

Software Management for VDI (managing VMware View Linked Clones)

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technologies

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Virtual Desktop Infrastructures

- *Virtual desktop projects and implementations have increased significantly over the past years*, however they are often managed separately from the physical estate
- Processes, procedures and policies regarding software/application entitlement, deployment and inventory therefore exist in different systems *making a consistent approach difficult*
- *This is especially true with VMware View's Linked Clone technology* where the dynamic nature of reset and recompose of golden images can wipe history away with a click

Benefits of Linked Clones

- Significantly smaller SAN storage requirements
- Easier patching updates
- Standardization

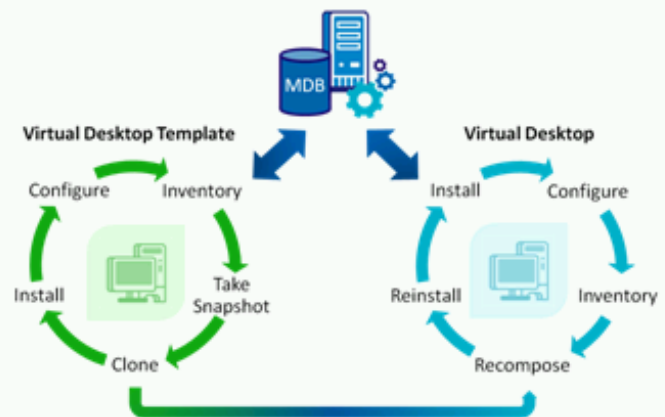
Challenges of Linked Clones

- All changes such as applications not in the golden image are frequently wiped away (data and personal settings can be stored on a persistent user disk or file server)
 - User requested software is removed
 - Policy based deployments beyond the golden image are removed
- Reporting on software inventory and associated licensing compliance is complicated and potentially misleading

Software Management for Virtual Desktop Infrastructures

Incorporating dynamic virtual desktops into a policy based and automated management paradigm

- Gold (Template) Image management for Linked Clones
- Automated deployment and re-deployment of additional software for Linked Clones
 - Policy based deployment across physical and virtual desktops
 - User requested software packages
- Emergency patching without image refresh
 - Patches can be omitted from re-deployment
- Consistent software inventory reporting across virtual and physical desktops with accurate history



Approaches to managing software on VMware View Linked Clones

1. **Standard redeployment and installation of needed packages to the Linked Clones**
 - However this could create significant network traffic in the data center
 - Significant disk writes as the delta image is re-written during the re-compose
2. **Use Application Virtualization and splitting the package (install/activate) so that applications can be streamed from a server**
 - However streaming applications in the data center could generate significant traffic and not all applications can be virtualized
3. **Split application package in two (install/activate) and install all binaries into Golden Image and activate (15-25K) in the Linked Clones**
 - This can be done for both regular installed applications and virtualized applications and would almost eliminate additional network traffic and limit disk-write activity
4. **Use CA packaging technology (SXP) to install all packages into the Golden Image and entitle through Active Directory groups**
 - This would eliminate all network traffic and disk write from the re-compose/reset activity

The benefits of having these different approaches:

- Increased flexibility for different applications and user scenarios
- Ability to significantly reduce number of different Golden Images
- Packaging software is the same across physical and virtual desktop environment
- Works for both floating and dedicated linked clones