

VMware in a production environment

Stacking the odds in your favour

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What we are actually talking about!

- Taking a stack of physical servers which we can generally only break one at a time.
- Replacing them with something that allows us to bring down every server at the same time.

Plan for failure

- Minimum of 3 hosts in an ESX cluster
- Never upgrade a host that you can't live without.
- Have a tested procedure for DR that does not rely on HA and vMotion features.

EsXpress

- Backs up guest virtual machines
- Restores to the same or another host
- Do not consider VMware ESX without it.

Choosing hardware

- VMware certified hosts and SAN
- Identical hosts
- Spend the money up front
- You can't have too many GigE ports

Networking stuff

- Separate networks for service console, virtual machines, vMotion, and backups
- Team NIC's for each network
- Bind VLAN's to all hosts in cluster
- Deploy multiple switches
- Test by pulling cables and watching!

vCenter

- Run on a dedicated virtual machine
- Replicate to a second host using EsXpress
- Physical host on service console network with VI client as a backup

Pay for support

- VMware support actually works
- You will need it
- WebEX remote control
- Log a ticket to check your workstation can be accessed before you call them in anger