



As the number of servers, applications, and services deployed in data centers continues to increase, so does the pressure to maximize resources such as server hardware. This pressure is driven by both cost savings and green IT initiatives.

Data center managers have automated some server management processes (such as patch deployment) but are now seeking ways to scale their management practices to the increasing number of servers they own. Virtualization, which supports server consolidation and server deployment flexibility, can also introduce the danger of virtual machine sprawl.

The Microsoft System Center server configuration management solution is designed to support data center managers as they deal with these increasing resource and management challenges.

### Solutions-Based Approach

The System Center data center management solutions provide integrated end-to-end management of departmental or enterprise data center environments and offer these benefits:

- Integrated management system for the physical and virtual data center infrastructure, thus removing duplicate tools for the different environments
- Extensible and interoperable platform that provides cross-platform monitoring capabilities to improve service levels

- Deep, embedded knowledge from Microsoft for best practices that reduce deployment time and support ongoing process improvements

### The System Center Configuration Management Solution

Microsoft has brought together key capabilities needed to provide an integrated solution to these inter-related issues. The configuration management solution enables data center managers to:

- Automate server provisioning and updating
- Deliver server consolidation through virtualization management

### Automated Server Provisioning and Updating

As the number of servers in the data center expands, so does the importance of automated server provisioning and updating. With these capabilities, data center managers can automate the complete server deployment process from creating and provisioning the server baseline to updating the operating systems and applications deployed in the data center.

By using the configuration management solution, a data center manager can reliably deploy servers to the data center, making use of templates and automated task sequencing, thereby reducing

deployment efforts. Being able to build and reuse server images or configuration baselines ensures that servers are properly configured and secured when deployed. This

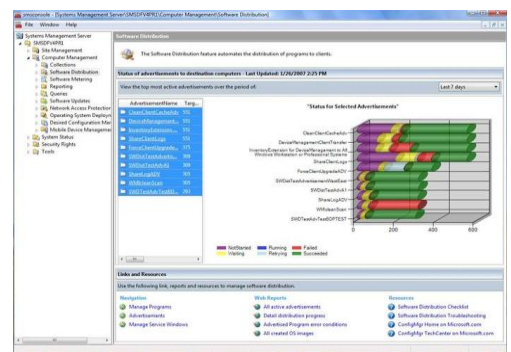


Figure 1 – Software Deployment Status Reporting

capability is available for both physical and virtual server images, and it can be adapted to suit the specific network bandwidth available to the organization.

Once server images are in place, the configuration management solution provides the automated deployment of patches or updates (and reports the success or failure of their installation). The solution can also ensure that servers are configured correctly to meet organizational policies for security, user access, or other various settings. This desired configuration management reduces the risk of configuration drift that can introduce security vulnerabilities or cause downtime.

Configuration Packs offer packaged configuration best practice that provide application- or domain-specific configuration items, settings, and guidance.

To help ensure that managers are making the best use of resources and effectively planning deployment to meet demand, capacity planning models for key applications such as Exchange Server 2007 and Office SharePoint Server 2007 also are available.

### **Server Consolidation Through Virtualization Management**

As cost-improvement and green IT efforts around power and space gather pace, data center managers are looking to virtualization as a key consolidation enabler. Server consolidation through virtualization management supports these efforts while controlling virtual machine sprawl.

Data center managers can use the configuration management solution to automatically identify which servers are the best candidates for virtualization (based on performance, resource usage, and other data), and then perform the appropriate conversions. The solution supports both Microsoft Hyper-V and Virtual Server, and virtualization technologies available from VMware. It also provides intelligent placement on the most appropriate server host for virtual machines. Data center managers can rapidly provision new virtual servers and deploy additional servers to meet application demand in

response to changes in business needs.

Server consolidation through virtualization management capabilities is not limited to virtual server creation and provisioning. An integrated approach means that this consolidation solution provides a single environment for configuring and provisioning both physical and virtual servers, along with managing patches and updating software. The integrated environment also extends to an end-to-end application perspective of server health, performance, and configuration. Additionally, virtual and physical servers can be backed up in the same way.

Data center managers now can manage both physical and virtual servers through a “single pane of glass.” Fully managing virtual servers by understanding their current state, location, and performance reduces the risk of virtual machine sprawl.

### **Microsoft Data Center Management Solutions**

System Center data center management solutions address greater interoperability, openness, and choice while improving overall efficiency. These solutions are:

#### **Configuration Management**

Automated provisioning and updating, with server consolidation through virtualization.

#### **End-to-End Monitoring**

Application and service-level monitoring, with proactive platform monitoring.

#### **Server Compliance**

Configuration controls and reporting plus centralized audit of system security.

#### **Data Protection and Recovery**

Backup and restore in addition to business continuity through server virtualization.

### **Microsoft System Center Server Management Suite Enterprise**

The Microsoft System Center Server Management Suite Enterprise offers the System Center products that together enable IT organizations to proactively manage their physical and virtual environments. The Server Management Suite Enterprise is a cost-effective way to acquire the core components of the System Center data center management solutions.

These System Center solutions lower costs, improve efficiency, and ensure the data center remains available for

For more information about System Center data center Solutions, visit <http://www.microsoft.com/systemcenter>.

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