Our Services

Compliance Check & Optimization

Discover your compliance risks and ways to optimize your Oracle license inventory.

Audit Defense

Get expert help at any stage of an Oracle license audit from our team of ex-Oracle auditors.

ULA Service

Get the maximum value out of your ULA throughout its lifecycle – from initial sizing to certification.

Contracts & Advisory

Whether negotiating a contract, virtualizing or doing DR/backup, our advisory service can be tailored to meet any Oracle licensing need.

Oracle & VMware: Part II – Key points to keep in mind

Below is a very condensed version of a recent blog post. For the full post, head over to www.redwoodcompliance.com/pro-tip-blog/.

If you read our previous blog post about Oracle in VMware and the Mars case, you may have assumed that running Oracle software in VMware is risk free and straightforward. After all, there is a court case that supports the assumption. This assumption, however, is fraught with risks. There are several important things to keep in mind as you navigate the licensing minefield of running Oracle software in VMware.

Firstly, the specifics vary. Mars had a combination of VMware settings in place that clearly limited VMotion capabilities. Mars declared the following in their court filings:

"The VMware clusters are configured such that a virtual machine that is hosted in one VMware cluster cannot readily be moved to a different cluster… The 'live migration' feature cannot be used to move virtual machines from a VMware cluster running Oracle Enterprise Edition database software to a VMware cluster not running Oracle Enterprise Edition database software…"

The filing goes on to state that moving VMs from cluster to cluster would be time consuming and would require taking multiple servers offline. Furthermore, per the filing, the clusters with Oracle software have dedicated storage. These details make it very difficult for Oracle to argue its point. Any customer looking to deploy Oracle in VMware should ensure that the combinations of settings and configurations should yield a level of control and restrictions that at least match what Mars had in place.

Secondly, it appears that outside of the VMware issue, Mars had a license surplus – this could have made Oracle more desperate to hang on to whatever findings it could get its hands on. Perhaps if there were other significant compliance issues, Oracle may have been less aggressive with its VMware approach, preferring to focus elsewhere, and Mars may have been less likely to go to court.

Thirdly, if you do decide to run Oracle software in VMware, be **prepared for an Oracle license audit!** Oracle has not changed its VMware approach – there are plenty of naive customers out there. Also, just because you may be able to defend your VMware position in the event of an Oracle audit doesn't mean they won't find other compliance gaps like use of under-licensed Database Options/Packs or excessive number of Named Users.

In summary, you can run Oracle software in VMware with the correct configurations, and it will be defensible in an Oracle audit. But this will also enhance the likelihood of an audit from Oracle, and the audit could well uncover other compliance issues. It's best to do a full internal audit of Oracle licensing to make sure you are audit-ready and running a tight ship.