

## **The Hidden Data Loss Dangers of Virtualization**

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While virtualization specifically and cloud computing in general are supposed to represent a major advancement in the state of enterprise computing, they do have a potential downside that IT organizations need to be more careful about mitigating.

As the number of virtual machines per server steadily increases, the amount of contention for shared storage resources increases. As that happens, Jeff Pederson, manager of data recovery operations at Kroll Ontrack, a provider of data recovery software and services, says the probability that one virtual machine is going to write data to the same space on a disk as another virtual machine starts to increase.

In fact, a recent survey of 369 IT professionals conducted by Kroll Ontrack at the recent VMworld 2011 conference suggests that many organizations are already starting to experience this phenomenon. The reason for that, says Pederson, is that many IT organizations simply make it too easy to provision a virtual machine either on premise or in the cloud without considering the impact all those virtual machines might have on limited storage resources.

Of course, Kroll Ontrack sells tools that can help IT organizations recover that lost data on a local or remote server. But Pederson says that one of the biggest issues many IT organizations have is that they don't know such tools exist, which winds up giving a black eye to their virtualization and cloud computing initiatives when they can't recover a critical piece of business data.

In a world where not everyone is sold on the benefits of virtualization and cloud computing, the ability to recover lost data may wind up being the difference between an insurrection and a content set of business application owners. And, of course, the difference between those two extremes is an IT environment that is well managed and under budget, versus one where every application has dedicated resources strewn across hundreds of physical servers and the IT staff is looking for the first available exit.