Case Study

RDS Server (Deployed as a VM under Citrix Xen Hypervisor) Migration to Azure Cloud

Client:
AFBA Group*

Industry:
Accounting & Advisory

Location:
Switzerland

Overview

The Objective: Migration of Citrix VMs under Citrix Hypervisor from on-premises to Microsoft Azure.

Our clients' customer, AFBA Group* is a multilingual Business Advisory and Accounting Firm.

The company was running an on-premises Windows Server 2012 R2 congiured to act as a Remote Desktop (RDS) Server. The server was deployed using Hardware Virtual Machine (HVM) Mode under Citrix Xen Hypervisor. One of the issues was that they were running it without an Active Directory Domain Services (AD DS) environment in place. There are local users created on Windows 2012 R2 server and they are allowed to access this server remotely using a remote desktop client.

Solution

The Aim: A successful and seamless migration of Citrix VMs under Citrix Hypervisor from on-premises to Microsoft Azure.

Strategy: A temporary Windows Server running 2016 Standard Edition was provisioned under Citrix Xen Hypervisor. That acted as a replication appliance for synchronization

The following procedures were carried out for replication & migration of on-premises RDS VM to Azure Cloud.

- Setting up Migration Project under Azure Site Recovery along with assigning required Azure Roles & permissions to migration administrator user account.

- Provisioning of Azure Replication appliance under on-premises Citrix Xen Hypervisor running configuration & process server for real time synchronization of on-premises VM image under Azure Storage account.

- Installed Azure Mobility service on existing RDS server to communicate with replication appliance.

- Kick off initial synchronization of on-premises RDS VM server followed by continuous replication (almost real time) to get it ready for final switch over.

Upon successful completion of replication, a test failover was performed to make sure replicated VM is up to date followed by actual migration of server under Azure Cloud environment.

Technical Challenges

The replicated RDS VM Server was failing to boot under Azure Cloud environment due to conflict caused by the Citrix Utility installed under it. As a remediation, we removed Citrix Utility from on-premises VM & resynchronized VM image from scratch. That fixed boot-up problem for this migrated Virtual Machine under Azure.

Technologies Used

Azure Site Recovery

Azure Virtual Machines

Accomplishment

- The migration was seamlessly carried out without hampering productivity of the staff.

- Successful migration of on-premises RDS Server to Azure Cloud environment

- The migration led to an enhanced performance and reliability

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