

## Microsoft System Centre 2012 Overview of Components:

**Configuration Manager** lets you deploy software to employee's devices and computers, inventory their hardware, push out OS / software updates as well as deploy OSs to bare metal computers. New in Configuration Manager 2012 is user centric management of devices and software with the concept of a user's primary device(s), self-service software catalog, management of mobile devices, a vastly simplified infrastructure hierarchy, remediation of configuration drift through settings management and Role Based Access.

**Virtual Machine Manager** manages your fabric infrastructure for virtualization: hosts, clusters and networks from the bare metal to the ultimate abstraction in private clouds. The 2012 version has changed fundamentally from its predecessor in the overall scope by now managing the entire fabric, creating Hyper-V clusters from bare metal, managing resource and power optimization natively, interfacing with Hyper-V, VMWare ESX and Citrix Xen server hosts and orchestrating patching of clusters. There's also a Service model that lets you deploy (and subsequently update) entire groups of related VMs for a distributed application, there's Server App-V application virtualization deployment, built in High Availability for Virtual Machine Manager itself, storage control (iSCSI and FC SANs) and built in self-service with Role Based Access control.

**Operations Manager** keeps an eye on your servers (physical and virtual), OS (Windows and Unix / Linux), applications (All Microsoft, many, many third party and Java application servers) and your networks through Microsoft and third party Management Packs that contain knowledge about each component. New in 2012 is a simpler infrastructure with built in High Availability, much better and easier network monitoring, enhanced dashboards that can be published to SharePoint for wider audiences, Application Performance Monitoring (formerly known as Avicode), Java Enterprise Edition (JEE) monitoring and enhanced functionality and security for \*nix monitoring.

**Data Protection Manager** is the best backup product for Microsoft's workloads, following supported processes to backup from Disk to Disk, Disk to Tape, Disk to Disk to Tape as well as Disk to Disk to Cloud. New in 2012 is a centralized console (through Operations Manager) that can manage hundreds of Data Protection Manager servers (including DPM 2010), a new console UI, scoped consoles for troubleshooting, Role Based Access, improved Item Level Recovery (ILR) for recovering files from within VMs that have only been backed up through a host level backup, much faster SharePoint recoveries and certificate based communication for workgroup data sources.

**Orchestrator** (formerly known as Opalis) is a newcomer in the Service Center 2012 suite but it's very important as it integrates and links the other components through automation. Via a Visio like interface Activities are linked together into Runbooks that can then automate IT processes on demand; Runbooks can be started from a web interface or from Service Manager or any other product that talks to the new Orchestrator Web Service. The true power of Orchestrator comes in the form of Integration Packs that allows it to "talk" to many other systems, including all the components in System Center 2012 as well as earlier System Center versions and many other third party systems, giving you a true automation engine to better provide IT as a service.

**Service Manager** is a help desk system for tracking incidents, change requests, service requests and configuration management in a central Configuration Management Database (CMDB). There's also a Data Warehouse server that manages long term storage of data, not just from Service Manager but from all the

System Center 2012 products, data is brought into Service Manager through connectors to AD, Virtual Machine Manager, Operations Manager and Configuration Manager for consolidated reporting, templates are used to build service offerings and self-service IT is enabled through a SharePoint integrated portal.

**Endpoint Protection** is Microsoft's business anti-malware solution that's integrated into Configuration Manager. This means that the distribution of the application is done through the normal model in Configuration Manager (either as part of new OS deployments or as a distributed program after OS installation) as well as all the signature updates. Reporting and policy management is also integrated which means that there's no separate infrastructure to manage and no new user interfaces to learn. Endpoint Protection is a multi-engine solution and one engine can be active and scan files and traffic while other engines are being updated with new signatures.

**App Controller** is an end-user / application owner focused web portal that lets you see Virtual Machine Manager, private clouds and services deployed in them as well as Windows Azure public cloud services and monitor, scale out and scale in these services.

Unified Installer lets you install the entire System Center 2012 product, all the components, and more importantly, all the prerequisites through one interface. This brings the total number of screens required to click through to install all the required software and all the components from over 400 to 16. This installation is designed for evaluation, learning, testing and proof of concepts, it's not designed for production deployments (unless your environment is small) and only works with Windows Server 2008 R2 SP1 and SQL Server 2008 R2 as the underlying components. A full installation requires nine separate servers / VMs, each with 2 GB of memory so if you're going to install this on one Hyper-V/ESX or XEN server host it'll need 20+ GB of memory.

