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Subject: Re: OpenVZ vs. VMware

Posted by [cdevidal](#) on Fri, 21 Jul 2006 02:17:10 GMT

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n00b\_admin wrote on Thu, 20 July 2006 14:16 I'm new to this virtualization thing, and i want to implement one of the above methods for security purposes and fast recovery in case something fails.

I was looking for an answer from someone who used any of these methods in production as a webhost and can tell me the pro's and con's of each method.

I'll bet this topic has been discussed plenty of times in this forum before (use the search).

I'm new to OpenVZ, just did my first install last week. But I've read about it and I have enough experience with VMware to give an honest answer.

In my opinion VMware is easier to install but OpenVZ performs FAR better so I will likely use it for my web hosting. OpenVZ will always outperform due to its design concept; I read a 2002 article that said they got 2,000 VMs on one machine. With VMware you're lucky to get 6 at once before performance goes to pot. And that's with fast RAID 5...

I have used VMware to do disaster recovery scenarios but never OpenVZ. But when both are set up they should both be easy to quickly restore. I know VMware VMs are just a folder, not sure where OpenVZ stores its files but I'm sure it's a snap to restore. That's one universally quality about any virtual machine -- the "hardware" is the same on every host. You just restore the folder and boot up, no reconfiguration, no reinstallation, no re-configuring settings, no backup/restore hassles. Pure and simple disaster recovery goodness

If you need to run a few Windows servers you might consider buying Virtuozzo for Windows instead of running VMware. Just like Linux, it shares the kernel so you can get around 50 VMs on one server.

Of course you can only run one kernel but in practice (especially for a web host) this isn't usually a big problem. OpenVZ can load kernel modules into the VMs (if necessary) and you can run any distro (despite sharing the kernel).

About the worst side-effect of VZ is I haven't found a way to just insert a CD and install the OS. You've got a bit more complicated setup. But that doesn't look like a deal-killer.

Don't get me wrong, VMware rocks. I'll continue to use VMware. I just believe that the advantages of OpenVZ, namely performance, make this my number 1 choice for web hosting.

If you need a more friendly experience, something between VMware and OpenVZ, purchase Virtuozzo. I understand it's real friendly. Plus it integrates with Plesk. You've \*got\* to have some sort of way to track users' megabytes and charge them for overages. I'm using HSphere but I'm sure Plesk is capable.

A tip for web hosters: use one VM per application. A MySQL VM, two DNS VMs, an SMTP VM, a POP3 VM, an Apache VM with all your users' websites, etc. That way if you need to scale out you can just migrate the VM to another piece of hardware. If you install too many apps under one VM you have to mess with a bunch of configurations when you migrate a service to another server. Because the overhead of OpenVZ is so very light you won't really notice the extra load of extra VMs, and you can scale up from one or two hardware nodes to a dozen or so HNs to handle multiple thousands of users.

I've spent too much time on this so I must go. Hope that helps!

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