

# VMware vCenter Stage Manager

## Management and Automation of Pre-production Operations

### AT A GLANCE

VMware™ vCenter Stage Manager allows IT service delivery teams to visualize, manage and automate service transition activities, streamlining the resources and processes required to move an IT service or business application from one stage to another during pre-production. Stage Manager works in concert with VMware vCenter Lifecycle Manager and VMware vCenter Lab Manager to automate the entire IT Service Delivery process, from developing, testing and staging to deploying, monitoring, changing and eventually retiring an IT service.

### BENEFITS

- Reduce time spent rolling out new or upgrading existing services.
- Accelerate the completion of change requests to production systems.
- More easily enforce change and release management procedures.
- Increase the resource utilization efficiency of services hosted on VMware Infrastructure.
- Maintain accurate replicas of production systems.
- Ensure consistency between stages of the release process.
- Reduce infrastructure costs through more efficient use of hardware resources.
- Keep an auditable history of service configuration changes.

### What is VMware vCenter Stage Manager?

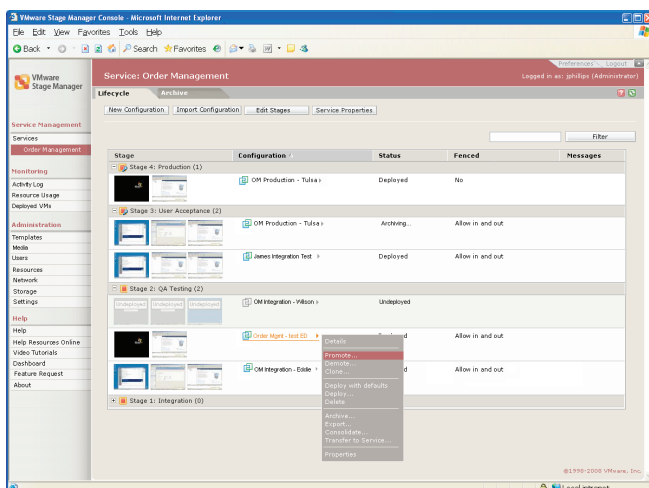
The first system of its kind, VMware vCenter Stage Manager helps IT teams manage and automate the change, configuration and release processes for production-bound software systems. It enables efficient management of resources and processes needed to move an IT service from stage to stage toward production. With Stage Manager, IT service administrators and business application owners can:

- Visualize, organize and streamline resources needed for pre-production and service transition activities.
- Accelerate and enforce change, configuration and release (CCR) management processes.
- Reduce server sprawl and increase the resource utilization efficiency of IT services hosted on VMware Infrastructure.
- Ensure all environments used for pre-production integration and testing are exact copies of current production systems.

### How Does Stage Manager Work?

Traditionally, IT services are delivered to the business by provisioning a set of hardware resources for production, then replicating system configurations for each of the stages of the release cycle. Pre-production systems are often underutilized, wasting space and power, and service transitions require repetitive provisioning tasks and testing cycles to ensure system consistency. Changes to production systems are risky, because pre-production systems are not true replicas of production systems, and it is nearly impossible to move complex system changes through the stages of pre-production with accuracy.

Stage Manager elegantly solves this problem by running service configurations as virtual machines on VMware Infrastructure. Stage Manager allows service administrators to effortlessly clone production systems for pre-production and move entire service configurations from one resource pool to another in a fraction of the time normally required. Stage Manager eliminates the risk of service interruption, because changes can be made on exact copies of production systems for validation or to roll out patched systems into production more quickly. By assigning service configurations to run on resource pools associated with different services or lifecycle stages, Stage Manager gives IT administrators unprecedented control over datacenter resources.



VMware vCenter Stage Manager is organized around IT services and the stages of the lifecycle associated with a service.

## KEY FEATURES

### How Is Stage Manager Used in the Enterprise?

#### IT Service Delivery

Delivering a software package to production is a long, complex, and error-prone process. Stage Manager streamlines and automates IT service delivery by enabling point-and-click promotion of software configurations on groups of virtual machines between stages. When a service is ready to be moved to the next stage of the release process, Stage Manager automatically shifts the software configuration machines to the server resources targeted for the new stage.

#### Patch Testing

Stage Manager reduces the risk associated with patch testing. Service Administrators simply make an exact copy of a production service and deploy that service in a resource pool associated with an earlier stage in the release process. Stage Manager allows simultaneous deployment of multiple instances of identical service configurations without causing network conflict.

Here, patches can be applied and tested to ensure all the functionality remains intact. Once tested, the administrator can promote the new instance back into production by un-deploying the existing configuration, or apply the tested patches directly to the production system. Since Stage Manager enables patch testing on exact copies of production systems, the administrator can be sure the patches will be successful.

#### Historical Archiving

Stage Manager simplifies the comprehensive archival of historical service images to enable rapid revert to archived configurations for disaster recovery or auditing purposes. Administrators simply select "Archive Now," and an archival copy of the chosen service configuration is saved. Stage Manager enables administrators to maintain archives of systems in a highly efficient storage format, reducing costs. Previous states of service configurations are quickly restored with a simple point-and-click command.

### Features and Specifications

#### Service Visualization

- Use a simple user interface as a global view of all services under management
- Organize multi-machine service configurations by the IT service they support.
- Define the stages of the release process and customize them for specific services.
- Associate resource pools from VMware VirtualCenter with services and lifecycle stages.

#### Service configurations

- Create multi-tier service configurations in seconds using machines templates, with no limit on machine count.
- Deploy cloned configurations side-by-side using the "fenced network" feature.
- Promote and demote service configurations across the lifecycle in seconds.
- Optimize for performance or disk space consumption with full and linked clone technology.
- Interact with all service configuration consoles on a single browser page.
- Set lease times to automatically un-deploy expired configurations.
- Leverage VMware Distributed Resource Scheduler (DRS) for optimum virtual machine placement across resource clusters.

#### Service archive

- Archive and restore complete service configurations with a single mouse-click.
- Leverage hierarchical storage management for archived service configurations.
- Store event and configuration change logs for audit purposes

#### Machine templates and media library

- Import virtual machine templates from VirtualCenter and share them across all services
- Automate the assignment of MAC and IP addresses, and SID for Windows systems when virtual machines are instantiated from templates.
- Maintain a media library for application and operating system installation CD images.

#### Administration and resource management

- Monitor resource consumption on a per-service or per-stage basis.
- Optimize datastore utilization with graphical displays of disk space consumption and configuration dependency trees.
- Grant administrator and user permissions on a per-service, per-stage basis through integration with LDAP.

### Find Out More

For information or to purchase VMware products, call 1-877-4VMWARE (outside of North America dial +1-650-427-5000), visit [www.vmware.com/products](http://www.vmware.com/products), or search online for an authorized reseller. For detailed product specifications and systems requirements, please refer to the Stage Manager install and configure guide.