordable and supports VMware ESX/ESXi

One of the key reasons Gruedl recommends HPE VM Explorer is its simple and cost-effective licensing model. “The pricing was very attractive,” he comments. “It’s an easy licensing model. It’s perfect.”

He stresses that HPE VM Explorer is a unique option for smaller businesses using VMware’s ESXi free hypervisor to virtualize their servers.

“A great benefit of VM Explorer is that it backs up the free versions of VMware,” says Gruedl. “If you have a small business with one server and five virtual machines, HPE VM Explorer is a great backup product. It’s the only backup product working this way.”

Learn more at
hpe.com/software/vmexplorer



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