

Comtrade Software goes beyond AHV, Adds ESX Support

Every vendor new to a market generally starts by introducing a product that satisfies a niche to gain a foothold in that market. Comtrade Software exemplified this premise by earlier this year coming to market with its HYCU software that targets the protection of VMs hosted on the Nutanix AHV hypervisor. But to grow in a market, especially in the hyper-competitive virtual machine (VM) data protection space, one must expand to protect all market-leading hypervisors. Comtrade Software's most recent HYCU release achieves that goal with its new support for VMware ESX.

In any rapidly growing market – and few markets currently experience faster growth than the VM data protection space – there will be opportunities to enter it that existing players overlook or cannot respond to in a timely manner. Such an entry point occurred earlier this year.

[Comtrade Software](#) recognized that no vendor had yet released purpose-built software targeted at protecting VMs hosted on the Nutanix AHV hypervisor. By coming to market with its [HYCU](#) software when it did (June 2017,) it was able to gain a foothold in customer accounts already using AHV who needed a simpler and more intuitive data protection solution.

But being a one-trick pony only works so long in this space. Other vendors have since come to market with features that compete head-to-head with HYCU by enabling their software to more effectively protect VMs hosted on the [Nutanix](#) AHV hypervisor. Remaining viable and relevant in this space demanded that [Comtrade Software](#) expand its support from VMs running on other hypervisors.

[Comtrade Software](#) answered that challenge this month. Its

current release adds VMware ESX support to give organizations the freedom to use HYCU to protect VMs running on AHV, ESX, or both. However, Comtrade Software tackled its support of ESX in a manner different than many of its counterparts.

Comtrade Software does **NOT** rely on the VMware APIs for Data Protection (VADP) which have become almost the default industry standard for protecting VMs. It instead leverages Nutanix snapshots to protect VMs running on the Nutanix cluster regardless if the underlying hypervisor is AHV or ESX. The motive behind this decision are two-fold as this technique minimizes if not eliminates:

1. Application impact
2. VM stuns

A VM stun, or quiescing a virtual machine (VM), is done to create a snapshot that contains a consistent or recoverable backup of the application and/or data residing on the VM. This VM stun, occurring under normal conditions, poses minimal or no risk to an organization as it typically completes in under a second.

However, hyper-converged environments are becoming anything but normal. As organizations continue to increase VM density, virtualize more I/O intensive applications, and/or retain more snapshots for longer periods of time on their Nutanix cluster, the length and impact of VM stuns increases using VMware's native VADP as other authors have [discussed](#). To counter this, [HYCU](#) leverages the native snapshot functionality found in Nutanix to offset this known deficiency of VMware VADP when using it where any of these three conditions exist.

Comtrade Software rightly recognizes what it is up against as it seeks to establish a larger footprint in the broader VM data protection space. While its initial release of HYCU enabled it to establish a footprint with some organizations, to keep that footprint with its existing customers as well as

attract new customers going forward, it needed to introduce support for other hypervisors.

Its most recent release accomplishes that objective and its choice of ESX exposes it to many more opportunities with nearly 70 percent of Nutanix installations currently using ESX as their preferred hypervisor. However, [Comtrade Software](#) offers support for ESX in a very clever way that differentiates it from its competitors.

By leveraging Nutanix snapshots instead of VMware VADP, it capitalizes on its existing tight relationship with [Nutanix](#) by giving organizations new opportunities to improve the availability and protection of applications already running on Nutanix. Further, it gives them greater confidence to scale their Nutanix implementation to host more applications and/or higher performance applications going into the future.

Other DCIG blog entries about Comtrade:

- [DCIG Quick Look: Comtrade Software HYCU Dives Deeper into Nutanix Backup Pool](#)
- [Comtrade Software HYCU Serves as Bellwether for Accelerated Adoption of Hyper-converged Platforms](#)

All other [DCIG blog](#) entries.