Dell Management Plug-in for VMware vCenter: Working in Linked Mode

This Dell Technical White Paper describes the features and steps required to use the Dell Management Plug-in for VMware vCenter with Linked Mode vCenters

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Introduction

Using vCenters in linked mode makes it easier for you to manage multiple vCenters from a single vSphere client session. The Dell Management Plug-in for VMware vCenter supports vCenters in linked mode; however, to configure and use it successfully with linked mode it may prove beneficial to know the information presented in this whitepaper.

Audience and scope

This is a technical whitepaper written for IT server administrators. It focuses on topics about using the product with linked mode vCenters. This whitepaper is not intended to replace the Users Guide. It is limited in detail as many of the topics are already covered in the Users Guide or other whitepapers.

Prerequisites

You are expected to have working knowledge of networking, VMware vSphere, virtual networking concept, Windows W2KR8, and the Linux environment. Requirements are VMware ESX/ESXi™ 4.0 or later host installation and VMware vCenter™.

You are expected to know how to install a VMware ESX/ESXi™ hypervisor on a server and add it to a vCenter as a vSphere host.

In addition, you are expected to know how to install the Dell Management Plug-in for VMware vCenter and register it to a vCenter. More information for installation and registering the plug-in to a vCenter is found in Dell Management Plug-in for VMware vCenter Quick Installation Guide and User’s Guide.

While efforts were made to make the product as intuitive as possible, be sure to read the User’s Guide and/or additional white papers prior to deploying and using the product.

Registration

Registering multiple vCenters

As of version 1.5.1, you can license the Dell Management Plug-in to support up to three linked mode vCenters. Each linked vCenter should be registered independently with the Dell Management Plug-in Administration Console, and the registration process is same for each vCenter. You can also deploy and use additional Dell Management Plug-in appliances if you have more than three vCenters you wish to register.
Using multiple appliances

The current licensing allows only three vCenters to be registered with a single appliance; however multiple appliances may be used. A decision to use multiple appliances can be based on the number of vCenters, or influenced by geographic, network and domain boundaries.

Another factor for consideration is the Dell Management Plug-in for VMware vCenter appliance also serves as a Dell provisioning server for Dell bare metal servers. Dell bare metal servers discovered by the appliance by Auto-Discovery or manually prior to launching a deployment template, are added to a pool of bare metal servers on the appliance, and are not limited for use by a given vCenter. Servers in this bare metal server pool are visible and available for hypervisor deployment from any vCenter registered on the appliance.

The Dell Management Center

Accessing the Dell Management Center using the vSphere Client

The Dell Management Plug-in for VMware vCenter stores the settings separately for each of the registered vCenters. Because of this, configure the Dell Management Plug-in settings and connection profiles for each of the registered vCenters. Do this using the Dell Management Center, accessible by clicking on the Management Center icon from the vSphere Client’s Home view.
The Dell Management Plug-in stores the settings separately for each of the registered vCenters; therefore it is important to know which vCenter’s plug-in settings you are managing. You can determine the vCenter being managed by looking at the vSphere Client’s navigation bar.

Switching between vCenters

Once you open the Dell Management Center in the vSphere Client, the VCenter that you are managing can be changed by clicking on the navigation bar, and selecting a different vCenter.
Dell Management Center settings

If this is the first time accessing the registered vCenter using the Management Center, a configuration wizard appears and guides you through the configuration process for the current vCenter. The settings you entered are for the registered vCenter only.

**Note:** When using Linked Mode, it is helpful to preface the connection profiles with the name of the vCenter.

The Dell Server Management tab

When viewing a vCenter from the inventory view and the vCenter was registered with the Dell Management Plug-in for VMware vCenter, the Dell Server Management tab displays at the DataCenter, Cluster, and Host levels. The Dell Server Management tab should not be visible at these levels if you are viewing a vCenter that has not been registered with the Dell Management Plug-in.

**Figure 5. Inventory View showing the Dell Management tab**

Conclusion

The Dell Management Plug-in for VMware vCenter has features to reduce complexity and help you update, manage, generate reports, and deploy Dell Servers. With linked mode, one vSphere Client session can be used to view and manage your distributed multiple vCenter virtual environment. Streamline the physical server management of Dell servers from within that same vSphere Client session.
References

1. Dell Management Plug-in for VMware vCenter Quick Installation Guide

Resources for linked mode vCenter
