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# Front Office and VMware

Automating server provisioning from your Service Catalog

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## 1.0 Introduction

Biomni Front Office provides comprehensive Service Catalog and Request Fulfillment features enabling IT organisations of any size to present their service offerings in a single intuitive portal with a familiar self-service shopping cart driven request experience.

Approval routing, fulfilment workflow, and performance measurement ensure requests raised via Front Office are correctly approved by the business, efficiently fulfilled, and effectively measured.

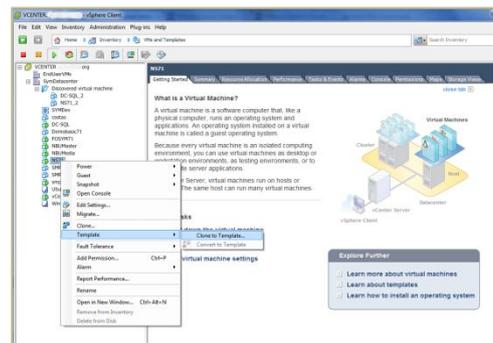
As a member of the VMware Technology Alliance Partner Program, Biomni provides seamless integration to VMware vCenter to enable automated provisioning of virtual machines directly from the Front Office Service Catalog.

## 2.0 How it works

### 2.1 Virtual Machine Templates

VMware vCenter allows for the configuration of virtual machine (VM) templates, most easily created by cloning an existing VM.

Deploying a VM from a template creates a VM that is a copy of the template. The new VM has the virtual hardware, installed software, and other properties that are configured for the template.

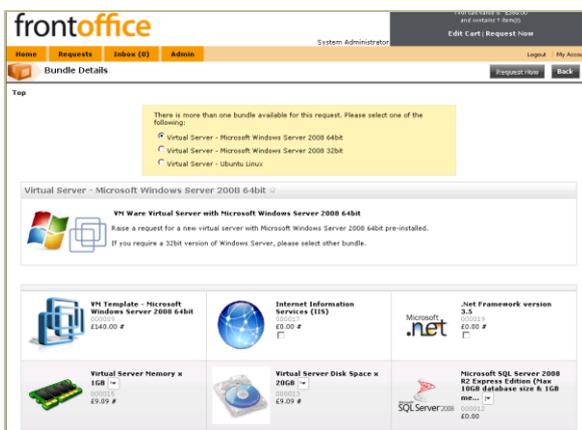


Clone VM to template in vSphere Client

These operations typically need be carried out manually by an experienced agent via the vSphere client console (see diagram).

Front Office now provides an intuitive means by which end users themselves can request and create these VMs.

Existing VM templates are synchronised to the Front Office service catalog in a number of ways depending on customer preference. Most typically they can be incorporated into Front Office bundles. The advantage of this approach is that additional options can be presented to the user such as desired memory, storage, and additional software. Item level pricing can also be displayed. These additional options can be automatically applied to the VM following creation.



Front Office VM bundle

## 2.2 Front Office Configuration

Biomni provide a template service, request and process definition to shortcut many of these steps, but below details what needs to be done from scratch.

- 1) Create the template catalogue items in Front Office, specify price, template ID, and possible an image (an automated import of this data from vCenter can be configured where there are large numbers of templates that need to be made available).
- 2) Create the relevant bundles if you want to allow selection of additional VM options at the same time e.g. Windows Server VM with optional memory and storage; Linux Server VM with optional memory and storage.
- 3) Create a VM request type with a form, optional approval routing and fulfilment workflow
  - a. The fulfilment workflow must include the automation steps to create the VM – again Biomni can provide the templates for these
- 4) Define your service offering, set as actionable, and assign the created request type.
- 5) Publish your service to the Service Catalog – it's now available for user requesting.

## 2.3 Request Process

Below is an overview of a typical VM request process...

- 1) User visits Front Office and authenticates
- 2) Service Catalog presented based on user group memberships
- 3) User browses/searches for VM services
- 4) User selects service and initiates request
- 5) User is typically presented with one or more bundles, each representing a VM configuration type e.g. Windows or Linux
- 6) User selects a bundle and then selects what options are additionally required e.g. memory, storage, additional software
- 7) The user completes the request form, specifying whether the VM is required for a temporary period
- 8) User submits the request for approval
- 9) Front Office routes the request to configured approvers and captures decisions
- 10) The requestor is notified of approval outcome
- 11) Front Office initiates fulfilment workflow, including the execution of the automated VM creation steps (see Front Office Adapter for VMware below)
- 12) The request is updated with details of the VM
- 13) Following successful creation of VM the requestor is notified
- 14) The request is marked as complete

## 2.4 Front Office Adapter for VMware

The VMware adapter allows a fulfillment workflow step to automatically trigger the creation of a VM based on a template and then modify the newly created VM if required. The adapter wraps Windows Powershell scripts using the VMware vSphere Power CLI extensions.

*VMware PowerCLI is a powerful command line tool that lets you automate all aspects of vSphere management, including network, storage, VM, guest OS and more. PowerCLI is distributed as a Windows PowerShell snapin, and includes more than 300 PowerShell cmdlets, along with documentation and samples.*

## 2.5 Front Office for Symantec™

Front Office for Symantec™ makes use of Symantec's powerful Workflow Solution for request fulfillment and is provided ready packaged with a number of sample service, request and workflow processes. One such sample is for VMware. With the extended orchestration features of Workflow solution, this process allows for the optional leasing of VMs by firstly prompting the requestor for a "need through date" and then scheduling activities to remove the VM after the required date has passed. The requestor is firstly asked, via automated email/form to confirm that they don't need the VM anymore.

## 3.0 Prerequisites

Biomni Front Office version 7.1

VMware vCenter version 4.0 or 5.0

VMware PowerCLI version 4.1