Highlights from webcast on Azure and Virtualization

CLOUD IAAS MIGRATIONS SHOULDN'T BE GUESS WORK

This Digital Dialogue is based on a webcast by Quest Software

Migrations to the Azure cloud are not as easy as proponents may have led you to believe and if you start your project with guess work, you are only going to make it harder.

This is especially important when migrating virtual machine workloads from an on premises data center into Azure. The goal is to build a hybrid environment leveraging the benefits of running in Azure. But you need to carefully plan and ask the right questions to assure that you are getting the application performance you require at the best possible price.

Chris Jones of Quest knows the ins and outs of this migration process having worked on it for Quest's own creation of a hybrid cloud environment with workloads moved to Azure.

"We wanted to build something that was available for our employees to access from anywhere," he explained.

The project used Quest Foglight for Virtualization and Rapid Recovery to build a IaaS solution in Azure that leverages the Quest solutions. The challenge was in migrating workloads from the Quest data centers running Foglight for Virtualization and Rapid Recovery, which was backing up the on-premises virtual machines.

The virtual machine workloads being moved to Azure represented a complex environment that included Microsoft Hyper-V and VMware with virtual machines running across both those hypervisors supporting mission critical applications.

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Migration Steps

Quest went through a series of steps in the migration to Azure, which is recommended as a way to smooth the process.

Identify Applications and VMs: It is important to understand all the communications and connectivity issues. This starts with identifying which applications are associated with which VMs.

Discover VM/Application Dependencies: Look at all of the dependencies of the virtual machines. This involves answering key questions.

■ What is the connectivity of the VMs?

■ What are the communications between a VM and all other parts of the infrastructure?

■ Are there variations in communications throughout the workday?

Select IaaS Offerings: Quest reviewed the range of different infrastructures and service offerings that are available in Azure to see which ones were best suited to it needs. "This is a fairly complex task," Jones notes.

Analyze Costs and Risks: It is important to understand and analyze

the costs and risks, especially in cases where IT budgets are tight. Key questions that need to be asked include:

- Which tier is right?
- Have you chosen the right tiers?
- Are the applications on the VMs going to provide the performance you require?
- Where can you save money?
- What are the initial costs?
- How much will it cost monthly/annually to operate in the cloud once the migration is complete?

Test Migration: It is critical to test applications on the VMs in the cloud. Put a VM in the cloud so you can do testing on your applications. You need to see how things will work before the migration to avoid unhappy surprises afterwards.

Migrate, Test, Commission: Here you need to have answers to key questions including:

- How do I keep my data current?
- How do I ensure performance and availability?

Then, you need to finish the migration, test to verify that applications are running optimally, get that signed off by the business, and then commission that into a production workload.

Quest and Azure

After Quest completed the migration of the VMs to the hybrid cloud environment, the on-premises data center continued to support data collection using Foglight for Virtualization, sending data to Azure, and utilizing Rapid Recovery backup instances protecting the virtual machines. This provided for replication of backup data into Azure with the

> Quest VROOM accelerates the performance of your entire virtual infrastructure, transforms the application experience for users, and helps you control license and hardware costs.

Quest Data Protection Portal offering a view of the health of the environment and supporting all the hybrid cloud activities.

The portal is available to any Rapid Recovery and Foglight for Virtualization user. The portal facilitates replications and tracks tasks, so IT professionals can keep on top of that data movement. It provides a clear way to understand what is going on in the on-premises data center as well as the protected cloud virtual machines. It allows IT to make sure that all the VMs are healthy and available to meet business users' needs. With Rapid Recovery, data is protected, no matter where the virtual machine is running, so it is available and able to be recovered.

Rapid Recovery and Foglight for Virtualization are available on the Azure marketplace and will allow IT departments to take advantage of the knowledge Quest gained in its migration. The ability to visualize the overall architecture will ease the migration path toward the success Quest now enjoys.

"In the end we have a number of Azure virtual machines that are running applications as well as enabling us to have a hybrid data center" Jones explained.

Quest VROOM

Quest offers VROOM which bundles Foglight and Rapid Recovery and adds other capabilities. To help assure that

you are getting the performance you require from your Microsoft Azure deployment, VROOM provides Virtual standby and DRaaS in Azure. This solution sends continual updates to a virtual machine that can be activated immediately if there's an issue with the primary machine. It makes it easy to create virtual standby machines in your Microsoft Azure account in just a few clicks for easy and reliable disaster recovery as a service (DRaaS).

Quest VROOM accelerates the performance of your entire virtual infrastructure, transforms the application experience for users, and helps you control license and hardware costs. It goes beyond simple Hyper-V and VMware monitoring by maximizing resource utilization and improving virtual application performance across hybrid environments. It will help:

- Reduce hardware and licensing costs by proactively predicting and budgeting for capital expenditures.
- Protect growing virtual environments automatically—systems, applications and data.
- Recover from data loss or corruption in minutes with zero impact on your users, as if the outage never happened.

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