

## **Virtualization: The New Norm**

**Speakers: Carla M. Krell, Program Manager Green ITO**

**Peter Heigis, Managing Partner of Lighthouse Virtualization Group**

### **Carla:**

Welcome to the IBM pod cast entitled Virtualization: The New Norm. My name is Carla Krell and I'm the Program Manager for the Americas IT Optimization and Green IT Group. I am please to be joined by Peter Heigis, Managing Partner of Lighthouse Virtualization Group. Our discussion today will focus on understanding virtualization eco systems and how virtualization has quickly become the new norm within the IT Organization. Peter will be answering a series of questions to help you understand how and why virtualization has become the new norm. Let's go ahead and get started.

The first question for you Peter is: What are the conditions that have lead up to the heavy demand for virtualization eco systems?

### **Peter:**

Thank you, Carla. As we see today, companies are constantly looking for solutions that provide the answers to the business needs of profitability. From the standpoint of infrastructure technology, companies that hire technologies that deliver those empty promises, if you look at the evolutions of virtualization, which started long before VMware came into being and actually was pioneered by IBM, the short history of x86 virtualization shows us that VMware took a page from the playbook of Microsoft and realized two things that needed to happen: messaging and marketing. To the community, it needed to happen quickly and consistently and continuing development of a rock solid product would provide that solid foundation for the adoption of virtualization to become the mainstream.

Secondly, as the mature software companies continued to enter into the new markets, such as Microsoft and Citrix, and as the ecosystems of ISVs continued to develop technologies that augment these virtualization platforms that address more granular ideas of business continuity, compliance and security, these developments continued to further legitimize the virtualization ideology.

### **Carla:**

That's great, Peter. Can you talk about what types of virtualizations there are and how can a business determine which is best for their environment?

### **Peter:**

The idea of virtualization technologies, first of all, was back in the 1960's, to partition large mainframe hardware developed by IBM and simply to ensure that the company's investment was being fully leveraged; so the x86 architecture evolved and became the mainstream. Companies were realizing that their investments were not being used to their fullest potential and that systems were being under-utilized, that datacenters were

becoming overcrowded, and that is really why the concept of virtualization has grown into a variety of concepts, including software virtualization, things like Thin Stall, like Soft Grid that can actually take an entire application and wrap it up into a bubble and allow for the deployment of that application out into the user environment in a much more streamlined fashion.

The second and third network virtualization and SAN virtualization, the concepts of Deduplication, Thin Provisioning and then, obviously, Desktop Virtualization where you can actually provide a thin client, if you will, to the end user and a concept called Cloud Computing that takes the virtualization concept and looks at the possibilities of a more holistic approach, moving the datacenter outside of those four walls and promising quicker, better, faster end user experiences and increased flexibility.

These virtualization technologies are gaining in popularity for the same reason that the core Hypervisor became the mainstream and it really evolved around cost efficiency, managing, testing, deploying, securing and quickly changing the environment have all become easier in a virtualized world. What is happening to the companies that are virtualizing their environments is that they're starting to check off the projects one by one that have been on the IT Director's plate for the last number of years and because their team can now focus their efforts on innovation and not necessarily on those mundane support calls that are typically addressed on a day to day basis.

**Carla:**

That's great. With that being said, what makes a business a good candidate to virtualize their environment?

**Peter:**

It's an interesting question. I've been developing strategies, designing blueprints, architecting solutions, implementing virtualization technologies for companies for about the past 6 years and I have not been to a company where some sort of virtualization was not a good fit. If you look at the business world from a vertical perspective and identify the different sectors including finance industry, health industry, pharmaceuticals, construction, even the ISV space, or taking a look at it from an even more simplistic perspective of small, medium or large enterprise customers, there is an approach to each one of those types of business where the virtualization can benefit the company either from a financial, a scalable or even a flexibility perspective that benefit, potentially, not only the company itself but then also the customers and the business units that allow them to deliver faster and better products and services to the end user.

What's more important is the methodology behind the company's virtualization strategy. I think. For all the benefits of virtualization, companies still need to realize that virtualizing their environment has incorporated a fundamental change to the way that they are used to doing business and common, everyday tasks. Now obviously, these technologies provide the foundation for these tasks to be done more quickly and more systematically, but the knowledge transfer and the education still need to occur and a proven methodology for ensuring the success, of not only the virtualization project itself

today but the entire virtualization strategy, is taken into account and the proper roadmap is addressed and laid out and properly calculated.

**Carla:**

Peter, can you talk about the near term results that a business should expect to see from their virtualized environment as well as some of the longer term results?

**Peter:**

Our Team is currently working with a customer right now, working through a standard implementation approach that addresses where the company is today and what they're looking at doing tomorrow and how they can leverage those ideas of today to make sure that they meet the needs of tomorrow's projects and innovative ideas. The part that makes my job easy is that companies recognize the benefits of what we do almost immediately. The speed, the flexibility, the reporting, the tracking, the ability to test and the stability are all really quantifiable metrics that the company recognizes time and time again as soon as they begin their virtualization strategy. Many times while on sight converting their physical environment to a virtualized one; the company's IT stats have looked over at me and simply smiled. It's a pretty heartwarming time where they recognize very early on that some of the most frustrating tasks that have kept them up at night such as backups, recovery, and procurement of new systems for new projects, and performance tuning all become instantly easier.

If you look at the long-term results, it really comes down to a much lower total cost of ownership surrounding all of these different projects that come to the table. The ability for them to provide better service level agreements, recovery time and point objectives, increased personnel satisfaction as I talked about before and the retention of those personnel all have those long-term benefits that virtualization brings to the table and they're ideas that most IT Directors don't even think about when they start to look at virtualization but definitely benefits to the virtualization strategy that they bring.

**Carla:**

Can you talk about the maintenance and skill considerations for virtualized environments?

**Peter:**

As with any technology, there is a learning curve when it comes to managing a virtualized environment and because of the different technologies that make up a virtualized environment including SAN technologies, different network technologies and different operating systems, there's a level of increased complexity and this is typically mitigated with a virtualization jumpstart workshops that allow the entire staff to really get up to speed on the design and implementation and management tasks that are associated with virtualization and with the whole virtualization ecosystem. From an LVG perspective, we try to design our implementation strategy with ongoing knowledge transfer and allows for companies to be ready for their production rollout. As companies adopt the associated products and services such as VDI and Lab Manager and SRM and Lifecycle Manager which are all augmenting products from VMware from the

virtualization realm, there will continued associated and required training but those learning curves are pretty quick and the results are unbelievable.

**Carla:**

That was great and thank you Peter. That concludes our list of questions but in closing, if our listeners could only remember one thing from this entire pod cast, one single benefit of virtualization, what would you say that would be?

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**Peter:**

That's a good question. I would say that the idea of virtualization is the new norm. The virtualization ecosystem is expanding to places never thought possible and the winners are the businesses that adopt and embrace and innovate. There really are no limits and the benefits have extremely positive and powerful impact on business.

**Carla:**

That's great. Thank you and that concluded this pod cast.