

Virtualisation Health Check

Within the data centre, the role of the hypervisor is critical as it provides the appropriate compute, memory and disk resources needed to maintain virtual machines as well as the applications and services it runs. Implementations can organically degrade over time, as system updates, modifications and continual operation take their toll on performance, best practice configuration and, ultimately, operational stability. Since organisations rely heavily on the functionality provided by products such as ESX and Hyper-V, having confidence in these systems is paramount.

As a Microsoft Gold and VMware Premier Partner, Ultima is able to deliver a flexible health check service to ensure that your hypervisors are running optimally, and management tools meet current and future requirements. Whether you are preparing to transform the way in which you provide virtualisation services, or just want to check things are running smoothly, we can provide visibility of the configuration, condition and performance of ESX and Hyper-V technologies. Leveraging our exposure of real-world implementations and vendor best practice, we can provide the insight and support needed to resolve any issues.

Scope

Ultima's comprehensive health check service against both VMware and Microsoft virtualisation platforms reviews aspects such as firmware compliance, performance, virtual machine sprawl, resource contention and consumption, storage, networking and high availability.

Where Hyper-V and ESX are both in use within the organisation, we can tailor our engagement to provide separate service improvement reports for each, to establish how best to align with vendor best practice.

Engagement Approach

We adopt a simple, but effective, four stage process, allowing us to interrogate your environment and deliver vendor best practice recommendations regarding issues facing your data centre. This structured engagement provides forensic analysis of each hypervisor and articulates findings to key stakeholders.

Step 1 - Analyse

Our consultant will lead a planning call to agree the scope and objectives of the health check, and further understand the issues and operational challenges affecting your current hosts. Once a schedule of engagement has been created, we will use existing tools to review the following aspects of your virtualisation platform (subject to scope):

- **Hypervisor Configuration** - OS versions, firmware, configuration and high availability
- **Networking** - bandwidth, zoning, multi-path I/O (Input/Output), port channelling, throttling and MTU (Maximum Transition Unit)
- **Storage** - latency, compatibility, IOPs (I/O operations per second), resiliency and performance
- **Security** - patching schedule and existing vulnerabilities
- **Management Platform** - vCenter, vRealize and Site Recovery Manager, and SCVMM
- **Storage Integration** - storage plugin configuration, snapshot types, frequency and retention
- **Automation** - System Center, Orchestrator, App Controller, Failover Cluster Manager and vCloud Director
- **Licensing** - confirm the current licensing position for VMware or Microsoft solutions

Step 2 - Review

We will examine the data to ensure optimal configuration and consistency as per best practice, while capturing, qualifying and prioritising issues which may impact business operations, alongside identifying areas where the service could be optimised. Our assessment includes the following:

- Identify the existing architecture (current operating model), establishing how the technology is currently being used
- Review single points of failure, alongside high availability and disaster recovery readiness
- Check the overall system health to ensure that all the key services are operating correctly
- Qualify any issues currently being experienced with the service, and identify potential resolutions
- Create a performance baseline and make recommendations around future optimisation
- Analyse whether functional requirements are in place and implemented in accordance with best practice
- Check the current component versions and potential upgrade roadmaps
- Identify design or feature implementation changes in order to best deliver business requirements
- Determine what further value can be gained from the existing licensing entitlement

Step 3 - Define

The ability to understand precisely what's going on inside your environment is as important as diagnosing the issues or threats facing it. Ultima's comprehensive service improvement report will provide you with the following insights:

- Management summary highlighting key risks, issues, recommendations and a prioritised list of next steps
- Outline of the current hypervisor setup, alongside any enhancements or reconfiguration that should be performed
- Capacity details including CPU / RAM usage, performance and incorrect VM settings
- Storage utilisation, data structuring and replication / backup optimisations
- High Availability (HA) and Disaster Recovery (DR) config, misconfigured services and DR position (at hypervisor / VM layer)
- Potential threats which may affect service operations

Step 4 - Present

Ultima will email the report for review, before presenting the management summary to your team via Skype. We will drill down into the headline findings, including the risks, issues and recommendations we have made regarding your environment. This gives you the opportunity to ask questions, get advice and plan for potential remediation activities.

Health Check Summary

Key Benefits

- Regain control and peace of mind over your hypervisors
- Delivered by a leading Microsoft and VMware partner
- Led by a vendor-certified virtualisation consultant
- Help prevent critical failures and performance degradation
- Undertake a best practice configuration review
- Confidence to make changes to production systems

Prerequisites

- Support at management and technical levels
- Administration access to systems in scope for review
- Schedule of engagement, outlining the scope

Key Deliverables

- Comprehensive service improvement report
- Consultant-led walkthrough, outlining the issues found, alongside the prioritisation of next steps
- Option of on-going consultancy to remediate issues

Typical Duration

3 Days

Microsoft Partner

- Gold Datacenter
- Gold Cloud Platform
- Gold Cloud Productivity
- Gold Identity and Access
- Gold Devices and Deployment
- Gold OEM
- Gold Messaging
- Gold Volume Licensing
- Gold Communications
- Gold Enterprise Mobility
- Silver Software Asset Management

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