



Microsoft Exchange 2013 on VMware Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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Frequently Asked Questions

What are the advantages of running Microsoft Exchange 2013 on VMware® vSphere®?

There are many advantages, including reducing the physical server footprint and improving deployment flexibility and agility. Other advantages include the following:

- Server consolidation:
 - Efficiently utilize the latest server hardware.
 - Maintain Exchange role isolation without additional hardware expense.
- Operational advantages:
 - Design for today's workload rather than guessing about tomorrow's needs.
 - Design for specific business requirements.
 - Rapidly provision Exchange servers with virtual machine templates.
 - Reduce hardware and operational costs of maintaining an Exchange lab.
- Higher availability with less complexity:
 - Use VMware vSphere vMotion® to reduce planned downtime due to hardware or BIOS updates.
 - Reduce unplanned downtime due to hardware failure or resource constraints.
 - Implement simple and reliable Exchange disaster recovery.

How can running Exchange 2013 on vSphere reduce costs?

By consolidating Exchange server roles using virtual machines, you save on server hardware investments, administrative expenses, and deployment and recovery costs. Running test/development and disaster recovery servers on vSphere can significantly reduce costs by eliminating the need to maintain costly 1:1 server ratios and identical hardware to replicate the production environment.

What are my support options for Exchange 2013 on vSphere?

There are various support options for Exchange running in VMware virtual machines. For detailed support information, see *Support for Microsoft Software* at http://www.vmware.com/support/policies/ms_support_statement.html.

What are my licensing options for Exchange 2013 on vSphere?

Exchange uses a Server/CAL licensing model. Virtualizing Exchange does not change the licensing model. Direct specific licensing questions to a Microsoft representative.

What are the performance implications?

Improvements in Exchange 2013, newer server hardware, and vSphere have made Exchange 2013 an excellent candidate for virtualization. VMware has conducted performance studies with many server OEM partners to demonstrate the high performance of Exchange virtual machines. With vSphere, your system can quickly respond to changing workloads without interrupting users.

How difficult is this solution to manage?

Management is simplified, because VMware vCenter Server™ provides a single user interface to manage virtual machines, vSphere hosts, and network and storage components. Exchange management remains the same.

How do I properly size my environment for virtualization?

There is very little difference between sizing Exchange virtual machines and sizing physical Exchange servers—follow the same Microsoft guidelines. As you begin to understand the performance characteristics of the environment, you can quickly adjust processor and memory resources.

How long will it take to deploy and configure Exchange 2013 virtual machines?

With virtual machine templates, deployment times are significantly reduced by eliminating the need to install and patch the operating system and prerequisite software.

Is this solution scalable?

Yes. Virtualization allows the flexibility to size servers initially on the conservative side, and then scale up quickly to meet the growing messaging demands of your business. When workloads outpace the capacity of your hardware, vSphere features allow you to migrate to newer hardware with no interruption in service to your Exchange users. With vSphere 5.0, Exchange 2013 virtual machines can scale to the maximum sizes supported by Microsoft with very good performance.

Will running my Exchange 2013 environment on vSphere improve availability?

Yes. VMware vSphere High Availability (HA) provides built-in protection from hardware failure that covers Exchange mailbox and Client Access servers. Even planned downtime can be avoided using vSphere vMotion, allowing server hardware maintenance that does not interrupt service to your end users.

I am concerned about disaster recovery. How can this solution help?

By running Exchange 2013 on vSphere you can achieve a much more reliable and disaster-tolerant infrastructure. With your Exchange servers encapsulated into virtual machines, there are storage and software-based options for replicating to a disaster recovery site. These methods are also very cost-effective, allowing you to avoid costly 1:1 disaster recovery server ratios and eliminating the need for identical hardware.

Where can I get more information?

VMware has a public Web site dedicated to Exchange virtualization. For more information, go to *Virtualizing Exchange with VMware* at <http://www.vmware.com/go/exchange>.