

DELL EMC READY BUNDLE FOR VIRTUALIZATION — WITH VMWARE AND FIBRE CHANNEL INFRASTRUCTURE

Design Guide

APRIL 2017

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Executive Sumamry

This Design Guide outlines the architecture of the Dell EMC Ready Bundle for Virtualization with VMware and Fibre Channel infrastructure. The Dell EMC Ready Bundle for Virtualization is the most flexible converged system in the industry. This Fibre Channel solution can be built to include Dell PowerEdge rack servers, PowerEdge FX2 converged platforms, Dell SC Storage SC4020 for midtier enterprise storage and Dell SC Storage SC9000 for high-end storage. Virtualization with VMware vSphere 6 completes the solution to provide a robust platform for enterprise workloads.

Introduction

The Dell EMC Ready Bundle for Virtualization with VMware is a family of converged and hyper-converged systems that combine servers, storage, networking, and infrastructure management into an integrated and optimized system that provides a platform for general-purpose virtualized workloads. The components undergo testing and validation to ensure full compatibility with VMware vSphere. The Ready Bundle uses infrastructure best practices, and converged server architecture. This document provides an overview of the design and implementation of the Dell EMC Ready Bundle for Virtualization with VMware for Fibre storage.

Audience and scope

This document is intended for stakeholders in IT infrastructure and service delivery who have purchased or are considering purchase of Dell EMC Ready Bundle for Virtualization with VMware and Fibre Channel infrastructure. This document provides information and diagrams to familiarize you with the components that make up the bundle.

Supported Configuration

The following table provides an overview of the supported components:

Table 1. Supported Configuration

| Components | Details |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Server platforms | Choice of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dell EMC PowerEdge R630,• Dell EMC PowerEdge R730,• Dell EMC PowerEdge FX2 with Dell EMC PowerEdge FC630 or Dell EMC PowerEdge FC430 |
| LAN connectivity | (2) Dell Networking S4048-ON |
| SAN connectivity | (2) Brocade 6500 series (Brocade 6505 or Brocade 6510) |
| Out-of-band (OOB) connectivity | (1) Dell Networking S3048-ON |
| Storage array | (1) Dell SC Storage SC4020 or (1) Dell SC Storage SC9000 |
| Management server platform | (2) Dell EMC PowerEdge R630 |
| Management software components | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dell Storage Manager• VMware vCenter Server Appliance• VMware vRealize Automation• VMware vRealize Business• VMware vRealize Log Insight• VMware vRealize Operations Manager with optional Dell Storage Management Pack |

Compute server

Ready bundle for Virtualization offers customers a choice of rack servers or modular enclosures for their compute infrastructure. The following table details the supported compute servers:

Table 2. Compute server configurations

| Platform model | PowerEdge R630 and PowerEdge R730 | PowerEdge FX2 with PowerEdge FC630 | PowerEdge FX2 with PowerEdge FC430 |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|
| Processor | (2) Intel® Xeon® E5 v4 Broadwell processors | (2) Intel® Xeon® E5 v4 Broadwell processors | (2) Intel® Xeon® E5 v4 Broadwell processors |
| Memory | 2400 MT/s RDIMMs | 2400 MT/s RDIMMs | 2400 MT/s RDIMMs |
| Network adapter | Intel® X710 quad port 10Gb network adapter or QLogic® 57800 10 Gb quad port network adapter | Intel® X710 quad port 10Gb network adapter or QLogic® 57800 10 Gb quad port network adapter | QLogic® 57800 10 Gb quad port network adapter |
| Host bus adapter | QLogic® 2662 dual port Fibre Channel HBA | QLogic® 2662 dual port Fibre Channel HBA | QLogic® 2662 dual port Fibre Channel HBA |
| Boot device | Internal Dual SD Module with 16 GB SD card for ESXi | Internal Dual SD Module with 16 GB SD card for ESXi | Internal Dual SD Module with 16 GB SD card for ESXi |
| OOB management | iDRAC8 Enterprise | iDRAC8 Enterprise | iDRAC8 Enterprise |
| Hypervisor | VMware ESXi 6.5 | VMware ESXi 6.5 | VMware ESXi 6.5 |
| FX2 chassis configuration | Not applicable | CMC and (2) Dell Networking FN IOAs | CMC and (2) Dell Networking FN IOAs |

Management server

The management cluster consist of three PowerEdge R630 servers will the following configuration:

Table 3. Management server configuration

| Components | Details |
|-------------------|--|
| Number of servers | (2) Dell EMC PowerEdge R630 |
| Processor | (2) Intel® Xeon® E5 v4 Broadwell processors |
| Memory | 2400MT/s RDIMMs |
| Network adapter | Intel® X710 quad port 10Gbnetwork adapter or QLogic® 57800 10 Gb quad port network adapter |
| Host bus adapter | QLogic® 2662 dual port Fibre Channel HBA |
| Boot device | Internal Dual SD Module with 16 GB SD card for ESXi |
| OOB management | iDRAC8 Enterprise |

Design Principles

The following principles are central to the design and architecture of the Dell EMC Ready Bundle for Virtualization. The Ready Bundle for Virtualization is built and validated using these design principles.

- No single point-of-failure: Redundancy is incorporated in the critical aspects¹ of the solution, including server high availability features, networking, and storage.
- Integrated Management: Provide integrated management using vRealize Operations Manager with associated plugins.
- Hardware configuration for virtualization: The system is designed for general use case virtualization. Each server is equipped with appropriate processor, memory, host bus, and network adapters as required for virtualization.
- Best practices adherence: Storage, networking and vSphere best practices of the corresponding components are incorporated into the design to ensure availability, serviceability and optimal performance.
- vRealize Suite Enabled: The system supports VMware vRealize Suite for managing heterogeneous and hybrid cloud.
- Flexible configurations: Ready Bundle for Virtualization can be configured to suit most customer needs for a virtualized infrastructure. The solution supports options, such as configuring server model, server processors, server memory, type of storage (Fibre Channel, iSCSI and SDS), and network switches based on customer needs.

Design Overview

This section provides an overview of the architecture including compute, storage, network, and management. The following figure provides a high-level overview of the architecture, including compute servers (showing flexible compute nodes), management servers, LAN switches, SAN switches, storage arrays and out-of-band switches:

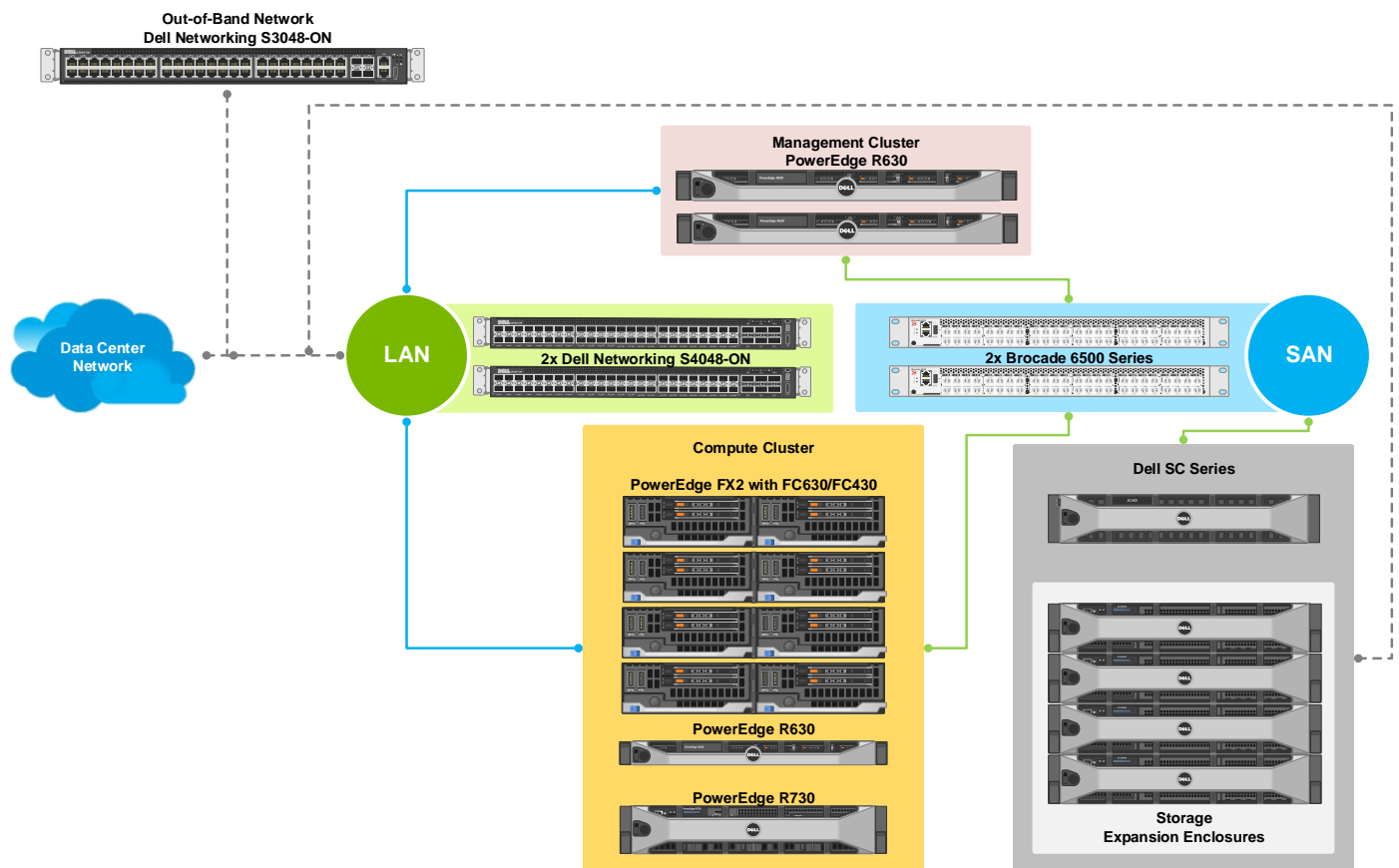


Figure 1. Ready Bundle for Virtualization with VMware and Fibre Channel infrastructure – Design Overview

¹ Out of band management is not considered critical to user workload and does not have redundancy

Compute Design

The latest Intel® Xeon v4 Broadwell generation processors power the Ready Bundle for Virtualization with VMware. With up to 22 cores per CPU and clock speeds of up to 3.5GHz in the Dell PowerEdge rack servers you can reduce CPU socket-based licensing costs and achieve greater VM density. The Dell EMC converged FX2 platform provides a powerful balance of resource density and power consumption in a dense form factor. These server nodes are configured with processors that have a lower thermal design power (TDP) value resulting in lower cooling and electrical costs.

The Dell PowerEdge rack platforms support the RDIMM and LRDIMM memory types. Load Reduced DIMM (LRDIMM) uses an iMB buffer to isolate electrical loading from the host memory controller. This buffer and isolation allows for the use of quad ranked DIMM to increase overall memory capacity. For general-purpose virtualization solutions, 2400 MT/s RDIMMs are recommended. Memory can be configured in various modes from within the BIOS. Optimizer mode is the default mode and is recommended for most virtualization use cases to provide the optimized memory performance. For improved reliability and resiliency, other modes such as mirror mode and Dell fault-resilient mode are available.

The Intel® X710 and QLogic® network adapters are supported to provide 10 Gb network connectivity to the top of rack switches. QLogic 2662 dual port 16 Gbps FC HBA is the recommended adapter for FC connectivity.

Dell PowerEdge servers support various BIOS configuration profiles that control the processor, memory, and other configuration options. Dell recommends the default profile of performance for the Dell EMC Ready Bundle for Virtualization with VMware.

Network Design

This section provides an overview of the network architecture including compute and management server connectivity. Details around the Top-of-Rack (ToR) and virtual switch configuration are provided.

Dell Networking S4048-ON

The network architecture employs Virtual Link Trunking (VLT) connection between the two Top-of-Rack (ToR) switches. In a non-VLT environment, redundancy requires idle equipment which drives up infrastructure costs and increases risks. In a VLT environment, all paths are active, adding immediate value and throughput while still protecting against hardware failures. VLT technology allows a server or bridge to uplink a physical trunk into more than one Dell Networking S4048-ON switch by treating the uplink as one logical trunk. A VLT connected pair of switches acts as a single switch to a connecting bridge or server. Both links from the bridge network can actively forward and receive traffic. VLT provides a replacement for Spanning Tree Protocol (STP) based networks by providing both redundancy and full bandwidth utilization using multiple active paths. Major benefits of VLT technology are:

- Dual control plane for highly available, resilient network services
- Full utilization of the active LAG interfaces
- Active / Active design for seamless operations during maintenance events

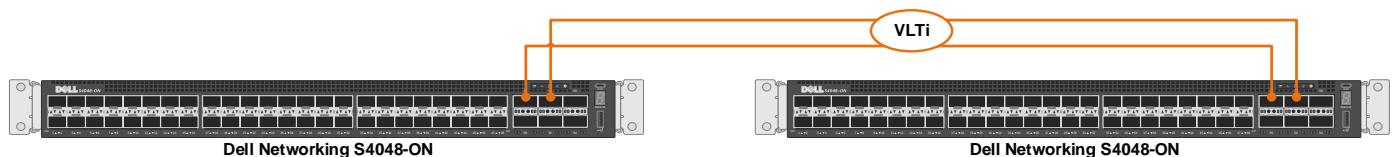


Figure 2. Dell Networking S4048-ON Virtual Link Trunk Interconnect (VLTi) Configuration

The Dell Networking S4048-ON switches each provide six 40 GbE uplink ports. The Virtual Link Trunk Interconnect (VLTi) configuration in this architecture uses two 40 GbE ports from each Top-of-Rack (ToR) switch to provide an 80 Gb data path between the switches. The remaining four 40Gb ports allow for high speed connectivity to spine switches or directly to the data center core network infrastructure. They can also be used to extend connectivity to other racks.

Network connectivity of PowerEdge FX2 Servers

This section describes the network connectivity when using PowerEdge FX2 modular infrastructure blade servers. The compute cluster Dell EMC PowerEdge FC630 and the Dell EMC PowerEdge FC430 server nodes connect to the Dell Networking S4048-ON switches through the Dell EMC PowerEdge FN410S modules shown in the following PowerEdge FX2 blade chassis figure:

- Connectivity between the PowerEdge FX server nodes and the PowerEdge FN410S: The internal architecture of PowerEdge FX2 chassis provides connectivity between an Intel or QLogic® 10 GbE Network Daughter Card (NDC) in

each PowerEdge FX2 server node and the internal ports of the PowerEdge FN410S module. The FN410 has eight 10 GbE internal ports. Four Dell EMC PowerEdge FC630 server nodes connect to four of the internal ports in each FN410. Eight Dell EMC PowerEdge FC430 server nodes connect to all eight of the internal ports in each PowerEdge FN410S.

- Connectivity between the Dell EMC PowerEdge FN401 and S4048-ON switches: Two Dell EMC PowerEdge FN410S I/O Aggregators (IOA) in the PowerEdge FX2 architecture provides the Top-of-Rack (ToR) connectivity for the PowerEdge FX2 server nodes. Each IOA provides four external ports. The FN IOA provides a low-touch configuration mode called VLT mode in which Port 9 from each IOA in the chassis forms a Virtual Link Trunk Interconnect (VLTi). Ports 10 and 11 from both the FN IOA form a single port channel which in turn connects to the Top-of-Rack (ToR) switches.

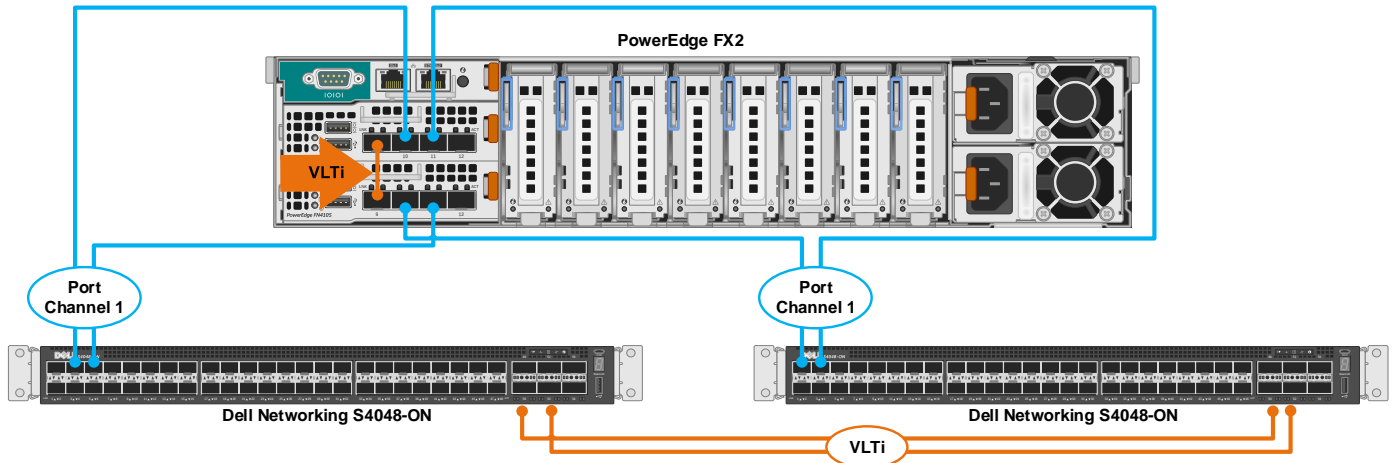


Figure 3. PowerEdge FX2 connectivity

Network configuration of PowerEdge rack servers

The compute cluster can either be Dell EMC PowerEdge FX2 servers or the Dell PowerEdge rack servers. This section describes the network connectivity if rack servers are used for compute servers, and the management servers. The following image is an example of the connectivity between the compute and management Dell PowerEdge rack servers and Dell Networking S4048-ON switches: The compute and management rack servers have two 10 GbE connections to S4048-ON switches through one Intel® or QLogic® dual port 10 GbE network daughter card (NDC).

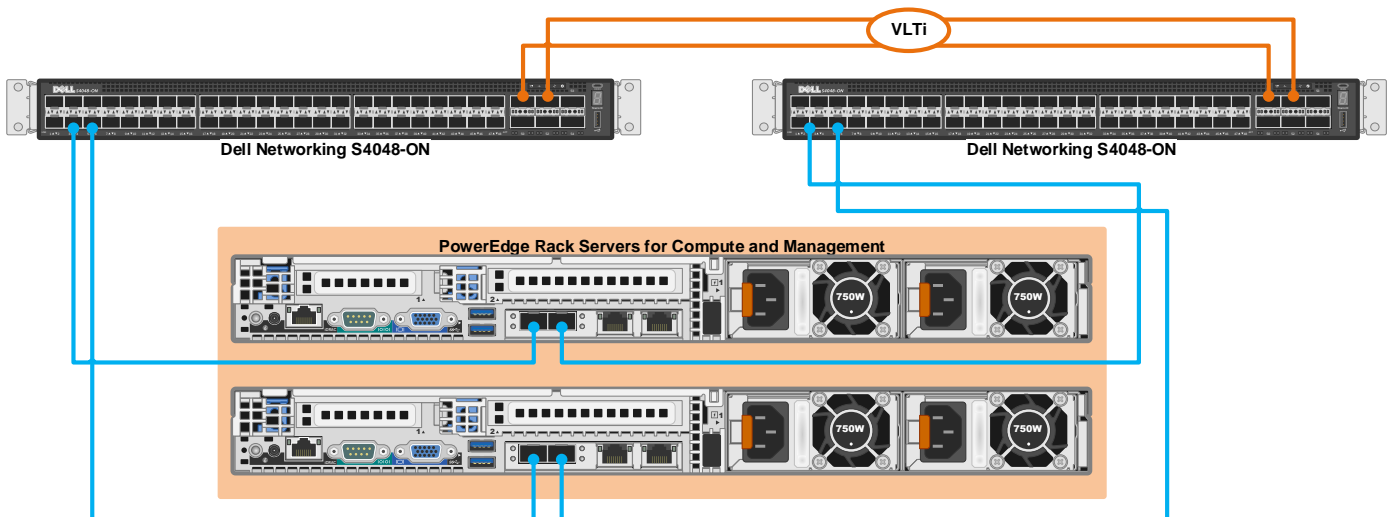
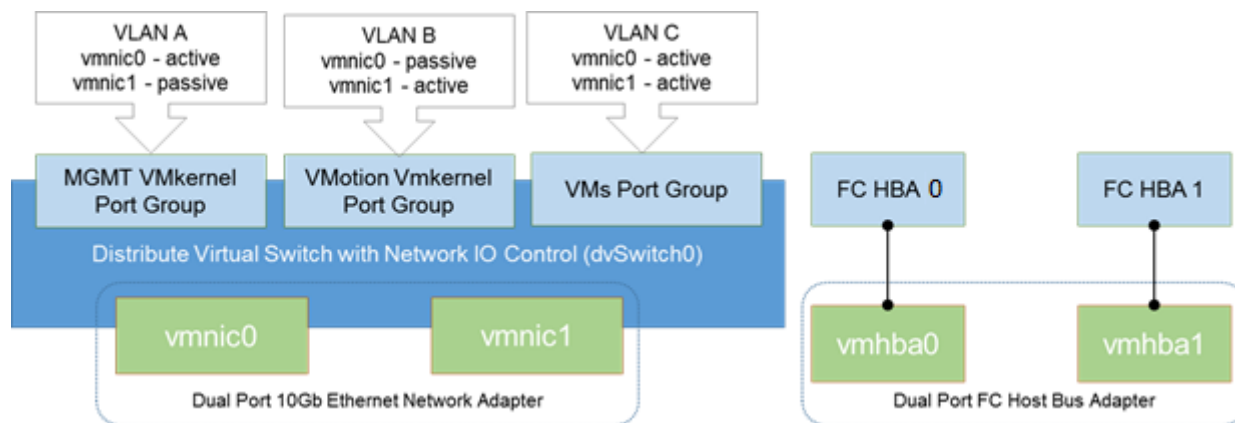


Figure 4. PowerEdge rack server connectivity

Network configuration for LAN traffic with VMware vSphere Distributed Switch (vDS)

Customers can achieve bandwidth prioritization for different traffic classes such as host management, vMotion, and VM network using VMware Distributed Virtual Switches. The VMware vSphere Distributed Switch (vDS) can be configured, managed, and monitored from a central interface and provides:

- Simplified virtual machine network configuration
- Enhanced network monitoring and troubleshooting capabilities
- Support for network bandwidth partitioning when NPAR is not available



The following figures show the virtual distributed switch configuration for the management and compute servers.

Figure 5. Distributed Virtual Switch for dual port configuration

Storage Design

The Ready Bundle uses the Dell Storage Center connected to a 16 GB Fibre Channel SAN. The Dell SC Storage SC4020 provides a shared storage mechanism to enable highly available datastores for mid-tier enterprise storage needs. Fault domains ensure that data paths are distributed in a way that prevents a component failure from impacting virtual machine operations. The Dell SC Storage SC9000 series provides the same high availability and redundancy to workloads that demand even more performance and capacity. Two Brocade 6500 series switches make up the Fibre Channel fabrics.

Storage fabric configuration

This solution is configured with two fault domains for high availability. For the Dell SC Storage SC4020 arrays, Port 1 from each controller connects to the Fibre Channel switch 1, while Port 2 connects to the Fibre Channel switch 2. Each Fibre Channel switch represents a fault domain for the Fibre Channel storage and enables port failover when the virtual port mode is enabled.

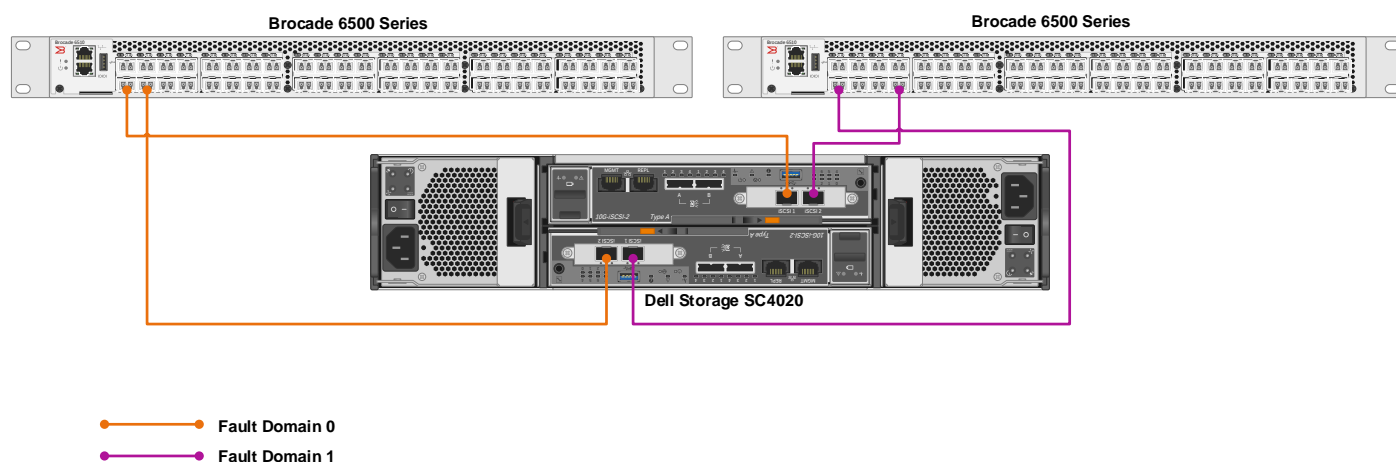


Figure 6. Storage fabric configuration with Dell SC Storage SC4020

The Dell SC Storage SC9000 has two controllers, each with four 16 Gbps ports. As with SC4020, the storage ports are able to failover to available ports when the virtual port mode is enabled. The following image shows the SC Storage SC9000 connected to the Brocade switches with two fault domains.

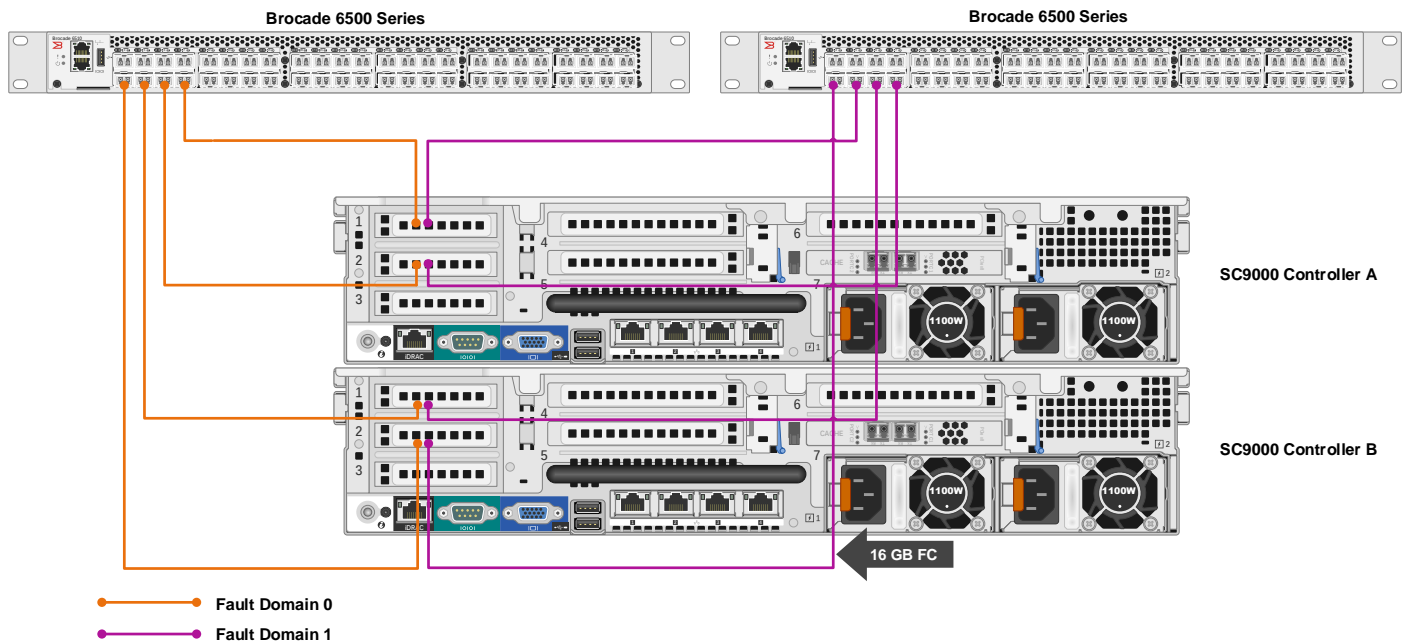


Figure 7. Storage fabric configuration with Dell SC Storage SC9000

Storage connectivity for compute and management servers

Each server has a QLogic® 2662 dual port Fibre Channel HBA host bus adapter (HBA) for connecting to the storage fabrics. For the Dell EMC PowerEdge FX2 platform servers, the PCIE HBA is inserted in the back of the chassis and mapped to the appropriate server node. When using the Dell EMC PowerEdge FC630 servers, the PCIE slots 2, 4, 6 and 8 are populated with the QLogic HBA as shown in the diagram below.

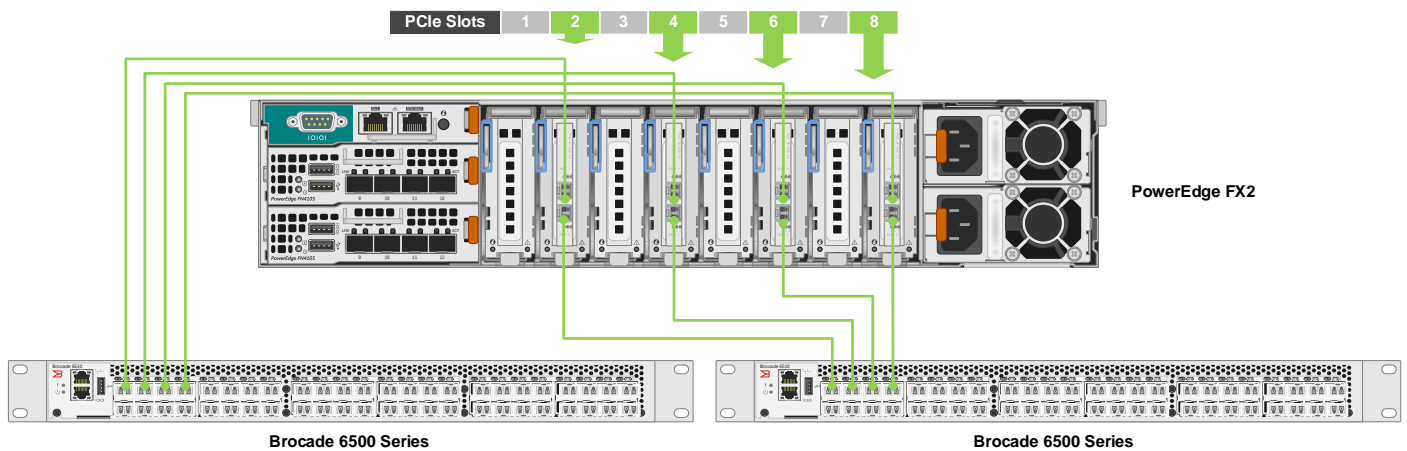


Figure 8. PowerEdge FX2 SAN connectivity

For management servers and rack compute servers, each server is configured with a dual port QLogic® 2662 dual port Fibre Channel Host bus adapter (HBA) with each port connecting to the Brocade switch as shown.

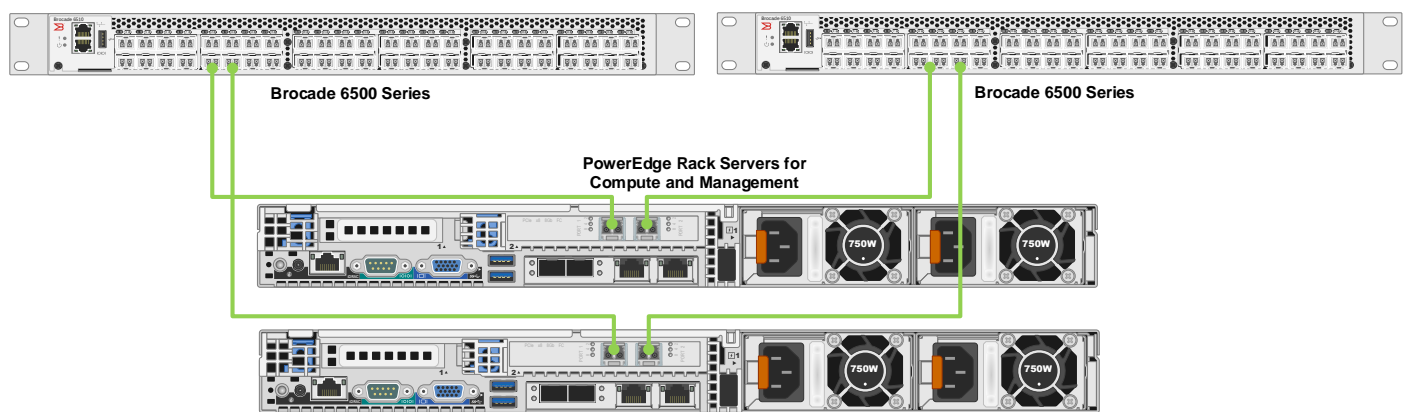


Figure 9. PowerEdge Rack Server SAN connectivity

Storage configuration

For both rack and converged platforms, each server’s HBA port 1 connects to the Brocade switch 1 while HBA port 2 connects to the Brocade switch 2. These ports are then zoned with the Dell SC array target ports to enable storage access for the hypervisor.

Having multiple datastores within the VMware vSphere cluster enable vSphere HA Datastore Heartbeat. This ensures that partitioning, or isolated host networks do not trigger VM movement within the cluster. By default, the vSphere cluster selects up to five datastores for the Datastore Heartbeat.

Management Design

Management Infrastructure

The management infrastructure consists of two R630 servers that form a management cluster. Management components are virtualized to provide high availability. Redundant 10 Gb Ethernet uplinks to the network infrastructure, redundant 16Gbps FC uplinks to the storage array combined with vSphere High Availability ensure that management components stay online. A Dell Networking S3048 switch is used for OOB connectivity. iDRAC ports in each management and compute cluster connect to this switch.

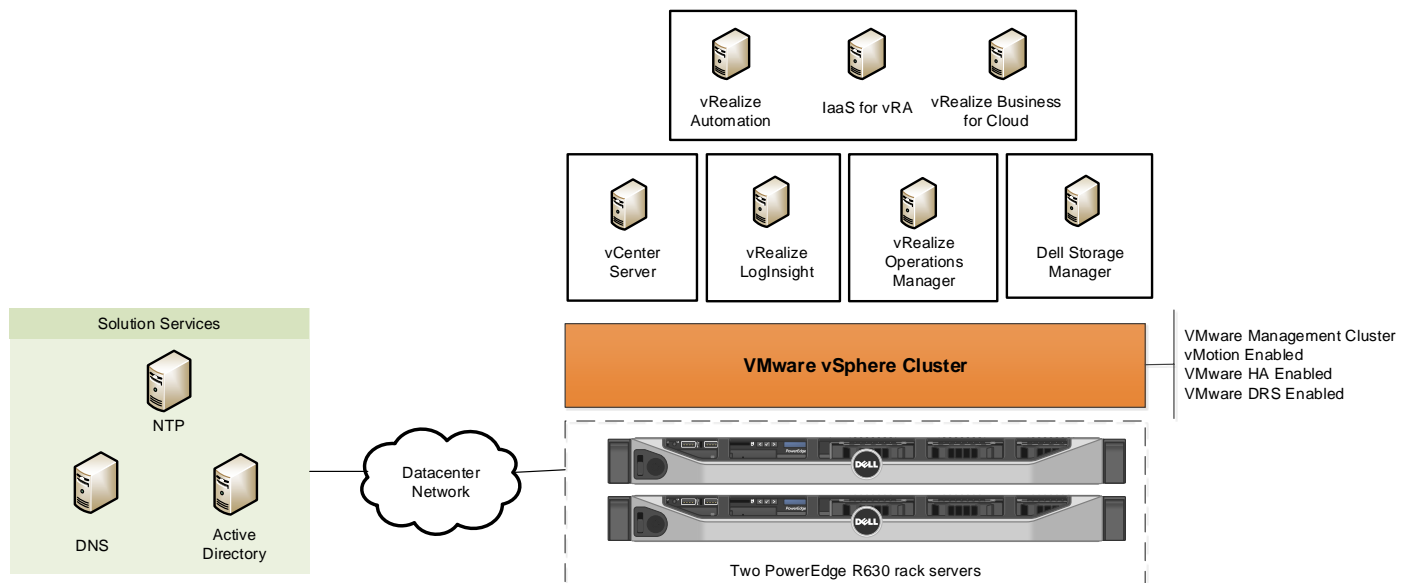


Figure 10. Management Design

Management Components

The following are management components:

- VMware vCenter Server Appliance
- VMware vRealize Automation
- VMware vRealize Business
- VMware vRealize Log Insight
- VMware vRealize Operations Manager
- Dell Storage Manager

The management software components run on virtual machines that reside in the management cluster. The following table lists the management components in the bundle and the VM sizing of those components:

Table 4. Management components sizing

| Component | VMs | CPU cores | RAM (GB) | OS (GB) | Data (GB) | NIC |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----------|----------|---------|-----------|-----|
| VMware vCenter Server | 1 | 4 | 12 | 12 | 256 | 1 |
| vRealize Operations Manager | 1 | 4 | 16 | 20 | 254 | 1 |
| vRealize Automation (vRA) | 1 | 4 | 18 | 50 | 90 | 1 |
| vRealize Business | 1 | 4 | 8 | 50 | 0 | 1 |
| vRealize Log Insight | 1 | 4 | 8 | 20 | 511 | 1 |
| vRealize IaaS (for vRA) | 1 | 4 | 6 | 80 | 0 | 1 |
| Dell Storage Manager | 1 | 2 | 8 | 80 | 0 | 1 |

VMware vRealize Automation Design

The VMware vRealize Automation architecture can be deployed using several models to provide flexibility in resource consumption, availability, and fabric management. The small, medium, and large deployment models all scale up as needed.

Note: Do not use the Minimal Deployment model described in the vRealize Automation documentation. This model is for proof of concept deployments only and cannot scale with the environment.

vRealize Automation uses DNS entries for all components. When scaling, vRealize Automation uses load balancers to distribute the workload across multiple automation appliances, web servers, and infrastructure managers. These components can be scaled as needed and distributed in the same data center or dispersed geographically. In addition to scaling for workload, vRealize Automation with load balancers is highly available. This feature ensures that users who consume vRealize Automation XaaS blueprints are not affected by an outage.

vRealize Automation components

The following are the components for vRealize Automation:

- VMware vRealize Automation Appliance - Contains core VRA services and the vRealize Orchestrator service, AD sync connectors, and an internal appliance database. Clusters A/A except DB failover is manual.
- Infrastructure web server - Runs IIS for user consumption of vRealize services and is fully active-active.
- Infrastructure Manager Service - Manages the infrastructure deployed with VRA. For small/medium deployment, this service runs on the Infrastructure Web Server and is active-passive with manual failover.
- Agents - Agents are used for integration with external systems such as Citrix, Hyper-V, and ESXi.
- Distributed Execution Manager - Performs the orchestration tasks necessary. When using multiple DEM worker servers, Distributed Execution Orchestrators are used to assign, track, and manage the tasks given to the workers.
- MSSQL - Tracks infrastructure components, supports Always ON for SQL Server 2016, otherwise a SQL failover cluster is necessary for HA.

VMware vRealize Automation deployment model sizing

VMware vRealize Automation deployment can be small, medium, or large based on the requirements. The following table provides a summary of the three deployment options:

Table 5. vRealize Automation deployment options

| | Small | Medium | Large |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| Managed Machines | 10,000 | 30,000 | 50,000 |
| Catalog Items | 500 | 1,000 | 2,500 |
| Concurrent Provisions | 10 | 50 | 100 |
| vRA Appliances | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Windows VMs | 1 | 6 | 8 |
| MSSQL DB | Single server | Failover cluster | Failover cluster |
| vRealize Business Appliance | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Load Balancers | 0 | 3 | 3 |

The following images illustrate a large deployment:

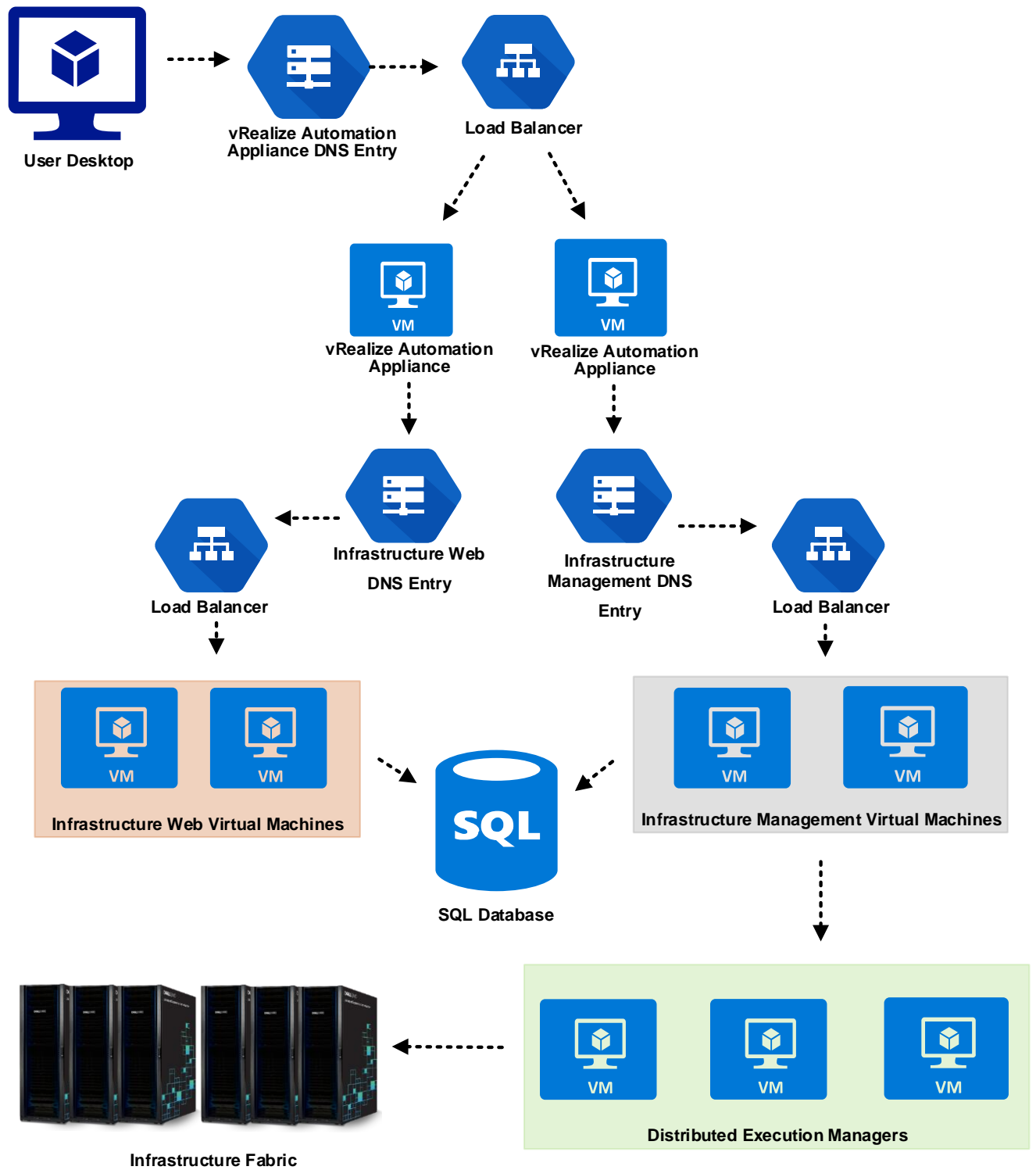


Figure 11. vRealize Automation – Large Deployment

Scaling the Ready Bundle

The solution can be scaled by adding multiple compute nodes (pods) in the customer data center. The Dell Networking Z9100 switch can be used to create a simple yet scalable network. The Z9100 switches serve as the spine switches in the leaf-spine architecture. The Z9100 is a multiline rate switch supporting 10 Gb, 25 Gb, 40 Gb, 50 Gb, and 100 Gb Ethernet connectivity and can aggregate multiple racks with little or no oversubscription. When connecting multiple racks, using the 40 GbE uplinks from the rack, you can build a large fabric that supports multi-terabit clusters. The density of the Z9100 allows flattening the network tiers and creating an equal-cost fabric from any point to any other point in the network.

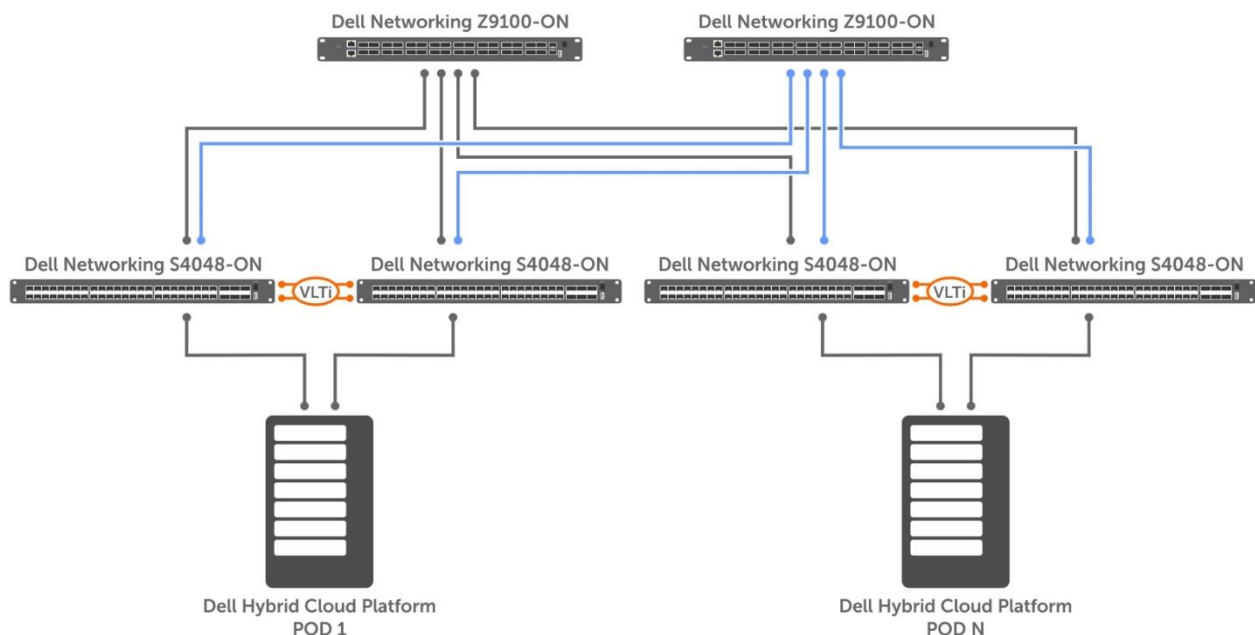


Figure 12. Multiple Compute PODs scaled out using leaf spine architecture

For large domain layer-2 requirements the Extended Virtual Link Trunking (eVLT) can be used on the Z9100, as shown in the following figure. The VLT pair formed can scale in terms of hundreds of servers inside multiple racks. Each rack has four 40 GbE links to the core network providing enough bandwidth for all the traffic between each rack.

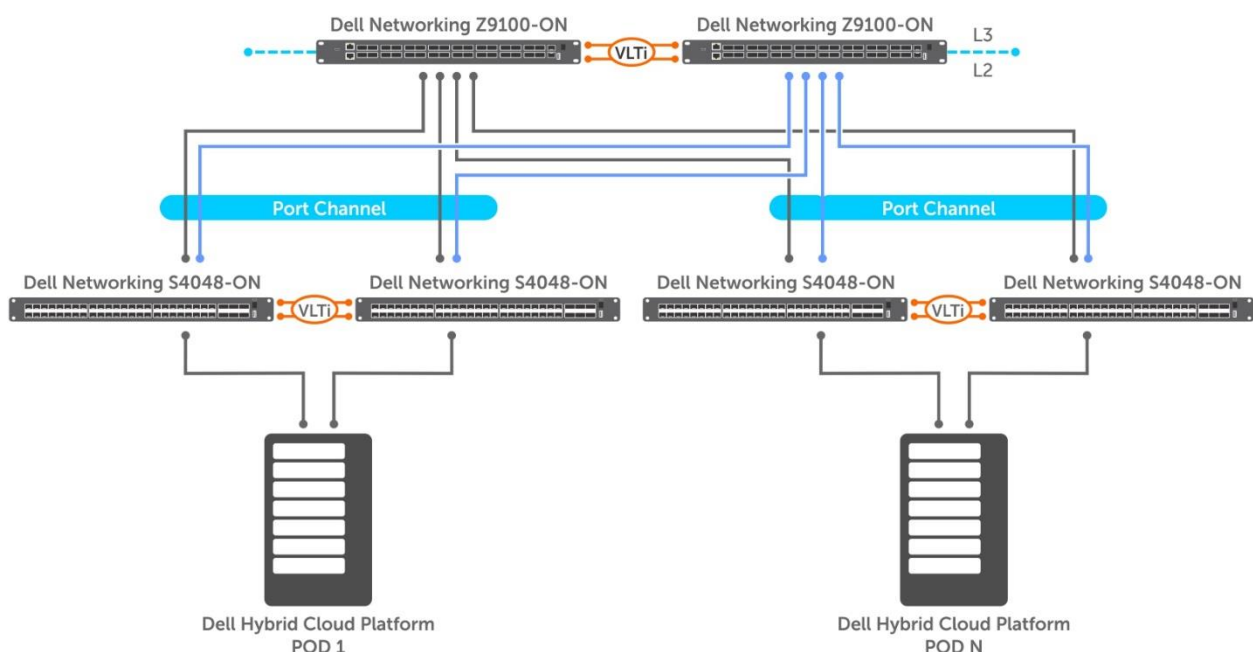


Figure 13. Multiple Compute PODs scaled out using eVLT

References

- [Dell EMC SC Series Best Practices with VMware vSphere 5.x–6.x](#)
- [vSphere storage for ESXi 6.0](#)
- [vRealize Automation – Reference Architecture](#)
- [Dell VLT Reference Architecture](#)
- [Dell Configuration Guide for S4048-ON](#)