



Advanced VMware Monitoring in real life scenario



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Vmware monitoring with Zabbix: Two years of continuous improvements



Zabbix VMWare Integration

- *Agentless integration without need to deploy other software*
- *Based on SOAP API calls*
- *Out of the Box, using the provided VMWare Template*

All templates / VMware Items 3 Triggers Graphs Dashboards Discovery rules 4 Web scenarios

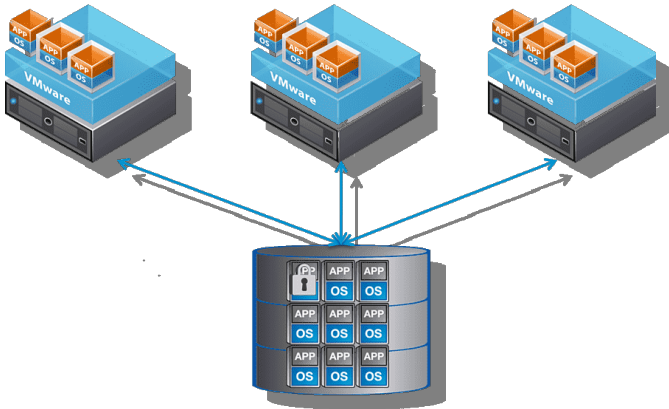
Templates Tags 2 Macros 3 Value mapping 1

Template macros Inherited and template macros

Macro	Value		Description
{VMWARE.PASSWORD}	value	T v	VMware service {USERNAME} user password
{VMWARE.URL}	value	T v	VMware service (vCenter or ESX hypervisor) SDK URL (https://servername/sdk)
{VMWARE.USERNAME}	value	T v	VMware service user name

VMware scenario in a real enterprise company

The simple vision



The reality

- 1 vCenter
- 84 Hypervisors
- 1993 VM grouped in many folders:
 - Hundreds of DB servers
 - Hundreds of application servers
 - Hundreds of Web servers
 - Hundreds of forgotten snapshots
 - ...
- VMs with different VMtools releases
- VMs disabled or switched off
- Simple automation for better VMs mangement

Zabbix up to 5.0 behavior for VMware

- VMware Cluster metrics (vCenter Status, Datastore space, Hypervisor status etc)
- VM Base monitoring (CPU, Memory, Filesystem)

But:

- VM & Hypervisor inherit vCenter IP address
- Most of the configuration options are read-only, except for enabling/disabling the host and host inventory.
- Discovered hosts cannot have host prototypes of their own.

Zabbix 5.0 VM available LLD Macros

{#VM.UUID}	Unique virtual machine identifier.
{#VM.ID}	Virtual machine identifier (VirtualMachine managed object name).
{#VM.NAME}	Virtual machine name.
{#HV.NAME}	Hypervisor name.
{#CLUSTER.NAME}	Cluster name, might be empty.
{#DATACENTER.NAME}	Datacenter name.

→ *Very few Macros are provided during the VM discovery*

VMware Discoveries on Zabbix 5.0

Fixed IP Address for all discovered Hosts

Hosts

												Filter			
☐	Name ▲	Applications	Items	Triggers	Graphs	Discovery	Web	Interface	Proxy	Templates	Status	Availability	Agent encryption	Info	Tags
☐	Discover VMware VMs: ARCA [redacted]	Applications 8	Items 35	Triggers	Graphs	Discovery 3	Web	192.168.148.50:10050		Template VM VMware Guest	Enabled	ZBX SNMP JMX IPMI	NONE		
☐	Discover VMware VMs: ATS [redacted]	Applications 8	Items 39	Triggers	Graphs	Discovery 3	Web	192.168.148.50:10050		Template VM VMware Guest	Enabled	ZBX SNMP JMX IPMI	NONE		
☐	Discover VMware VMs: dc02 [redacted]	Applications 8	Items 39	Triggers	Graphs	Discovery 3	Web	192.168.148.50:10050		Template VM VMware Guest	Enabled	ZBX SNMP JMX IPMI	NONE		
☐	DELL_VRTX_TBM_Uffici	Applications 4	Items 18	Triggers 1	Graphs	Discovery 4	Web	192.168.148.50:10050		Template [redacted] Semplice Ping, Template VM VMware	Enabled	ZBX SNMP JMX IPMI	NONE		
☐	Discover VMware hypervisors: sx1 [redacted]	Applications 6	Items 33	Triggers	Graphs	Discovery 1	Web	192.168.148.50:10050		Template VM VMware Hypervisor	Enabled	ZBX SNMP JMX IPMI	NONE		
☐	Discover VMware hypervisors: sx2 [redacted]	Applications 6	Items 33	Triggers	Graphs	Discovery 1	Web	192.168.148.50:10050		Template VM VMware Hypervisor	Enabled	ZBX SNMP JMX IPMI	NONE		
☐	Discover VMware hypervisors: sx3 [redacted]	Applications 6	Items 33	Triggers	Graphs	Discovery 1	Web	192.168.148.50:10050		Template VM VMware Hypervisor	Enabled	ZBX SNMP JMX IPMI	NONE		
☐	Discover VMware VMs: [redacted] Immobiliare	Applications 8	Items 31	Triggers	Graphs	Discovery 3	Web	192.168.148.50:10050		Template VM VMware Guest	Enabled	ZBX SNMP JMX IPMI	NONE		

vCenter Host

DELL_VRTX_TBM_Uffici

vCenter Host

Discovered host view

All hosts / ARCA Enabled ZBX SNMP JMX IPMI Applications 8 Items 35 Triggers Graphs Discovery rules 3 Web scenarios

Host Templates IPMI Macros Inventory Encryption

Discovered by [Discover VMware VMs](#)

* Host name 50376c79-7e47-cbcd-2531-9c5af696762b

Visible name ARCA

* Groups Virtual machines × Select
VRTX-Cluster1 (vm) ×

Interfaces	Type	IP address	DNS name	Connect to	Port	Default
Agent	192.168.148.50		IP DNS	10050	☒	

Description

Monitored by proxy (no proxy) ▼

Enabled ☒

Most of all
parameters are
locked

Collected data

Latest data



Filter

☐ Host	Name ▲	Last check	Last value	Change	
▼ Server	CPU (3 Items)				
☐	CPU ready	2022-09-01 19:15:19	7 ms	+1 ms	Graph
☐	CPU usage	2022-09-01 19:15:20	21 MHz	-110 MHz	Graph
☐	Number of virtual CPUs	2022-09-01 19:10:18	2		Graph
▼ Server	Disks (4 Items)				
☐	Average number of bytes read from the disk Hard disk 1	2022-09-01 19:14:56	0 Bps		Graph
☐	Average number of bytes written to the disk Hard disk 1	2022-09-01 19:14:57	13 KBps	+1 KBps	Graph
☐	Average number of reads from the disk Hard disk 1	2022-09-01 19:14:56	0		Graph
☐	Average number of writes to the disk Hard disk 1	2022-09-01 19:14:59	0		Graph
▼ Server	Filesystems (8 Items)				
☐	Free disk space on /	2022-09-01 19:14:59	214.85 GB		Graph
☐	Free disk space on / (percentage)	2022-09-01 19:15:01	87.8428 %		Graph
☐	Free disk space on /boot/efi	2022-09-01 19:15:00	504.14 MB		Graph
☐	Free disk space on /boot/efi (percentage)	2022-09-01 19:15:03	98.4672 %		Graph
☐	Total disk space on /	2022-09-01 19:11:03	244.58 GB		Graph
☐	Total disk space on /boot/efi	2022-09-01 19:11:04	511.98 MB		Graph
☐	Used disk space on /	2022-09-01 19:15:05	29.73 GB		Graph
☐	Used disk space on /boot/efi	2022-09-01 19:15:06	7.85 MB		Graph

Collected data

▼	Server 	General (5 Items)				
☐		Cluster name 	2022-09-01 19:10:17	VRTX-Cluster1		History
☐		Datacenter name 	2022-09-01 19:10:21	 -Monaca		History
☐		Hypervisor name 	2022-09-01 19:10:22	esx3. 		History
☐		Power state 	2022-09-01 19:18:36	poweredOn (1)		Graph
☐		Uptime 	2022-09-01 19:18:40	588 days, 23:21:02	+00:01:00	Graph
▼	Server 	Interfaces (4 Items)				
☐		Number of bytes received on interface Network adapter 1	2022-09-01 19:18:51	0 Bps		Graph
☐		Number of bytes transmitted on interface Network adapter 1	2022-09-01 19:18:53	0 Bps		Graph
☐		Number of packets received on interface Network adapter 1	2022-09-01 19:18:52	112	+14	Graph
☐		Number of packets transmitted on interface Network adapter 1	2022-09-01 19:18:54	70	-7	Graph
▼	Server 	Memory (8 Items)				
☐		Ballooned memory 	2022-09-01 19:18:24	0 B		Graph
☐		Compressed memory 	2022-09-01 19:18:25	0 B		Graph
☐		Guest memory usage 	2022-09-01 19:18:29	450 MB	+123 MB	Graph
☐		Host memory usage 	2022-09-01 19:18:30	4.04 GB		Graph
☐		Memory size 	2022-09-01 19:10:23	4 GB		Graph
☐		Private memory 	2022-09-01 19:18:27	4 GB		Graph
☐		Shared memory 	2022-09-01 19:18:27	0 B		Graph
☐		Swapped memory 	2022-09-01 19:18:28	0 B		Graph
▼	Server 	Storage (3 Items)				
☐		Committed storage space 	2022-09-01 19:18:37	254.12 GB		Graph
☐		Uncommitted storage space 	2022-09-01 19:18:38	595 B		Graph
☐		Unshared storage space 	2022-09-01 19:18:39	250 GB		Graph

Zabbix 5.2 and 5.4 Enhancements

Two important enhancements:

- Discovered VMs VMWare with a dedicated network interface (<https://support.zabbix.com/browse/ZBXNEXT-6269>) – **introduced for Zabbix 5.2.2**
- Zabbix template VMWare FQDN (<https://support.zabbix.com/browse/ZBXNEXT-6272> and <https://support.zabbix.com/browse/ZBXNEXT-2088>) – **introduced for Zabbix 5.4**

Solved Issues:

- We can directly monitor Hypervisor using a simple ping
- We can add Zabbix agent monitoring to a discovered VM
- No more “two” hosts for same VM (one discovered by VMWare integration for VMWare metrics, one for Zabbix Agent metrics)

Warning

- If the guest OS hostname is not accessible, than the VM will not be discovered. Powered off VMs or VMs without vmtools installed will not be discovered, because host FQDN name is absent/unavailable.



New possibilities but still some problems

- **No more duplicated hosts for VM** (using Zabbix Agent Active)
- **It's now possible link a specific template** based on VM Operating System, using *Override rules* during the HostPrototype creation

But...

- **No easy way to associate a specific template** according to VM role and installed services (i.e. application monitoring).

Possible workaround for specific application monitoring

Using an LLD Javascript Preprocessing Step to change VMware VM discovery to extend the information of "Host Specialization" using the Zabbix Inventory Field...

Tricky solution with huge performance penalty and Timeout limitation during the PreProc Steps...

Ugly Workaround...

- 1) Discover VMs using standard FQDN template
- 2) Change “software” field in the VM inventory
- 3) Modify preprocessor Javascript in the VM discovery
- 4) Add Override rule in order to associate a template related to “software” field in the inventory

Populate inventory "software" field

Host

Host IPMI Tags Macros 4 Inventory Encryption

MAC address A

MAC address B

Hardware

Hardware (Full details)

Software FLEET

Software (Full details)

Preprocessing script real example (relevant part)

```
// look for requested template in inventory software field
var w = disc_array.length;
while (w--) {
    disc_array[w]["{#INV.SOFTWARE}"] = "";
    for (var t in hdata_array) {
        if (disc_array[w]["{#VM.DNS}"] == hdata_array[t]["host"]) {
            disc_array[w]["{#INV.SOFTWARE}"] = hdata_array[t]["inventory"].software;
        }
    }
}

var output = JSON.stringify(disc_array);
Zabbix.Log(1, output);
Zabbix.Log(1, 'END preproc: OK');
```

Discovery overrides

Override

* Name

FLEET

If filter matches

Continue overrides

Stop processing

Filters

Label

Macro

Regular expression

A

{#INV.SOFTWARE}

matches

▼

FLEET

Add

.....

Edit operation

Object

Host prototype

▼

Condition

matches

▼

.*

Create enabled

☐

Original

Discover

☐

Original

Link templates

☒

FLEET

×

type here to search

Select

Tags

☐

Original

Host inventory

☐

Original

Overrides	Name	Stop processing
⋮	1: Esclusione "Dabutt", "template", "clone", "old", "tmp", ecc	Yes
⋮	2: ETCD	No
⋮	3: POSTGRES	No
⋮	4: ZBXCLU	No
⋮	5: EXCHANGE	No
⋮	6: DHCP - Windows	No
⋮	7:	No
⋮	8: Dollar Universe	No
⋮	9: Genesys	No
⋮	10: FLEET	No
⋮	11: PMS2-PROD	No
⋮	12: OS Linux	Yes
⋮	13: OS Windows - WIN2003	Yes
⋮	14: OS Windows	Yes

VM with a new associated template

Host

Host

IPMI

Tags

Macros 4

Inventory

Encryption

Discovered by

Discover VMware VMs FQDN

* Host name

master.local

Visible name

Templates ?

Name	Action
FLEET (linked by host discovery)	
- ICMP Ping (linked by host discovery)	
- Linux by Zabbix agent active (linked by host discovery)	
- VMware Guest (linked by host discovery)	

type here to search

Select

* Host groups

Templates/Applications x

VMWARE/Cluster VMLinux (vm) x

VMWARE/MasterDC/Fleet/Prod (vm) x

VMWARE/master.local x

Select

Interfaces

Type	IP address	DNS name	Connect to	Port
Agent		master.local	IP DNS	10050



Zabbix 6.2 enhancements

Added support for :

- Host Prototype add custom tags -> **ZBXNEXT-7591**
- Host Prototype add/change custom Macros -> **ZBXNEXT-5517**
- Host Prototype add custom Templates -> **ZBXNEXT-7523**
- VMware tags for HV, VM, DS, CL and DC -> **ZBXNEXT-5229**
Warning: only VMware >= 7.0.2 is supported (on Zabbix 6.2.2)
- vmware.dvswitch.discovery and vmware.dvswitch.fetchports.get -> **ZBXNEXT-7029**
- VMware snapshot information (discovery & item) -> **ZBXNEXT-2043**
- VMware vmtools status (discovery & item) -> **ZBXNEXT-2302**

VM discovery LLD Macros in Zabbix 6.2

- `{#VM.UUID}` Unique virtual machine identifier.
- `{#VM.ID}` Virtual machine identifier (VirtualMachine managed object name).
- `{#VM.NAME}` Virtual machine name.
- `{#HV.NAME}` Hypervisor name.
- `{#HV.UUID}` Unique hypervisor identifier.
- `{#HV.ID}` Hypervisor identifier (HostSystem managed object name).
- `{#CLUSTER.NAME}` Cluster name, might be empty.
- `{#DATACENTER.NAME}` Datacenter name.
- `{#DATASTORE.NAME}` Datastore name.
- `{#DATASTORE.UUID}` Datastore identifier.
- `{#VM.IP}` Virtual machine IP address, might be empty.
- `{#VM.DNS}` Virtual machine DNS name, might be empty.
- `{#VM.GUESTFAMILY}` Guest virtual machine OS family, might be empty.

- `{#VM.GUESTFAMILY}` Guest virtual machine OS family, might be empty.
 - `{#VM.GUESTFULLNAME}` Full guest virtual machine OS name, might be empty.
 - `{#VM.FOLDER}` The chain of virtual machine parent folders, can be used as value for nested groups; folder names are combined with "/". Might be empty.
 - **`{#VM.TOOLS.STATUS}`** VMware virtual machine tools state.
 - `{#VM.POWERSTATE}` VMware virtual machine power state (poweredOff, poweredOn, or suspended).
 - `{#VM.RPOOL.ID}` Resource pool identifier.
 - `{#VM.RPOOL.PATH}` Full resource pool path excluding the "root" name "Resources". Folder names are combined with "/".
 - **`{#VM.SNAPSHOT.COUNT}`** Number of VM snapshots.
- "tags" An array containing tags with tag name, description and category:
- **`[{"tag": "tag name", "tag_description": "tag description", "category": "tag category"}]`**
 - `vm.customattribute = [{}]` An array of virtual machine custom attributes (if defined):
 - `[{"name": "custom field name", "value": "custom field value"}]`

Zabbix 6.2 VMware host prototype

Host

Host IPMI Tags Macros 7 Inventory Encryption

Discovered by VM

* Host name []_VBR

FQDN Hostname based on VMTools

Visible name farcon_VBR

Templates ? Name Action

VMware Guest - [] (linked by host discovery)

Windows vm checks (linked by host discovery)

HTTP x
type here to search

Select

Assign Template after Host creation

* Host groups

[] Type/Virtual Machine x

Select

Interfaces

Type IP address

DNS name

Connect to

Port

Default

Agent 172.16.10.4

IP

DNS

10050

☐

Dedicated Interface per VM

Description

Monitored by proxy

[]_proxy v

Enabled ☒



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Zabbix 6.2 VMware host prototype

Host

Host IPMI Tags **Macros 7** Inventory Encryption

Host macros Inherited and host macros

Macro	Value		Description	
{CUSTOMER.GRP}		T	Customer name for hostgroup and hostname prefix	Change Remove (created by host discovery)
{CUSTOMER.ID}	3870	T	ID	Change Remove (created by host discovery)
{VMWARE.PASSWORD}		T	VMware service {USERNAME} user password	Change Remove (created by host discovery)
{VMWARE.URL}	https://172.16.10.10/sdk	T	VMware service (vCenter or ESX hypervisor) SDK URL (https://servername/sdk)	Change Remove (created by host discovery)
{VMWARE.USERNAME}	isrc	T		Change Remove (created by host discovery)
{VMWARE.VM.NAME.EXCLUDED}	SynetoOS SynetoFileRecovery	T		

Change inherited Macro per VM

{VMWARE.VM.UUID}	564d0617-8446-6666-4506-036c03a7fb1c	T	UUID of guest virtual machine.	Revert Remove (created by host discovery)
------------------	--------------------------------------	---	--------------------------------	---

{MACRO}	value	T	description	Remove
---------	-------	---	-------------	------------------------

[Add](#)

Add new Custom Macro per VM

We achieved some good goals!

- Template linking Automation based on VMWare Tags/Custom attribute for VMs monitoring
- We can change some specific details of an HostPrototype (aka custom macros, template etc)
- No more Dual Hosts for a single VM
- Extended VMWare metrics
 - Snapshot [size/number] → Check old Snapshot or Snapshot size
 - VMTools [version/presence] → Check the version to prevent weird monitoring data collection
- More pre-built LLD Macros on VMWare Discoveries (granular control of discovered objects)
- Better VMWare components (VMs,Hypervisors) organization using Folder/Resource Pool



Final question: Can we monitor an Enterprise grade VMWare installation easily and with needed detail level?

Yes, we can! Using Zabbix :-)

VMWare Snapshot details

Snapshot items "Grand Total per VM"

☐ Host	Name ▲	Last check	Last value	Change	Tags
☐ [redacted]_Backup 🚀	VMware: Snapshots Count ?	15m 26s	1		component: snapshot
☐ [redacted]_Backup 🚀	VMware: Snapshots get ?	15m 26s	{"snapshot":[{"name"...		component: raw
☐ [redacted]_Backup 🚀	VMware: Snapshots Last execution date ?	15m 26s	2021-11-23T08:39:3...		component: snapshot
☐ [redacted]_Backup 🚀	VMware: Snapshots Total Size ?	15m 26s	60.56 GB		component: snapshot
☐ [redacted]_Backup 🚀	VMware: Snapshots Total Uniquesize ?	15m 26s	60.56 GB		component: snapshot

```
{
  "snapshot": [
    {
      "name": "MyHost-VM-Snapshot",
      "description": "",
      "createtime": "2020-12-31T19:10:52.897813Z",
      "size": 44970372562,
      "uniquesize": 44970372562
    }
  ],
  "count": 1,
  "latestdate": "2020-12-31T19:10:52.897813Z",
  "size": 44970372562,
  "uniquesize": 44970372562
}
```

JSON output of "vmware.vm.snapshot.get"

You can use it for a *Snapshot Discovery*!

VMWare Tags for Automation

VMWare Tag/Custom Attribute used to automate the Template association

All templates / BCOM - VMware FQDN

Discovery list / Discover VMware VMs FQDN

Item prototypes

Trigger prototypes

Graph prototypes

Host prototypes 1

Discovery rule

Preprocessing 3

LLD macros 3

Filters 2

Overrides 2

LLD macros

LLD macro

{#VM.CA.MONITORING.DEPARTMENT}

\$.vmcustomattribute[?(@.name == "monitoring-department")].value.first()

Remove

{#VM.CA.MONITORING.ZBXAGENT}

\$.vmcustomattribute[?(@.name == "monitoring-zbxagent")].value.first()

Remove

{#VM.TAG.CATEGORY.MONITORING}

\$.tags[?(@.category == "Monitoring")].name.first()

Remove

Override

* Name

OS WINDOWS

If filter matches

Continue overrides

Stop processing

Filters

Type of calculation

And/Or

A and B

Label

Macro

Regular expression

A

{#VM.CA.MONITORING.ZBXAGENT}

matches

yes

B

{#VM.GUESTFAMILY}

matches

windowsGuest

Add

Operations

Condition

Host prototype matches . *

Add

Edit operation

Object

Host prototype

Condition

matches

.*

Create enabled

Original

Discover

Original

Link templates

BCOM - Windows by Zabbix agent active

type here to search

Tags

Original

Host inventory

Original

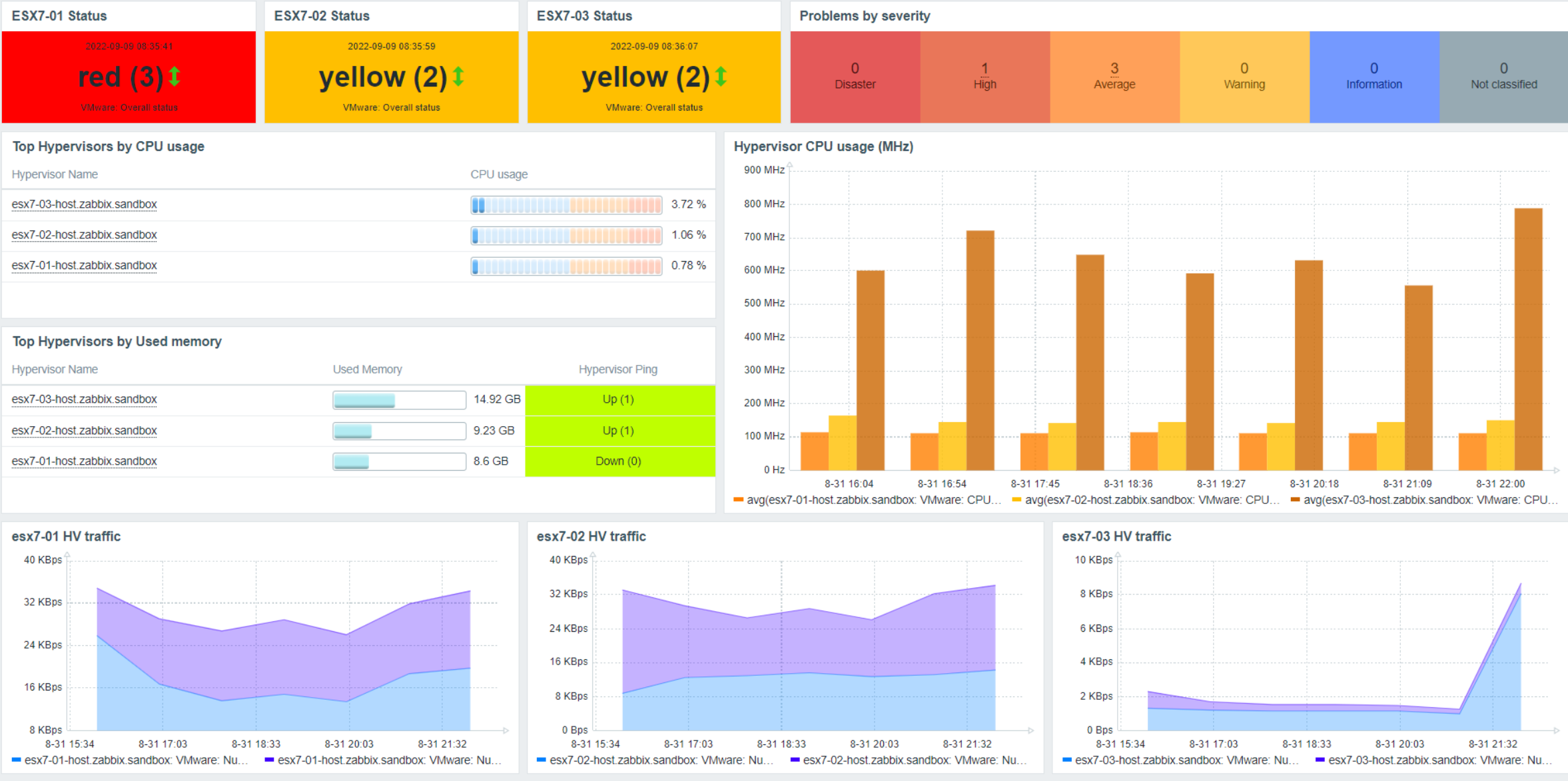
More nice and complete VMWare Dashboard

VMware Hypervisor state

[?](#) [Edit dashboard](#) [≡](#) [⛶](#)

[All dashboards](#) / [VMware Hypervisor state](#)

[◀](#) Zoom out [▶](#) 2022-08-31 15:31:29 – 2022-08-31 22:27:50 [🕒](#)



More nice and complete VMWare Dashboard

Guest VM status

?

Edit dashboard

All dashboards / Guest VM status

< Zoom out > 2022-08-31 15:30:13 – 2022-08-31 22:24:01

PROD Node Guest VM memory usage

Guest VM name	Memory usage	CPU usage in percent
vCenter	2.52 GB	8.32 %
vSAN-Witness	245 MB	2.16 %
vCLS-a3b73ff6-5d23-4867-8d97-69f75f987d93	20 MB	0.08 %
vCLS-a96e64cc-6c96-499b-a04b-d513b7361c29	20 MB	0.11 %
Debian 2	10 MB	0.09 %
Debian	10 MB	0.14 %

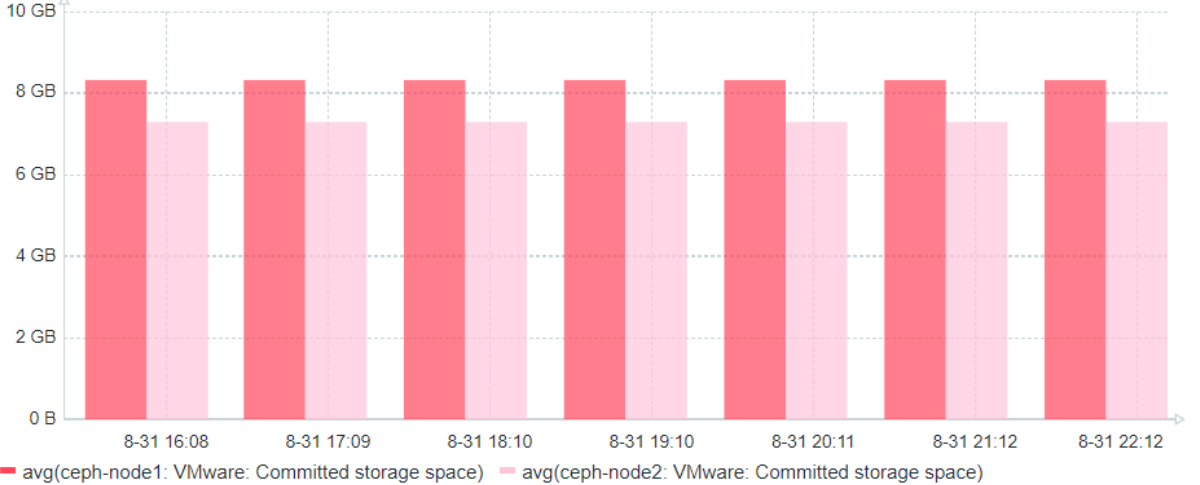
Problem hosts

Host group ▲	Without problems	With problems	Total
esx7-02-host.zabbix.sandbox	4		4
esx7-03-host.zabbix.sandbox	2		2

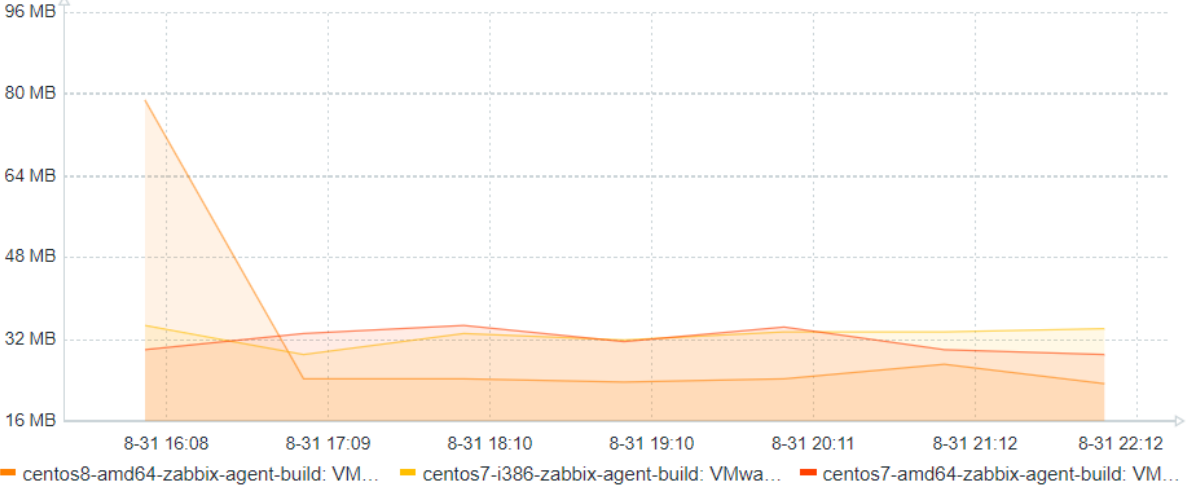
Problems by severity



Ceph node committed storage



CentOS Build node memory usage



Future interesting enhancements

- **Ability to show LLD rule output** → ZBXNEXT-6812 (Show output generated by a discovery)
- **Creating vmware.hv.sensor.health.state via lld discovery** → ZBX-20564 (Template VMWare broken since VMWare version 6.5)

Special thanks

- **Zabbix SIA** for new Zabbix functionalities
- **Michael Veksler** for supporting VMWare development



Angelo Porta
Architect, Quadrata Service Group, Italy
Slide writing and daily suggestions :-)

Thank you!



www.quadrata-group.com



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