

Double-Take® Availability™ Case Study

Scalability Experts



Testimonial

"With Double-Take Move we synched up to 70 VMs per day and cut them over at night. Every day we synched one set while we were cutting over another."

- Chris Cadieux, Infrastructure Practice Manager



Project Background

Migrating virtualization platforms from VMware to Microsoft Hyper-V makes a lot of sense operationally and financially for many organizations running Windows-based servers. The question is how can you do that quickly, cost-effectively and with minimal business interruption. That challenge was multiplied by a factor of more than 3,000 when Scalability Experts was contracted to perform a VMware to Hyper-V migration project for a major consulting firm.

Scalability Experts considered a number of alternatives for performing the migrations, including a free tool, but most of them would not have simplified and automated the process sufficiently to make the solution economical for Scalability Experts and its client. In particular, using the free tool would have added significant risk according to Chris Cadieux, Infrastructure Practice Manager at Scalability Experts. "It would have added many layers of complexity and made it a very time-consuming, problematic process."



Business Challenge

Scalability Experts helps companies to achieve their data management and business intelligence goals effectively and efficiently. Because Microsoft Hyper-V is included with Windows Server licenses, migrating from VMware can reduce costs substantially. For one of Scalability Experts' clients, a global consulting firm, the reduction in licensing costs alone would amount to a savings of a couple of million dollars per year, money that could be better directed to other IT investments. In addition, Hyper-V would provide the client with technical benefits.

The question was how could Scalability Experts perform the migrations cost-effectively, with its client incurring only very minimal business downtime throughout the process. This was not a trivial issue. The client wanted to migrate more than 3,000 virtual machines. Thus, the cost and downtime of a single migration would be multiplied more than 3,000 times over the course of the project.

Company Name:

Scalability Experts, Inc.

Headquarters:

Coppell, Texas, USA

Industry:

IT Consulting

Business Environment:

- Founded: 2002
- Clients: >800
- Operations in USA, Dubai, India and Singapore
- Serves customers worldwide
- Partners with Microsoft and Vision Solutions

Implementation Team:

Scalability Experts and Vision Solutions



Solution

To successfully undertake the migration project for its client, Scalability Experts needed the most cost-effective, value-enhancing migration tool possible that did not add risk to the project. That tool was Double-Take Move. When considering total cost of ownership, it proved to be significantly more economical than even “free” migration tools.

Double-Take Move works by copying entire Windows servers, including all system settings, from one server to another in the background so users can continue working normally while that’s happening. And it can perform that replication between physical, virtual or cloud-based servers—or any combination of them. It then keeps the source and target perfectly synchronized until you’re ready to cutover to the new server, thereby minimizing operational downtime.

In the first phase of the migration project, which included about 1,600 of the client’s more than 3,000 virtual machines, Scalability Experts used Double-Take Move to migrate as many 70 virtual servers a day. The initial synchronization was done during the day and the cutover was performed at night so the few minutes of downtime required to complete the switchover happened outside of normal business hours.

Scalability Experts automatically tested all of each server’s functionality in parallel before completing the cutover. Despite the time taken to perform this testing, cutover downtime was only about 15 minutes.

Double-Take Move automates so much of the migration process that much of it was done with little more than a click of a button. This greatly reduced the time and manual labor required to perform each migration. In fact, Cadieux estimates that it would have taken at least five

times longer to perform the migrations using the next-best tool. “Double-Take Move gave us the ability to monetize on the migrations, while keeping the price economical for our customer,” he said.

Phase one of the project migrated some of the client’s less complex servers, such as those that were used to develop applications for the client’s customers. The next phase, which will migrate another 1,600 to 1,800 servers, will include more mission-critical servers, for which downtime is an even graver issue, including servers running production office systems. Based on his experience in the first phase, Cadieux is “very confident that the process will go very well.”



Results

- Migrated about 1,600 VMs in the first phase, with 1,600 to 1,800 to be migrated in the second phase.
- Automated much of the migration process.
- Reduced migration time to about one fifth of the time required for the next-best option.
- Dramatically reduced downtime.
- Made migrations simpler, faster, less disruptive and less costly than “free” alternatives.



Technologies

Software:

- Double-Take Move
- Microsoft Windows Server
- VMware (old)
- Hyper-V (new)



For more information: info@visionsolutions.com • visionsolutions.com