

## The Mercedes and the Yugo

A Mercedes and a Yugo perform the same basic function but few would argue that they are equally reliable. Yet for some reason it is assumed that, because distributed servers from different vendors perform the same basic function, their reliability is the same. We have measured the reliability rates for these servers and they clearly show that the difference between the best and worst server is significant.

There was a time when the reliability of servers was probably not critical. If it worked you used it, if it stopped working you either fixed it or replaced it. Each server did one discrete job and if the server failed and it took an hour or so to fix, no big deal. However, it started to become a big deal when IT organizations found themselves with thousands of servers and discovered that the impact of those failing servers on the stability of the corporate computing system was approximately a hundred times greater than the impact of the hardware failures of mainframes, on-line storage devices and telecommunication devices combined.

Now we enter the era of virtualization, and the one thing that is certain is that whatever the impact of a failing server running one discrete job, a failing server running ten discrete jobs will have a much larger impact. And in a few years if those ten jobs increase to twenty jobs, then the impact of that server failing will clearly be more damaging.

And at some point, very early in this virtualizing process, IT organizations will want to eliminate their servers that have the reliability characteristics of a Yugo and install the server version of a Mercedes. But unlike the cost difference between a Yugo and a Mercedes, those IT organizations will find that the cost difference between the most and least reliable server is modest.

But here is the problem, when you look at a Yugo and a Mercedes it is easy to identify the one you want. But just looking at the different servers is not going to tell you which of them is the more reliable...for that you need access to the availability measurements that only are available by subscribing to R+2.

