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PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TECH NOTE #042

Data ONTAP Simulator

The Concept

Every storage administrator wishes they could personally own a NetApp storage controller for training and testing purposes. Only a rare few can afford to pay the electric bill even if they did acquire one. The fact is, long before virtualization was a buzzword NetApp has offered a free Data ONTAP simulator to allow anyone to run a virtual storage controller. Most of NetApp's labs and canned demonstrations run inside ONTAP simulators because their operation is indistinguishable from physical systems.

Requirements

1. A NOW account
2. A physical or virtual machine (VMware, Hyper-V, VirtualBox) running RedHat, Fedora or SuSe Linux with 4 – 30GB of free disk space (You can create up to twenty-eight 1GB virtual disks).
3. Basic Unix/Linux command line skills and ability to run shell scripts to install and configure the simulator (once the simulator is running you can manage it through FilerView).

What It Means To You

The Data ONTAP simulator provides an environment for training, practicing administrative and maintenance procedures and even testing functionality of newer versions of Data ONTAP (the simulator generally lags 1 or 2 minor releases behind the latest General Availability releases). The simulator includes most of the licenses you can purchase for a NetApp storage controller. The simulator emulates all software functionality and most hardware functionality. The primary limitations are no support for FCP and SAN connectivity (which require an external hardware connection and cannot be simulated). You can even configure a simulated cluster and perform failover and giveback as well as SnapMirror and SnapVault replication.

More Information

Read about the simulator in the February 2006 issue of Tech ONTAP:

http://partners.netapp.com/go/techontap/matl/sample/0206tot_monthlytool.html

Download the simulator from the Tool Chest section of the NOW website:

<http://now.netapp.com/NOW/cgi-bin/simulator>

See this comprehensive blog post for guidance on installing and modifying the ONTAP simulator:

<http://communities.netapp.com/blogs/fitforpurpose/2009/09/06/data-ontap-simulator-installation-simple-steps-and-frequently-asked-questions>

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