



Customer: Microsoft Partner Solutions Center (MPSC)

Partner: Sun Microsystems

Customer Profile

The MPSC provides a range of proof of concept (POC) and pilot support to Microsoft customers and partners, including those who are evaluating the benefits of server consolidation as achieved through virtualization and the Microsoft® Hyper-V™ server environment, running Microsoft Windows Server 2008 on the Sun x64 platform.

Microsoft Partner Solution Center

The MPSC offers a variety of services to customers, partners, and Microsoft business units:

- Lab engagements — architect, POC, pilot, test, deploy
- Workshop programs
- Consulting and partner services
- Customer tours, briefings, and demonstrations

Software and Services

- Products
 - Windows Server 2008
 - System Center Virtual Machine Manager 2008
 - Sun Microsystems Sun Fire X4450 servers running on x64-based processors

Results

- Reduced MPSC server footprint from 700 physical servers to 12 physical servers
- Reduced MPSC physical support locations from 12 locations to 1

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Microsoft
Partner Solutions Center

Microsoft Gains Energy and Cost Efficiencies using Hyper-V Technology on the Sun Platform

“We faced the same issues as our customers: the need to lower our server footprint substantially, while continuing to scale to support growing demand. And we wanted to support Microsoft’s environmental goals for lowering power consumption and reducing our carbon footprint. Teaming with Sun Microsystems provided the answers.”

David Hayes, Director, Microsoft Partner Solutions Center

Business Needs

Almost every information technology (IT) organization is using server consolidation, or is considering using server consolidation, as a way to reduce both capital and operating costs. In most cases, server consolidation requires virtualization technology to allow multiple applications to coexist on a single server without interference. For server consolidation through virtualization to be an effective business strategy, the virtualization technology and server performance must combine to deliver a platform that allows multiple applications to run on the same server at the desired performance levels.

The Microsoft Partner Solution Center (MPSC) provides POC and pilot support to help customers understand the business and technology advantages, benefits, and risk factors of server consolidation and virtualization. Because of demand, the MPSC found itself in the same position as many of its customers, with too many servers and escalating operations costs. The MPSC

needed the ability to scale to meet higher peak demands, and had no more space for additional servers.

In addition to these traditional data center challenges, the MPSC had a unique set of needs.

- Responding to high customer demand to deploy, maintain, and grow a dynamic set of IT applications and role-driven data centers to a broad set of customers
- Reducing manual provisioning support, currently requiring a deployment time of four hours or greater for an average physical server-based data center

Finding the right solution was as imperative to the MPSC as to the customers it serves. With the introduction of the enabling Microsoft technologies—System Center Virtual Machine Manager and Hyper-V—and the expanding relationship between Microsoft and Sun, the MPSC took a fresh look at Sun and its x64 technology.



Solution

In less than three months and with a team of four people (and ready access to Sun's technology experts), the MPSC architected and deployed its server consolidation and virtualization strategy running Hyper-V on Windows Server 2008, System Center Virtual Machine Manager 2008, and Sun Fire x64-based servers.

Sun's x64 platform for Hyper-V

Sun helps accelerate the delivery of value to Microsoft customers with the industry's broadest line of x64 systems. Sun's award-winning server designs, powered by AMD Opteron or Intel Xeon processors, provide customers with twice the computing power within a given amount of rack space, while using less power and cooling.

Today, 40 percent of the world's largest databases run on Sun servers. With Sun's technology for 64-bit architectures, customers of all sizes and work groups can use this technology to help reduce datacenter costs with fewer, more power-efficient Sun servers and higher levels of service agreement for less money. Sun end-to-end server and storage helps customers simplify the procurement process, accelerate deployment, and reduce risks associated with consolidation.

Benefits

The benefits of server consolidation and virtualization at the MPSC include:

- Infrastructure cost savings accruing over the next three fiscal years
- Lease option, transitioning capital (balance sheet) expenditure to an expense (income statement) line item, reducing up-front cash requirements
- Service contracts supporting scalability, manageability, and refresh costs

- Storage area network support, providing secure storage to internal and external clients alike

"Compared to the mixed environment the MPSC was running on before, Sun's servers are lightning fast," said David Hayes. "We're working with leading edge technology that is easy to set up; supports fault-tolerant configurations; helps Microsoft match computing capabilities to business needs; and helps reduce our costs, as well as those of our customers."

Server Consolidation Assistance from the MPSC

Virtually every IT organization is being forced to rethink how they create, manage, extend, and ultimately deliver IT services with greater functionality and at reduced costs. While costs and complexity are at the forefront of people's minds, IT managers are also concerned about the ability of the infrastructure to adapt and meet ever-changing business demands.

Given its experience with server consolidation and virtualization, the MPSC has developed a portfolio of new services to support other companies working through these challenges. Ideal candidates for the MPSC's server consolidation and virtualization solutions are companies that have:

- Applications that lend themselves well to consolidation
- A sufficient number of servers so that the consolidated environment does not leave "too many eggs in one basket"
- Existing hardware infrastructure that is approaching the end of its depreciation schedule and that needs to be upgraded

- A low average server utilization rate: it is not uncommon to find servers with utilization rates under 10 percent
- Larger IT environments: the larger the data center, the greater the potential is for savings
- Smaller environments that can benefit from backup and recovery capabilities

Because the MPSC and its newly virtualized environment can roll out POC and pilot deployment in hours, not days or weeks, it is in a powerful position to help other companies realize the benefits of server consolidation. Applications built on Hyper-V technology benefit from inherent ROI/TCO, and customers can transfer successful engagements directly to production, which helps reduce risk and lower costs.

"Server consolidation and virtualized solutions built on Hyper-V offer compelling advantages," says Hayes, "and that's true for the MPSC and our customers alike."

"Virtualization can easily reduce costs for power, data center footprint, and management costs while at the same time improving availability and improving flexibility," adds Jeff Woolsey, Principal Group Program Manager for the Microsoft Windows Virtualization group. "Windows Server 2008 with Hyper-V provides enterprise class hypervisor based virtualization. To help our customers realize these benefits I highly recommend our valued customers take advantage of the MPSC. The MPSC provides a world class environment to deploy Hyper-V in a production environment and evaluate this technology first hand."

For more information, visit the MPSC on the Web at www.microsoft.com/mpsc

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