



Five reasons to choose Citrix XenServer

The installation process, server management, workload performance, desktop and application delivery and cost of XenServer make it the clear choice in server virtualization solutions.



Summary

Citrix® XenServer® is a complete, managed server virtualization platform and is widely acknowledged as the fastest and most secure virtualization software in the industry. Since 2009, over 50,000 customers have installed XenServer and are using it to run millions of VMs. XenServer has proven it can handle any server workload and is designed for efficient management of Windows® and Linux® virtual servers while delivering a cost-effective server consolidation and business continuity solution.

Whether you're virtualizing servers for the first time, expanding your server virtualization footprint, or moving server workloads to the cloud, consider the following five reasons to choose XenServer as your server virtualization platform.

Ten minutes to Xen

When deciding on any software to use in a datacenter, IT administrators must consider the time it takes to install the software and get it running. XenServer is designed to install and have a virtual machine running in as little as ten minutes—the ten minutes to Xen experience. With XenServer, there is no need to configure a complex management infrastructure or create a dedicated storage network. Simply install XenServer on any x86, 64-bit server that has Intel® VT or AMD V™ technology, install Citrix® XenCenter® on any Microsoft® Windows® desktop, and then start virtualizing workloads immediately.

Once XenServer is installed, physical server workloads can be converted to virtual machines and imported into the XenServer environment. By converting physical machines to virtual machines and consolidating the workloads to fewer physical hosts, IT administrators will reduce their server sprawl thus saving on power and cooling costs. And, using the Citrix® XenMotion® live migration tool, virtual machines can be moved across a resource pool without loss of service or degradation of performance to the end user.

Powerful, yet intuitive server management

XenServer is an enterprise-ready, cloud-proven virtualization platform with all the capabilities needed to create and manage a virtual infrastructure. The advanced XenServer capabilities enable organizations of any size to integrate and automate management processes to transform complex IT environments into virtual computing centers.

In addition to the bare-metal hypervisor, the XenServer Free edition includes the following enterprise-class features at no additional cost:

- **XenCenter®** management console allows IT staff to easily monitor, manage and administer hundreds of VMs from a centralized, highly available management console. Using XenCenter, VMs can be started, stopped, migrated, created, copied and backed-up—all with a couple of mouse clicks. The XenServer management architecture distributes server management data across the servers in a resource pool to ensure that there is no single point of management failure.

- **IntelliCache™** optimizes XenServer to reduce the overall costs and improve performance of a XenDesktop installation. By using local storage as a repository for boot images and non-persistent or temporary data, XenServer can reduce virtual desktop boot times, decrease network volume and traffic, and save on total storage costs for a XenDesktop installation.
- **XenMotion** live migration allows VMs to be moved between physical servers with no interruption in service—making it possible to eliminate nearly all planned downtime.
- **XenConvert** can be used to convert existing physical and virtual machines to XenServer compatible virtual machines. This will make the transition to XenServer nearly instantaneous.

For organizations that require additional management features, the XenServer premium editions offer a rich set of management and automation capabilities designed to help customers create a virtual computing center. A selection of the additional features are:

- **High availability** guarantees that in the event of a server outage, protected VMs will automatically be restarted on another server in the resource pool with minimal downtime.
- **VM protection and recovery** allows IT administrators to set policies to automatically take regularly scheduled VM snapshots for archiving. This will ensure that a VM can be reverted to a previously good known state in the event of an outage.
- **Dynamic memory** shares unused server memory between VMs which allows for a greater number of VMs per server host and improves application performance.
- **Distributed virtual switching** can be used to create a network fabric that supports multi-tenancy which is the basis for building any public or private cloud.
- **Workload balancing** prevents performance bottlenecks by dynamically migrating VMs to the optimal location within a resource pool based on changing demand.
- **Lab management with web self service portal** reduces the complexity, time and cost of developing, maintaining and delivering virtual workloads and allows application owners to manage the day to day administration of their VMs.
- **Citrix Provisioning Services™** reduces system storage requirements by creating a set of golden images that can be streamed to both physical and virtual servers for fast, consistent, reliable deployments.

Built for mission critical workloads

For many organizations, moving from a physical IT environment to a virtual infrastructure can draw a lot of internal opposition. Managers, administrators and end-users want to know that their applications will operate with the same performance and availability service levels on a virtual machine as it will on a physical machine.



XenServer's paravirtualization technology is widely acknowledged as the fastest and most secure virtualization software in the industry and is enhanced by taking full advantage of the latest Intel VT and AMD-V hardware virtualization assist capabilities. The compact design of the hypervisor delivers a ultra-efficient architecture making XenServer the highest performing hypervisor in the market. Workloads that have been virtualized on XenServer will run at near-native performance levels.

Additionally, to maximize the performance and availability of a virtual workload, the XenServer premium editions include dynamic workload balancing, dynamic memory control, performance alerting and reporting and high availability. Using these features, IT administrators can set policies for XenServer to automatically adjust host resources and to move VMs within a resource pool as demands for the host resources fluctuates or in the event of a server outage.

Optimized for XenApp and XenDesktop

Virtualization has moved rapidly beyond the datacenter and now encompasses all aspects of an organization's IT footprint. Combining server virtualization with application and desktop virtualization projects is proving to be a highly effective method of lowering costs and increasing IT efficiency and manageability.

XenServer is part of the broader portfolio of virtualization solutions available from Citrix. As a result, organizations implementing an entire Citrix virtualization solution can progressively enhance their IT capabilities without having to establish and manage relationships with additional virtualization vendors, and without having to worry about product compatibility and interoperability. And, with features such as IntelliCache, Citrix's customers are benefiting from a single vendor virtualization stack.

While other server virtualization solutions offer similar features, XenServer is uniquely capable of delivering best in class performance for XenApp™ and XenDesktop® workloads. This performance advantage helps customers reduce both capital and operational costs, which are critical to successful desktop and application virtualization deployments. And, given that XenApp includes XenServer Free and XenDesktop includes XenServer Enterprise licenses makes XenServer the clear choice in creating an entire virtualization stack with Citrix®.

Unmatched return on investment

With XenServer, you can consolidate servers to reduce server sprawl, create public and private clouds, establish business continuity plans to protect IT infrastructure, and deliver virtual applications and desktops all for one-third the cost of competitive solutions. The XenServer premium editions are licensed on a per server basis—no matter how many processors, cores or VMs are in the system the price remains the same. As multi-socket, multi-core architecture becomes more widespread, the cost benefits of XenServer become even more compelling. To upgrade to a premium edition, simply purchase a license, apply it to a server and virtualize the entire server workload.

Customers can maximize their virtualization investment by using the XenServer Free edition for pre-production, production support and lower-priority services while using the premium editions of XenServer for more business and mission-critical applications or rapidly-changing lab environments.

Conclusion

Citrix XenServer is the clear server virtualization solution to implement in any datacenter. XenServer can be used to convert existing server workloads to new virtual machines and to migrate those workloads to the XenServer environment. Using XenServer, IT administrators can deliver best in class performance for XenApp and XenDesktop solutions, and establish policies to protect server workloads from server outages. Best of all, XenServer can do all of this at one-third of the cost as compared to its competitors.

Whether you are using the free version or purchasing a premium edition, XenServer allows you to do more, without spending more.

Download a copy of XenServer today to experience this for yourself.



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About Citrix

Citrix Systems, Inc. (NASDAQ:CTXS) is a leading provider of virtual computing solutions that help companies deliver IT as an on-demand service. Founded in 1989, Citrix combines virtualization, networking, and cloud computing technologies into a full portfolio of products that enable virtual workstyles for users and virtual datacenters for IT. More than 230,000 organizations worldwide rely on Citrix to help them build simpler and more cost-effective IT environments. Citrix partners with over 10,000 companies in more than 100 countries. Annual revenue in 2010 was \$1.87 billion.

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