

Cortex cuts provisioning time for Hyper-V, allows customer management on demand

Application hosting company MHA Ltd is using Cortex software to slash provisioning time for Microsoft Hyper-V Virtual Servers, and allow customers to choose their own level of in-house management for their virtual environments.

Cortex is a 'cloud control panel' used by leading Telcos, ICT services companies, and specialist application hosting providers to manage the provisioning and administration of hosted software applications.

Hosting company MHA is using Cortex to host and sell hosted infrastructure and applications in a low cost, automated fashion through a single web-based control panel. Cortex allows MHA to offer virtual data centers on Hyper-V and a range of popular cloud applications including Exchange, SharePoint, OCS and Dynamics CRM, as well as cloud desktop delivery.

Rapid provisioning of Hyper-V

Cortex has heavily reduced the time it takes to provision Microsoft Hyper-V virtual servers, says MHA's CEO Paul O'Brien.

"We used to provision virtual servers manually, but using Cortex has cut provisioning time from 48 hours to minutes," says Paul O'Brien, CEO of MHA Ltd.

"We were up and running – and a market leader – in seven days. Five days to learn Hyper-V, two days to learn Cortex."

Paul O'Brien, CEO of MHA Limited

"The move to Cortex has given us a clear service edge over our competitors. We can delegate any level of control to the customer, which customers love."

Customers may opt for a fully managed service, or choose to undertake selected management tasks themselves.



Hosting company MHA has cut Hyper-V virtual server provisioning time from 48 hours to just minutes by using Cortex, says CEO Paul O'Brien.

Customer self-management

"Some customers find it cheaper and easier to 'manage their own world'. They avoid hardware purchases by using our infrastructure as a service, but provision their own machines. Others just want to look after their own Exchange mail boxes, or adjust processors, memory and hard drive space," Paul O'Brien says.

A full web interface gives the customer real time management. Customers have complete control over their own servers – but cannot affect other customers or Cortex, as their access level is controlled by the hosting provider.

Cortex is an 'out of the box' solution that does not require customisation. MHA spent one week installing and learning Hyper-V, then two days installing and learning Cortex.

"In seven days we were up and running in a market leadership position," says Paul O'Brien.

MHA is now rolling Cortex out to its reseller channel. ▶

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Provisioning resellers in ten minutes

"Our target market is IT companies who want to sell hosting to their customers. We simply give our resellers a login. We can push out Dynamic Data Centre to resellers within ten minutes of signing a contract, with no incremental cost. They can then let their end customers manage their own environment if they wish, or manage it for them," Paul O'Brien says.

"Cortex Hyper-V allows us to push out Dynamic Data Centre to resellers within ten minutes of signing a contract – with no incremental cost."

Paul O'Brien, CEO of MHA Limited

"We love tools that help us take new technologies to market quickly. Cortex is a real business enabler."

Cortex is set to release different Systems Centre components to automate the monitoring and backing up of created virtual servers.

Unisys Corporation recently made a global purchase of Cortex provisioning and management software. Unisys is using Cortex to support and bring clear differentiation to its Unified Communication as a Service offering.

The Unisys strategy enables clients to choose the type of data center computing services that best meet their business objectives, from self-managed private clouds to Unisys-managed cloud services as well as hybrid solutions. ■

Highlights

Summary

Applications hosting provider MHA has used Cortex to achieve market leadership in the provisioning of virtual environments. The company uses Cortex to slash provisioning time for Hyper-V virtual server customers; and to push out Dynamic Data Centre to its resellers within ten minutes of signing a contract - with no incremental cost. End customers can select which – if any – parts of their virtual environment they wish to manage internally.

Original problem

- Manual provisioning of virtual servers repetitive and time consuming
- Resellers unable to manage their customers effectively
- Many customers want some ability to self-manage
- Self-managed private clouds a growing trend

Business Benefits

- Two days to learn Cortex, then hit the ground running as market leader
- A level of service other hosting companies can't match
- Ten minutes to provision Hyper-V resellers, with no incremental cost
- Customers choose their own level of self management, or opt for a fully managed service
- Hyper-V servers provisioned in minutes, compared to 48 hours for manual provisioning

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