Published by *HPC Wire*
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One of my objectives in writing this article was to put a bit of public relations pressure on some of the main players in the VM and hypervisor industries so that they would come to Forecast, ODCA's annual – and very unique - data center and big data event - to address interoperability issues. It was a strategy that worked beautifully as senior representatives from Citrix, Microsoft, Red Hat and VMware came together – for the first time – during a highly promoted panel at Forecast to discuss VM interoperability in the enterprise cloud. – Russ DeVeau

ODCA to Hypervisor and VM Providers: Interoperability is an Enterprise Cloud Requirement

ODCA leadership has always stated that interoperability of virtual machines (VM) is a critical requirement for enterprise ready cloud implementations. This is why the [ODCA VM interoperability usage model](#) was developed. The document provides clear guidance on achieving interoperability of various hypervisor platforms and virtual machines based on well-defined enterprise requirements. The usage model has been adopted by many of our member companies as a core foundation for implementing their own enterprise ready clouds and has been extremely instrumental in shaping new solutions from VM vendors. But ODCA knows there is a lot of work to be done before the industry realizes 100% interoperability of VM solutions, so we're taking several steps to help ensure this ODCA objective is met.

One of these steps focuses on testing various hypervisor platforms and virtual machines from vendors and cloud solution providers against the ODCA VM interoperability usage model. Earlier this year members of ODCA developed a proof of concept (POC) paper to establish testing criteria and procedures

for documenting how VM solutions interoperated in real world cloud implementations. The paper includes the solutions that were tested, the specific tests conducted, and testing results. Testing took place over a one month period and included hypervisor platforms and cloud VM solutions from both ODCA members and non-members. A primary goal of the testing was to get a better handle on where the industry is today on VM interoperability and to develop strategies for moving VM interoperability based on ODCA VM usage model requirements forward.

We've learned a lot from the testing experience. Perhaps one of the most important findings is that ODCA has proven interoperability based on the ODCA VM usage model is indeed possible. We've also learned that the testing processes outlined in the POC paper serve as a valuable starting point for gauging VM interoperability and that the testing procedures outlined in the document will continuously evolve to address some of the more complex issues identified during the testing process. Of course, testing results are what matter most. While scores varied based on the individual testing procedures included in the POC, no hypervisor platform or vendor VM solution passed with flying colors. In fact, there are many more failing grades included in the document than passing grades.

So where do we go next to ensure full interoperability of hypervisors and VMs among public and private clouds?

The *Implementing the Open Data Center Alliance Virtual Machine Interoperability Usage Model* is a must-read for any organization interested in learning about where the hypervisor and VM industry is today on meeting ODCA requirements for interoperability. We also encourage any organization interested in advancing VM interoperability across public and private clouds to join the ODCA to participate in the many steps ODCA members are taking within our workgroups to ensure the grades of future tests based on criteria included in the evolving POC document go up. ODCA is the organization where members are working collaboratively to address and solve VM interoperability challenges and where all organizations are welcome to join to help ensure that hypervisor and VM interoperability are part of the enterprise ready cloud.

The next step we're taking is to talk publicly about the POC paper and testing results at Forecast, our annual cloud and big data conference taking place in San Francisco on June 17 and 18. This will happen at a newly announced VM interoperability panel discussion we'll be holding on June 17 when ODCA members who have participated in the development of the ODCA VM interoperability usage model and corresponding POC paper will come together with industry to collaborate on next steps for moving interoperability forward. All Forecast attendees are welcome to attend the panel discussion to interact with hypervisor and VM solutions providers, hear what's coming next from ODCA, and learn how to get involved in helping to drive the next phase of VM interoperability. More information is available on the ODCA Forecast website.

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