VMware Converter 3

Enterprise class migration tool for converting physical machines to VMware virtual machines

AT A GLANCE

VMware® Converter is a highly robust and scalable enterprise-class migration tool that automates the process of creating VMware virtual machines from physical machines, other virtual machine formats and third party image formats. VMware® Converter uses a snapshot based cloning mechanism to increase the reliability of the conversion and enables remote conversions without disrupting the source server during the process.

BENEFITS

. Convert physical machines running Windows operating systems to VMware virtual machines quickly, reliably and without any disruption or downtime.

. Import older VMware virtual machine formats to new VMware virtual machine formats

. Convert third-party formats such as Symantec Backup Exec System Recovery (formerly Symantec LiveState Recovery) and Microsoft Virtual Server/Virtual PC to VMware virtual machines

. Enable centralized management of remote conversions of many physical servers or virtual machines simultaneously

. Populate new virtual machine environments quickly from large directory of virtual machine appliances

. Create a clone of a physical machine for disaster recovery purposes.

What are Benefits and Applications of VMware Converter?

VMware Converter reduces the amount of time IT professionals spend on migrating to a virtual infrastructure by enabling fast, reliable and non-disruptive conversions from physical to virtual machines and from older virtual machines to newer formats.

For example, during a server consolidation project, dozens or even hundreds of physical machines may need to be converted to VMware virtual machines. VMware Converter automates this process and reduces the time and effort required to manage these multiple large-scale conversions.

VMware Converter can also be used to convert between multiple types or generations of VMware virtual machines. For example, virtual machines created by VMware Server in a lab environment can be directly migrated to VMware Infrastructure systems in production environments.

VMware Converter can also be used as part of a disaster recovery plan by creating virtual machine clones of physical servers and archiving them to a file server at an alternative site. In the event of a disaster, the customer can deploy the cloned virtual machines on VMware Server or VMware Infrastructure and enable end users to access their files or applications.
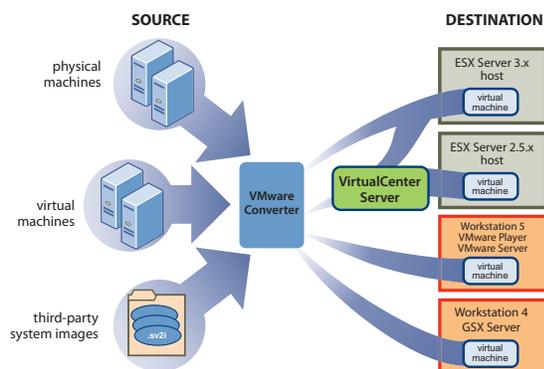
How Does VMware Converter Work?

VMware Converter is managed through a simple, task based user interface that enables users to convert VMware virtual machines or third-party virtual machines and disk image formats to VMware virtual machines in three easy steps:

• Step 1: Specify the source physical server, virtual machine or third-party format to convert.

• Step 2: Specify the destination format, virtual machine name, and location for the new virtual machine to be created.

• Step 3: Create/Convert to destination virtual machine and configure it.

VMware Converter achieves faster speed of conversions through the use of sector based copying (vs file level copying in other products). VMware Converter first takes a snapshot of the source machine before migrating the data, resulting in fewer failed conversions and no downtime on the source server.

VMware Converter communicates directly with the guest OS running on the source physical machine for hot cloning these machines without any downtime and as such has no direct hardware level dependencies.

With cold cloning, the VMware Converter Boot CD provides a Windows PE boot environment that provides support for the latest hardware and is thus able to recognize most physical server systems. For instances where the VMware Converter BootCD does not recognize the source physical hardware, VMware provides a utility that helps administrators download the necessary storage/network adapter drivers from the vendors' website and inject these drivers into the BootCD distribution. This can be used to create a new BootCD image that will help recognize the system hardware.

Where Can I Get VMware Converter?

VMware Converter Starter is a free software download enabling conversions of physical machines, virtual machines or other third-party image formats to VMware virtual machines. You can download it at: http://www.vmware.com/converter.

VMware Converter Enterprise is a highly scalable, flexible and centrally managed conversion solution designed for multiple, simultaneous conversions in large-scale enterprise environments. It is available "free" as part of support and subscription for VirtualCenter Management Server

Product Specifications and Systems Requirements

VMware Converter can run on Windows NT SP4, Windows 2000, Windows 2003 and Windows XP Professional. For detailed product specifications and systems requirements refer to the VMware Converter user manual, found at http://www.vmware.com/converter.

Key Features of VMware Converter

	Converter Starter	Converter Enterprise
Main Cloning Mechanism(s)	Local/remote hot cloning[1]	Local/remote hot cloning, local cold cloning
Source Operating Systems	Windows NT4 SP4+, Windows XP, Windows 2000, Windows 2003, 64-bit Windows XP and Windows 2003	
Source System Images	Microsoft Windows Operating system-based only system images from Symantec Backup Exec System Recovery (formerly LiveState recovery) , Norton Ghost versions 9 or higher, Microsoft Virtual PC 7 and higher , Microsoft Virtual Server	
Source Virtual Machine Formats	Workstation 4.x, Workstation 5.x, VMware Player 1.x, ESX Server 3.x, ESX Server 2.5.x (if the virtual machine is managed by VirtualCenter 2.x), GSX Server 3.x, VMware Server 1.x, VirtualCenter 2.x, Microsoft Virtual PC version 7 and later, Any version of Microsoft Virtual Server	
VMware Destinations	Player/Workstation/GSX Server/VMware Server ESX Server 3.x/ ESX Server 2.5 (Managed by VirtualCenter 2.0)	
Price/Distribution	Free download	Licensed as part of support and subscription services with VirtualCenter Management Server
Centralized Management Console	View status of a single conversion	View and manage multiple simultaneous conversions
Image Customization	VMware Converter allows users to customize their virual machines after they have been created	
Virtual Center Integration	Ability to export local machines directly into VC2.0/ESX 3.0	Ability to export local and remote machines directly into VC2.0/ESX 3.0

1 "Remote hot cloning limited to standalone virtual machines (Workstation, Player, GSX Server, VMware Server) as destination type"