VMware Launches vRealize Suite 7 Featuring Hybrid Cloud License Portability and Streamlined Packaging

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IDC's Quick Take
On February 10, 2016 VMware announced major updates to its vRealize Cloud Management Platform (CMP), featuring new DevOps application centric features, new packaging, and full license portability across on premise and supported public clouds. By providing customers streamlined access to sophisticated multi-vendor hybrid cloud management VMware hopes to accelerate mainstream CMP adoption.

Product Announcement Highlights
The newly announced vRealize Suite 7 features a number of updates designed to support the provisioning and lifecycle management of hybrid cloud applications and infrastructure. New functions include:

- Updates to vRealize Automation that supports the creation of multi-tier application simplify blueprints from a single UI and automates integrated multi-tier application deployments, including integrated networking and security policy configuration and policy control across private clouds and supported public clouds
- Greater levels of application visibility and tighter integrations between vRealize Operations and vSphere® Distributed Resource Scheduler™ (DRS) to support intelligent workload placement
- Additional enhancements to vRealize Business for Cloud and vRealize Log Insight to strengthen support for hybrid cloud and DevOps management.

The real, news however, was a major overhaul and simplification of vCloud Suite and vRealize Suite packaging and licensing. Both Suites now include the exact same cloud management capabilities for the same edition level. The new model also permits full license portability for vRealize products across multi-vendor on premise resources and supported public clouds.

Specifically, the newly announced framework introduces a new licensing metric termed the Portable License Unit (PLU) which applies to vRealize products included in either vCloud Suite 7 or vRealize Suite 7. One PLU allows vRealize products to manage unlimited virtual machines deployed on one on-premises vSphere CPU OR up to 15 Operating System Instances (OSIs) deployed in any non-vSphere environment, including public clouds such as AWS, Microsoft Azure and vCloud Air, as well as third party hypervisors and physical servers. Licenses can move back and forth from on premise to public clouds but cannot be active in both locations simultaneously.

The simplified vRealize packaging, which includes vRealize Automation, vRealize Operations, vRealize Business for Cloud and vRealize Log Insight introduces three editions aligned to rising levels of hybrid cloud management maturity. Each edition builds on the next as shown below:
vRealize Suite Standard Edition: a new edition focused on providing monitoring, analytics and business management for hybrid clouds. It includes vRealize Operations Advanced with hybrid and software defined data center monitoring; Log Insight for log analysis and vRealize Business for Cloud Standard which offers cloud costing and consumption reporting along with the ability to compare the cost of private versus public cloud alternatives.

vRealize Suite Advanced Edition: Targeted at organizations that want to automate IaaS cloud environments, the Advanced Edition adds vRealize Automation Advanced to support automated infrastructure provisioning and lifecycle management. It also adds cloud business planning capabilities provided by vRealize Business for Cloud Advanced.

vRealize Suite Enterprise Edition: Focuses on the needs of DevOps teams by adding the application blueprint automation capabilities of vRealize Automation Enterprise edition and the application monitoring functions provided by vRealize Operations Application Monitoring.

All of the above vRealize editions are designed to support heterogeneous, multi-vendor and multi-cloud environments regardless of whether they rely on vSphere for core infrastructure. For customers currently focused on managing homogenous vSphere clouds using the vCloud Suite, VMware introduced a new licensing option that bundles all the above vRealize functionality into three aligned vCloud Suite editions. All vCloud Suite editions now provide vSphere Enterprise Plus and the appropriate vRealize edition.

Existing vRealize Suite and vCloud Suite customers, with active Support and Subscription (SnS), retain all the features they already own with vRealize Suite 6 and vCloud Suite 6. They are also entitled to all the new capabilities available in version 7, including Portable Licensing.

IDC's Point of View

By simplifying the customer’s ability to purchase and consume its cloud management capabilities across a wider range of hybrid infrastructure and software defined data centers, VMware is signaling its firm intention to compete aggressively in the multi-vendor hybrid cloud management arena. As demand for traditional virtualization software matures, VMware sees management software as a major vector for growth. The company rightly recognizes that customers want more integrated hybrid cloud management functionality that breaks down operational silos and improves internal IT efficiency and agility.

VMware's challenge is to win mindshare among customers that typically view the company's management software portfolio as being exclusively optimized for VMware environments. To compete on a level, multi-vendor playing field VMware will need to demonstrate success in helping high profile multi-vendor clouds to reduce costs, improve service levels and accelerate DevOps driven digital transformation.

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