Cluster Rules Manager (CRM) - Frequently Asked Questions

Common Queries

1. ***What features does the tool offer?***
   - Auditing anti-affinity across VMs in a vCenter Server.
   - Importing DRS affinity rules from multiple vCenter servers.
   - Exporting DRS affinity rules to new vCenter from the vCenter for which DRS rules are already imported.
   - Real time complete DRS rule report containing various metrics. User has flexibility to generate this report on entire vCenter or datacenter (s) or cluster(s) level. This report cannot be generated on ESXi host and VM level. This report can be downloaded.
   - Real time VM-Rule association report. Here, the VM will be the focal point and the report will give all the associated rules with that VM. The rule status User has flexibility to generate this report on all the levels, entire vCenter or datacenter (s) or cluster(s) or host (s) or VM(s) level. This report can be downloaded.
   - Ability to connect other vCenter from UI.

2. ***What databases this tool supports?***
   - MySQL
   - MS SQL
   - Oracle

3. ***Can we use remote database server for this tool?***

   Yes, you can register remote database for this tool. It may lead to bit increase in latency due to network.

4. ***What are the default ports for MS SQL, Oracle & MySQL respectively?***
   - MS SQL: 1433
   - MySQL: 3306
   - Oracle: 1521

   However, we can configure other valid ports while installing respective databases. User can specify appropriate port.

5. ***How to configure database that will be used by this tool?***

   It is one time task, as soon as user logs in to the tool, user to enter vCenter FQDN/IP and credentials, on the next page, user will be asked to enter DB details. These details are registered and used later. Next time when user logs in, he will not be asked to enter DB details. DB details registered at the time of first login will be used by tool.

6. ***Do user need to have admin privileges on database server?***

No, Admin need not have admin privileges on entire DB server, admin privileges on the DB schema used is sufficient.

7. ***Whether user need to have admin vCenter server privileges to manage the DRS rules using this tool?***

No. You can create a user (local users or AD user) and assign her required vCenter privileges. Created user need not be an admin user. Example: Create one user and assign permission on one of the datacenters. You can login to vCenter Server using this user and tool will operate only on the datacenter for which permissions are assigned to the logged in user. If you have admin privileges, tool can operate on entire vCenter.

8. ***To manage DRS rules, is connection to vCenter Server encrypted?***

Yes. It is encrypted.

9. ***Any recommendation on where to deploy this tool?***

There is no specific recommendations as the tool is lightweight. Admin either can deploy it in his local system or can deploy in one of the VMs.

10. ***Can user access this tool remotely ?(without login to the machine where it is deployed)***

Yes, it is a web application, hence whenever user wants to login to the tool remotely from any other system, he just needs to know the IP address of the system where the tool is deployed. URL will look like this *https://<IP address of the machine where WAR deployed>:8443/crm*

11. ***Does the tool support latest versions of vSphere 5.5/6.0/6.5 vCenter Server?***

Yes, it supports all vSphere releases.

12. ***Can user use multiple features at the same time?***
We highly recommend using one feature at a time to avoid unexpected results. In some cases, it may work as well.

Feature wise FAQs
Audit anti-affined VMs

1. ***What is this feature in brief?***

This feature helps admin to audit the critical VMs for anti-affinity across vCenter server. The admin must enter the regex, which starts with VM name. Example: If admin has two critical VMs, IND-BLR-NTP-1 and IND-BLR-NTP-2, admin must enter regex string IND-BLR-NTP. Based on this regex, all the VMs whose name start with this regex will be listed along with its anti-affinity status.

2. *Should search regex be started with VM name?*

Yes, search regex must start with VM name. Example: If database server VMs are named as IND-BLR-DB-1, IND-BLR-DB-2, admin must enter regex as IND-BLR-DB (This is most appropriate) or IND-BLR or just IND.

3. *Does this feature consider only DRS VM-VM anti-affinity rule?*

Yes. First, tool will see if there is VM-VM anti-affinity rule where VMs matching with regex are involved and will display rule status. If rule is not satisfied or rule is not there, tool will display whether the VMs with matching regex are anti-affine compliant. Note that VM-Host anti-affinity rules are not considered here.

4. *Can this feature gives some troubleshooting tips if VMs are not anti-affined compliant?*

Yes, reason why VMs matching with regex is not anti-affined compliant will be displayed in UI.

5. *Is search regex entered case sensitive?*

Yes, it is case sensitive.

DRS rule import and export

1. *What is this feature in brief?*

This feature offers importing DRS affinity rules from multiple vCenter and exporting the already imported rules to new vCenter server.

2. *Can I import rules from multiple vCenter servers before starting exporting?*

Yes, user can import DRS rules from multiple vCenter before exporting these rules. Only condition is same DB schema must be maintained to store these imported rules. Example: Login to VC, import all the rules, then login to other VC and import rules. Once rules are imported from multiple VCs, user can now export them one VC at a time. UI is self-explanatory.

3. *Can rules be imported on various vCenter inventory levels?*

No, rules can only be imported on vCenter level. Rules cannot be imported on datacenter and cluster level.

4. *What are the constraints user will have on target vCenter server, in order to export these imported rules?*

You need to maintain the exact same names for clusters, hosts and VMs on target/ new vCenter as old vCenter (from where DRS rules will be imported and exported to new vCenter). Fundamentally, the inventory structure must be maintained.

5. **Why there is no flexibility to change cluster, host and VMs name on target vCenter while exporting DRS rules?**

vCenter uses MOR ID or UUID to uniquely identify inventory object within the same vCenter but not across the vCenter . There is no guarantee on identifying inventory object across vCenter when we move inventory object from source (old) VC to target (new) VC. To avoid any such conflicts, it is recommended to maintain the same inventory structure in new VC as old VC.

6. **Can I change the cluster, host and VMs names after exporting the rules?**

Yes, user can do this. Once all the rules are exported for particular cluster, user can change that cluster, host and VMs name with no any issue.

7. **What if only some inventory objects (clusters, hosts, VMs) are added to the new vCenter server before exporting rules?**

Rules are created for those applicable to the current inventory and remaining rules will not be created. User will get report on rules those are created and those which are not created with appropriate reason. Once user adds remaining inventory objects to inventory, he needs to run rule export again so that remaining rules will be exported on newly added inventory objects.

8. **If export report rule does not show some rules as exported, what does this mean?**

It means that either rules are already created or rule could not find required inventory objects in the target vCenter.

DRS rule report

1. **What is this feature in brief?**

This feature generates real time complete DRS rule report containing various intelligent metrics. User has flexibility to generate this report on entire vCenter or datacenter (s) or cluster(s) level. This report is not generated on ESXi host and VM level. This report can be downloaded.

VM Rule association

1. **What is this feature in brief?**

This feature offers the real time VM to Rule association report. User has flexibility to generate this report on all the levels, entire vCenter or datacenter (s) or cluster(s) or host (s) or VM(s) level. This report can be downloaded.

General queries:

1. *Can I use multiple features at the same time?*

Yes and No. Please do use one feature at a time example: If you use "Audit anti-affined VMs" feature, please finish all the operation on this feature and then start using other features. If application is open in multiple browser tabs, multiple features can be used simultaneously.

2. *Is the report generated in the same period irrespective of inventory size?*

No, time required for report generation is directly proportional to the size of inventory. If inventory size is huge, the time taken will be higher.

3. *Can I leverage all the features on all the vCenter inventory levels (datacenter(s), cluster (s), hosts, VMs)?*

User Interface will give appropriate message when a user selects particular inventory level and the selected level is not applicable to feature that user wants to use. However, if the user gets any error/exception while selecting multiple inventory levels at the same time, no need to panic, there is no harm, just continue to use features.

4. *How do I troubleshoot if something goes wrong?*

We are in process of writing troubleshooting guide; we will publish as soon as it is ready.

5. *If my vCenter inventory has "not responding/disconnected/inaccessible" hosts/VMs, does this affect any of the features?*

No, it does not affect any features; however, it is recommended to remove such inventory objects completely to avoid the confusion.

6. *Is the inventory populated on UI page of the tool is same as that of vCenter inventory?*

Yes, it is the same. We are populating inventory on the UI itself just for the convenience of the user as reference. Inventory gives flexibly for user to use tool features on various inventory level.

7. *If I select child inventory level (a VM) and its parent (a Host) level, does the report generation just on child level?*

No, if both child and parent inventory levels are selected; report is generated at the parent level.