

WHITE PAPER

Efficient Licensing of Virtual Machines with Software Management Suite 2007

Microsoft Virtual Server and VMWare are recognized solutions for saving costs, especially in terms of hardware and service. Translating license rights for virtually used software into savings and keeping track of them is no easy task. Software Management Suite documents, automates and safeguards compliance.

Many organizations now use virtualization software to reduce costs. The many and varied applications deliver everything from device consolidation and application compatibility to development and testing environments or training and help desk scenarios.

This white paper demonstrates how Software Management Suite maximizes the potential savings from virtualization use rights in the Microsoft Virtual PC/Server and VMWare world and delivers significant information as a decision-making basis for purchasing and IT planning departments.

Executive Summary

It is not possible to make genuine savings until you have obtained a painstaking overview of the software that is in use as well as of purchased licenses and agreements. Reconciliation of this information is a necessity for every single product that is subject to licensing. This reconciliation must include all usages and installations in all areas. This means it must also include any software used on virtual systems. Correct reconciliation between the installed base and commercial data can be totally falsified if this aspect is neglected. Experts agree that anyone not documenting and reconciling such usage is at least guilty of negligence.

Savings through Automation

Virtual machines can be used to run multiple operating systems simultaneously on a single computer. There is no doubt that this is a way to save on hardware. However, it raises the question of whether the same applies to software.

The main virtualization systems currently in use are those of Microsoft and VMWare. Microsoft's license conditions apply independently of the virtualization solution used.

However, it remains a challenge for license managers to extract benefits from the applicable license rules. The answer to this can ultimately only be automated monitoring and documentation, also of virtual environments. Virtual systems must be added to the software inventory and subjected to monitoring. Otherwise compliance with license rules can hardly be guaranteed, and it is impossible to exploit potential savings without knowing exactly where you stand in terms of licensing rights.

Monetary Advantage from Additional Information

In order to achieve a financial advantage from the licensing rules for virtual environments, the virtual system must be evaluated in the context of the host system. A good SAM system like Software Management Suite also provides information on where the software was accessed from. In this case, therefore, which conventional machine hosts which virtual machine(s).

Correct Detection is Decisive

Only contextual evaluation delivers benefits in terms of license savings, and that only if very specific operating systems are used as the host system. Special licensing rights ultimately apply not only to Windows Server but also to Vista Enterprise.

The software scan and inventory must deliver excellent detection results. Companies are easily at risk of simply giving away possible savings because they do not know precisely what is in use, where and how.

Software Management Suite

Software Management Suite helps you to include such systems in the normal inventory of installed software. However, each such system is identified with the host system, so it is evaluated in that context.

In creating the License Balance Sheet, Software Management Suite evaluates additional rights, thus helping to assert and document savings. In the case of certain systems, the additional rights cause software that is otherwise always necessary for licensing, e.g. operating systems, to be suppressed during the evaluation.

Microsoft Virtualization Rules

The rules regarding access to Microsoft software via virtual systems are defined in the respective Microsoft Product Use Rights (PURs), and they are fleshed out in the available Microsoft License Briefs. You can read up on this in the following documents:

<http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/resources/volbrief.mspx>

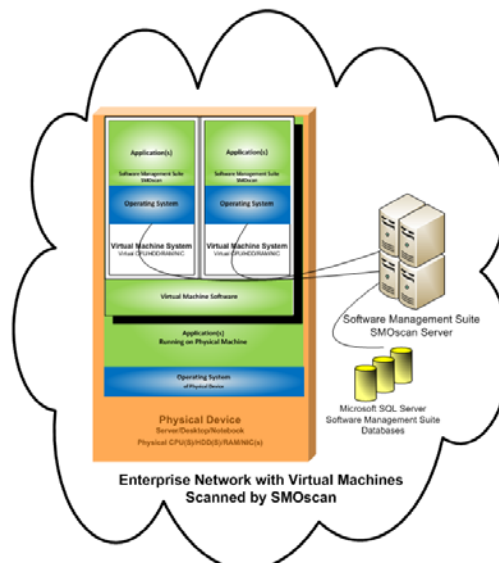


Fig. 1: Host System with 2 Virtual Guest Systems. Both scanned like any other system with Software Management Suite.

Automatic Documentation

Planning and documentation of software providing via virtual machines helps to guard against rude awakenings if compliant licensing is already taken into consideration as early as the planning stage. The important thing is to keep the documentation up-to-date, otherwise the time and effort involved in updating it can quickly get out of hand. Software Management Suite 2007 delivers automated documentation that is always current.

By supporting virtual systems, Software Management Suite delivers significant added value that enables organizations to achieve and maintain compliance, to budget intelligently, and to make savings on license costs and resources.

CANCOM is an authorized dealer of Software Management Suite

Further information is available online at <http://www.cancom.de>

