CASE STUDY−AWS and Citrix XenDesktop Integration

CLIENT: A large insurance brokerage organization.

Background

The project was initiated to enable users to *utilize Citrix XenDesktop within the AWS Cloud*, so that applications could be used anywhere, anytime and with maximum efficiency. The key objective was the integration of the client's users to AWS (Amazon Web Services) & Enterprise Datacenter to use the Citrix XenDesktop environment.

This was the first successful project at the client where the data was moved to AWS. This project became the benchmark for future projects which involved data being moved to AWS at the client.

Paramount's technical consultant was engaged in design, implementation and support for users during the go- live & after the go-live phase.

CASE SUMMARY

Large Insurance Brokerage Organization

Requirement:

AWS and XenDesktop Integration

Approach:

Using XenApp to run incompatible applications; complete migration of data to AWS

Results:

- Successful copying of user data to AWS
- Incompatible application usage made possible with XenApp

Approach

The team started the project by doing the discovery of the applications and the amount of data involved in the migration and all the potential risks with possible solutions were presented to business heads.

The team completed the project in phases; during the 1st phase the team completed the discovery and then started copying the data to a temporary location on S3; then, scheduled scripts to sync the data from local servers to the AWS S3 location until the migration was completed to keep the data in sync. Post this, the team created a Citrix Desktop for users and moved all the users' data to an AWS location from their personal home drives to use inside Citrix and installed/published all the required applications in Citrix.

Challenges

The team faced multiple challenges during the data migration as the data was being copied from Canada to an AWS S3 location, which caused some issues with latency & copying of long file names during data copies.

- File servers were running on old hardware and some servers hung during the data copy.
- Identified some applications that are incompatible in Citrix or AWS Environments.
- Identified some applications where nobody had any information about how the application was configured.
- Identified some applications that were outdated & out of support.
- Identified data where business users or application teams had no clarity.

The team engaged the project management team to expedite the approval process to get the support contracts/licenses renewed for applications. They also identified the concerned teams from business who could provide information on Data & unsupported applications.

Technology

Cloudberry, Tera copy, Beyond compare, Microsoft App-v, AWS cloud, Citrix XenApp & XenDesktop & wrote scripts via Batch files & PowerShell.

Solution

After multiple meetings/discussions with business users & management the team identified the right tools that were required to copy the data from local servers and also perform the synchronization of data until the go live phase, without causing latency issues. Later, the team worked with application vendors and renewed the support contracts/licenses to install in the AWS environment.

The team also confirmed with the clientthe action to be taken for incompatible applications; it was decided that the applications would be kept on the user's local machine, along with decommissioning of the applications that are not in use.

As part of the overall solution, the team also came up with an elegant solution to install/publish incompatible applications on the XenApp environment installed on 2008 R2 , which enabled their use and made them functional.

Results

Overall results were impressive as the team was able to effectively solve the challenges that the team faced. The following results were noted:

1. Completed the copying of datato the AWS servers successfully using Cloudberry, Beyond compare & batch scripts.
2. Installed incompatible applications in the XenApp environment and successfully published them, enaling their use by the client
3. Packaged a few of the applications using Microsoft's App-V
4. Worked with respective application vendors to complete application upgrades where required.
5. Decommissioned the applications that are not in use.
6. Worked with business users & identified the data that can be deleted which reduced the size of data to be copied.