IBM

Flash
IBM Oracle International Competency Center (ICC)

November 12, 2013   email address: ibmoracle@us.ibm.com

Oracle Database no longer requires certification of Block Storage Systems! [(*)]

The main objective of this Flash is to update the reader on the fact that EMC's VPLEX is no longer listed as certified on Oracle's website. This specific option is no longer on the certification list, nor will there be there similar listing of vendor specific storage technology from other vendors, including IBM. If there is still some documentation on the internet claiming otherwise, it is most likely outdated information.

This is based on recent changes in Oracle's certification policy regarding the need to test specific technologies. Previously, hardware vendors who offered a specific technology via its disk storage products, might have been required to run certification tests with the Oracle Database Real Application Cluster (RAC) option. After tests were completed and approved by Oracle, the certification was posted on Oracle RAC Technologies Certification Matrix for UNIX Platforms at http://www.oracle.com/technetwork/database/clustering/tech-generic-unix-new-166583.html

Per Oracle's advice to IBM during regular development meetings, this requirement is no longer in place. Oracle reverted to the traditional model, whereupon the storage hardware vendor is responsible for self testing the disk storage options and features.   With this model, the storage vendor declares which disk storage options and features are supported with a specific combination of operating system and Oracle database level. For example, at the IBM System Storage Interoperation Center (SSIC - http://www-03.ibm.com/systems/support/storage/ssic/interoperability.wss) the IBM System Storage DS8870 is shown as supported with IBM's AIX 7.1, and Oracle Database 11gR2. Oracle will support their customers when using this combination.   .

What does this mean?

If an installation plans to use IBM's Hyperswap with IBM disk storage devices, no specific certification from Oracle is required. This means if a customer encounters a problem with IBM's Hyperswap when running with an Oracle product, they contact IBM for support on this topic. If the problem is related to the Oracle software, the customer can contact Oracle support. This is true for storage options from other hardware vendors as well. Specifically, EMC's VPLEX no longer shows up on the Oracle RAC Technologies Certification Matrix for UNIX Platforms website (see above). This means that if a customer has any issue related with VPLEX, when an Oracle product is running, the customer must contact EMC directly.

Please note that the changes described above do not apply to NAS (network attached storage) devices. For these, Oracle will continue to perform regular certifications.

For further information on this Flash, please e-mail the IBM Oracle International Competency Center at ibmoracle@us.ibm.com with any questions you may have on this topic.

(*) **All statements regarding IBM's future direction and intent are subject to change or withdrawal without notice, and represent goals and objectives only. Oracle can change its policy on this subject at any moment.**