



# VMware vRealize Automation (vRA)

## Review From A Customer



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### Review by a Real User

Verified by IT Central Station



Sr Systems Engineer at a financial services firm with 1,001-5,000 employees

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#### WHAT IS MOST VALUABLE?

The ability to quickly setup the self-provisioning of vSphere VMs was one of the primary drivers for us to use this product over others. Additionally, the product has several plugins and an almost limitless potential for further automation using vRealize Orchestrator. Lastly, its integration with NSX is superb and very much a critical part of our VM provisioning. We are using the following vRealize suite products: Log Insight, Operations, Orchestrator, Business for Cloud, and Automation.

#### HOW HAS IT HELPED MY ORGANIZATION?

We have given internal IT developers the ability to self-provision VMs for development and testing. This has been a hit with our staff. I have talked to several of them involved in the POC and it has drastically increased their efficiency since they do not need to wait on IT Ops. Additionally, the publishing of templates, firewall rules, and software installs in the system has increased the communication and transparency between IT development and IT operations.

#### WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT?

As with all recent VMware products, more focus needs to be done on QA. I encountered far too many bugs for an enterprise product. Additionally, more native vRA integration for various parts of the VM lifecycle will take some of the onus off the engineer to learn so much about Orchestrator.

#### FOR HOW LONG HAVE I USED THE SOLUTION?

I used version 6.2.0 for five months and version 7.0.1 for 11 months.

#### WHAT DO I THINK ABOUT THE STABILITY OF THE SOLUTION?

We did have stability problems. I encountered several issues with the product after the upgrade from 6.2.0 to 7.0.1. I would highly recommend that anyone looking to move to 7.x from 6.x should do a migration rather than an upgrade. VMware did not do enough QA on the product in order to handle in-place upgrades.



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### WHAT DO I THINK ABOUT THE SCALABILITY OF THE SOLUTION?

We did not encounter scaling issues because we had a limited release of the product since it was a POC.

### HOW ARE CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT?

Technical support from the frontline technicians is very good, but if your problem has to be routed to “engineering” then be prepared to wait for days (sometimes weeks) for resolution.

### WHICH SOLUTION DID I USE PREVIOUSLY AND WHY DID I SWITCH?

We did not have an existing automation product. We already owned vRealize Automation as part of our suite licensing. We did evaluate the Cisco UCS Director product for one month and found it too complex to setup.

### HOW WAS THE INITIAL SETUP?

The initial deployment of vRealize Automation was not complex, but it was tedious and error prone. This was the 6.2.0 version and these issues have been fixed in the 7.x versions.

### WHAT'S MY EXPERIENCE WITH PRICING, SETUP COST, AND LICENSING?

I would advise heavy VMware shops to look into getting suite licensing and leverage the VMware ELA framework if possible. Additionally, I would highly recommend that NSX is purchased in conjunction with vRealize Automation in order to get the most out of the product.

### WHICH OTHER SOLUTIONS DID I EVALUATE?

We evaluated Cisco UCS Director.

### WHAT OTHER ADVICE DO I HAVE?

Do your research ahead of time and try to find others in your area who have already deployed the product. Your VMware rep can usually provide contacts that may be able to provide advice. Additionally, start talking to internal developers at your company and see what pain points they have and how automation can help. This communication will also help when you start publishing catalog items in automation, because a lot of more advanced workflows will require knowledge of Javascript and PowerShell. Lastly, start working with Orchestrator now. It has the steepest learning curve, but it is critical to understand how it works for advanced workflows. Orchestrator is already included with your vCenter licensing.

Learn more: [Read 70 reviews of VMware vRealize Automation \(vRA\)](#)