

VKernel Case Study: CyberShift



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Brian Reasoner, Senior Systems Engineer, CyberShift

Industry: Workforce and Expense Management

Challenge

CyberShift needed visibility into actual resource utilization to continually identify, predict, and resolve memory and storage capacity bottlenecks

Solution

Using VKernel's Capacity Analyzer and Optimization Pack, CyberShift is better monitoring, managing, and optimizing its VMware infrastructure with instant visibility, detailed information, and automated reporting

VKernel at Work

Capacity Analyzer and the Optimization Pack are easy-to-deploy and simple-to-use software products that provide answers to solve critical virtualization management issues and enable users to optimize their virtual data center to improve performance and lower costs

Deployment Environment

- VKernel Capacity Analyzer and Optimization Pack Virtual Appliances
- VMware ESX Server 3.5 on HP ProLiant and Sun Fire servers
- Guest operating systems: Windows Server 2003
- Applications: Various application servers, WebLogic, MS SQL 2000/2005, monitoring software, Sharepoint services, HP SiteScope

CyberShift

Headquartered in Parsippany, NJ, CyberShift, Inc. is a leading provider of workforce and expense management software and services focused on helping mid-sized to large, complex organizations improve organizational performance and profitability. For more information, visit www.CyberShift.com.

Brian Reasoner, senior systems engineer at CyberShift, was struggling to pull the resource utilization information he needed out of VMware vCenter and other server monitoring tools. "It would take me hours to pull 15-20 reports out of our existing management software and we still couldn't get the visibility that we needed to effectively manage and optimize our VMware infrastructure," said Reasoner.

As CyberShift was adding more virtual machines (VMs) to its QA and UAT clusters, it was starting to run into resource constraint issues on memory, storage, and I/O. That's when Reasoner received an email with a free trial offer for VKernel Capacity Analyzer.

"I installed the trial version and within minutes after the initial data collection, Capacity Analyzer was showing our problem areas," added Reasoner. By quickly generating a few reports for management, it was easy to justify the need and we immediately purchased Capacity Analyzer bundled with the Optimization Pack."

Reasoner is using Capacity Analyzer to gain visibility into resource utilization, continually monitor for current and future bottlenecks, and know where to safely place additional VMs. "Capacity Analyzer is a huge time saver. I've set up a daily report that shows us where our hot spots are and to monitor trends to determine how we can improve our resource allocations especially around memory and I/O to our storage area network (SAN)," Reasoner stated.

Additionally, Rightsizer and Wastefinder, two of the applets in the Optimization Pack, are also providing instant benefits and value. "We planned to increase the physical memory and drive space in a cluster, said Reasoner. "After we installed Rightsizer, we discovered that we could delay that purchase for at least six months, resulting in a savings of approximately \$30,000-\$40,000." With Wastefinder, Reasoner has found and reclaimed multi GBs of storage space that he just has never had time to find from abandoned snapshots and templates.

Overall, VKernel has helped CyberShift improve service to its customers. "knowing that we are able to take a VM template, create an application server, and identify what resources we have to deploy, really speeds the time to a live environment," explained Reasoner. "The VKernel is just a tremendous value to us as it helps us get a good idea of how our environments should be tuned for our particular needs, and will definitely help us as we move forward with deploying VMWare in our production environment."

Results

- Delayed an unnecessary server hardware and storage purchase that saved CyberShift \$30-40K – providing an instant ROI
- Gained immediate visibility into resource utilization and trends to take a more proactive approach to ensuring optimal performance levels
- Making more informed decisions on VM placement to get better VM to server ratios and lower the cost per VM



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