

Toronto VMUG February 6th Full Day Event

Recap

☒ What a week it has been! My task list grew massively, but it was because I created my own workload. The reason why: Toronto VMUG inspired me once again!

On February 6th the Toronto VMUG hosted a full day event at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre here in Toronto. It was a great event and we had a mighty good crowd out for it. This time around I was able to connect with some amazing people and really got some great value from the technology, process and social sides of the event.

Pre-Event Tweet-up

One of the things that I really enjoy about the VMUG community is that we have some amazing people involved, and it is not only a learning experience but a great social atmosphere. I met up with Angelo Luciani (Toronto VMUG leader) and we were able to enjoy a nice dinner with Donna Brown from Nimbus Data (@DataDonna) before we all met up with Paul Valentino (@Sysxperts) who many of you will know from the [vCommunity Trust](#).

It was a good time for all and I hope that this trend can continue to bring out great folks before and after to get some good social catch up time before and after the events. We don't often get a chance to enjoy vBeers but I have a feeling we will grow that trend ☐

Event Day

This year had some exciting features including a VMUG event iOS app (presented by HP Autonomy and powered by [CrowdCompass](#)) and after many requests from the last event, we had WiFi for the attendees which was a great add-on.

The crowds were great and from what I had heard we had around 500 attendees confirmed for the event. A testament to the growing community in the Toronto area and how VMUG is continuing to bring great value to our members.

Keynote with Nick Weaver

☒ Our keynote was the much sought after Nick Weaver (@lynxbat) who is an Automation Architect at VMware. Nick's blog [Nickapedia.com](#) is a haven for anyone who is keen on automation and his work with Puppet and Razor have made for some real excitement in the virtualization and IT community.

Nick's presentation titled "Automation Generation" was a great introduction to many for the advances that have been made to date on automation, the increased adoption of the DevOps methodologies and the upcoming changes to virtualization platforms with SDDC (Software Defined Data Center) and SDN (Software Defined Networking).

Puppet and Razor were the stars of the presentation, and for anyone who hasn't already take a look at these technologies, you should get started today! Even if it isn't going to be an immediate part of your platform, this is a directional shift in how virtualized environments are going to be built and managed.

There is only one way to describe the great work and content that Nick brought to us and that is “mind = blown”.



Breakout Presentations

There were some great breakout presentations from VMware and numerous vendors which talked about automation, cloud deployment, operations management, security and performance. The sessions were run in sets of four in multiple time slots so there was lots of choice for the attendees to get a taste of many different tools and techniques.

I managed to sit in for a few sessions while networking with some great folks including Mike Preston (@mwpreston - www.mwpreston.net) who is another of the great blogger community who brings great knowledge and sharing to the VMUG community. I managed to meet up with more folks who tracked me down for some Veeam USB goodies and t-shirts so I was really pleased to be able to help out with spreading the Virtualization Lover goodness to more community members.

Vendor Booths

There was a wide selection of vendors at the event with everything from hardware to software, VARs and consultants plus the ever popular Symantec caricaturist who always draws a big crowd.

I visited a number of folks at the event including my sponsors at Veeam Software, plus a new introduction to the team at Zerto who I'll be doing some lab work with soon on their product suite.

Paul Valentino was on hand at the Acronis booth and beyond being a great community advocate, notable blogger and all around cool guy, he was bringing a good crowd to the Acronis table to get some great exposure for their products.

A first timer to the Toronto VMUG was [Nimbus Data](#) represented by @DataDonna who was presenting the Nimbus all-flash storage systems. The products look really cool and I hope to get a chance to gather some more information with them between now and VMworld. The all-flash designs are quickly gaining popularity, and with good reason. This looks like a really cool product line.

My only regret was that I didn't have a full day to commit as I had to leave at 3:30 for an evening appointment. Luckily I maximized my time with lots of people and brought some great knowledge and ideas out of the day.

More VMUG Goodness to come in 2013!

It's going to be another great year in the VMUG community, so stay tuned to the Toronto VMUG website <https://tovmug.com> and if you aren't already a member of this awesome community, visit www.vmug.com and get started!

Big thanks go out as always to Angelo (@AngeloLuciani) for his tireless work to support and grow our community. Thanks also to Frannie and Kendra from the VMUG offices in Chicago for their support and efforts to make this a smooth event and for always going above and beyond to ensure that VMUG stands out in the technology community.