

VMware Purchases Dunes for Virtual Machine Process Automation

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The acquisition of Dunes is part of VMware's effort to improve the manageability of its infrastructure. The purchase is designed to more fully automate activities related to managing virtual servers.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Event

On 11 September 2007, VMware announced it has acquired Dunes, a Switzerland-based software company, founded in 2001, which focuses on automating the processes associated with configuration, provisioning, backup and other functions for virtual servers and virtual desktops. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. The Dunes development team will remain in Switzerland and will report to VMware's Virtual Infrastructure Management Group.

Analysis

Gartner has previously identified the need to improve the management of virtual environments, which are increasingly becoming mission-critical. Dunes was formerly VMware's first value-added reseller in Europe, but it evolved into a provider of virtual machine (VM) process automation when it introduced Virtual Service Orchestrator (VS-O). Since renamed VS-O Lifecycle, the product has plug-ins to support both VMware VirtualServer and Microsoft Virtual Server. A follow-on product, Virtual Desktop Orchestrator (VD-O), later renamed VS-O Desktop, offers similar management capabilities (as well as a connection broker) to support VMware's Virtual Desktop Infrastructure.

The Dunes acquisition will help VMware to reduce the costs associated with managing a complex virtual infrastructure, and the company also believes that it will play a role in managing VM sprawl. But the acquisition will also require VMware to make some decisions:

- VMware now has two life cycle management solutions —VMware Lab Manager and the Dunes technology — but IT organizations increasingly desire a single solution. VMware has indicated to Gartner that it plans to integrate the tools.
- VMware has a connection broker which it acquired by buying Propero earlier in 2007. Dunes also has a connection broker. VMware does not plan to continue development of the Dunes technology in this area, but will integrate some of the virtual desktop infrastructure management support into its newly released Virtual Desktop Manager, based on Propero.
- VMware does not plan to carry forward the support of Microsoft Virtual Server in the Dunes technology.

VMware has not disclosed pricing for the products it has acquired, but VS-O Lifecycle was formerly priced at \$2,900 per server license plus \$790 per CPU license.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Dunes customers:** Lock in service and support contracts now. If you also use the technology to manage Microsoft Virtual Server, look for an alternative solution.
- **VMware customers:** Evaluate the integrated product for your needs. Compare it with other vendors' solutions, which may be able to support a broader array of virtual and nonvirtual platforms.

RECOMMENDED READING

- "Why VMware Must Morph Into a Management Company" — Although VMware publicly eschews a role as a major system management provider, Gartner believes the nature of VMware Infrastructure 3 will push the company into embracing this position. **By Cameron Haight**
- "VMware Boosts Virtual Security Capabilities With Determina Buy" — VMware's purchase of Determina, a vendor of host-based intrusion prevention system technology, raised the bar for security capabilities in hypervisors and virtualized workloads. **By Neil MacDonald**

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