



**VMBACKUP**  
Hyper-V | VMware

# Altaro VM Backup vs. BackupAssist

Product comparison

# Altaro VM Backup 6 vs. BackupAssist 9.1

BackupAssist provides a low cost backup solution that works, but is hindered by a complex configuration and licensing process that requires existing knowledge of Hyper-V and underlying Windows Server Technology.

## Executive Summary

- Low Tier Pricing for BackupAssist is price competitive. However, the price climbs quickly and licensing gets quite complex as soon as you bring in all the add-on products and features. BackupAssist will claim this is a strength. It isn't, as it makes pricing and licensing difficult to impossible without the assistance of their sales staff.
- Product is not designed for VMware environments and quickly becomes very expensive to license in those use cases as VMware VMs are treated the same as physical devices in that they require a base license of the product.
- BackupAssist consists of two disparate management UIs. Entry level tools are difficult to use and provide nearly zero guidance on configuring the product, while higher tier management tools greatly add to the licensing cost. This by itself will make it difficult and expensive for SMBs to use, especially when being managed by non-technical staff.

## BackupAssist Weaknesses against Altaro VM Backup

- **Not an efficient backup solution for VMware based workloads:** Unlike their support for Hyper-V, BackupAssist does not utilize the baked in APIs that VMware provides to facilitate backups at the host level. The backup application must be installed on and licensed for each VMware based virtual machine that is present in the environment. This not only increases cost, but management requirements as well as backup jobs have to be managed on each source VM if BackupAssist's MultiSite Manager application is not present, which requires additional licensing and cost.
- **Licensing model is confusing:** BackupAssist likes to market that they use the licensing model they use to allow businesses to only purchase the functionality they need. While this is true, trying to determine what licenses you need for your environment can be very difficult to determine without assistance from their sales team. A base license is required for each source machine needed backup protection, including VMware VMs. However with Hyper-V, you need a base license for each host, and the Hyper-V add-on license. Additionally, further add-on licenses are needed if you want granular restores for exchange and SQL, offsite backups, tape support, and simplified management. Each add-on with the exception of the Hyper-V add-on is purchased on a "per domain" level, which is NOT documented on their website in any way/shape/form.
- **Difficult to configure:** While Altaro VM Backup is very easy to use, and guides the user through the initial setup tasks, BackupAssist can be very difficult to configure, especially if you are unaware of some of the industry terminology, and underlying Windows Server technologies. No guidance is provided in the UI, there is no consistency in the labeling of certain items and/or error messages, and the installation and configuration process for configuring backups for Hyper-V VMs is vastly different than VMware VMs and physical devices. BackupAssist's MultiSite Manager Product claims to fix this, but it adds a lot of



additional cost for more add-on licensing and requiring annual upgrade protection fees on top of that.

- **Additional Applications Needed:** BackupAssist will claim a small installation footprint, and at 140MB, their application is small, but their interface will prompt the user to install additional underlying Windows Server roles and features based on the task at hand, such as Bitlocker and/or Windows Backup Services. This can become confusing and troublesome for users with a modest skill level and increases the needs of the system to provide the same functionality that Altaro VM Backup does from one application.

### BackupAssist 9.1 Strengths over Altaro VM Backup

- **Better Support for SQL:** Like Altaro VM Backup, BackupAssist is only able to restore entire databases and not specific tables. However, BackupAssist is able to do backups of the transaction logs every 5 minutes which makes their SQL backups more efficient as they don't have to back up the entire VM that often.
- **Multi-Tenant Management:** While it comes with a hefty price tag, BackupAssist does have multi-site and multi-tenant management capabilities with their MultiSite Manager product.
- **Ability to Archive to Tape:** Even though tape is not widely used anymore, there are several organizations that still REQUIRE the use of tape due to organizational stipulations. BackupAssist is able to do this.

### Feature comparison

	<b>Altaro VM Backup 6</b>	<b>BackupAssist 9.1</b>
Size of install files	<b>183MB</b> Main installer.	<b>140MB</b> Main Installer – Does not include MultiSite Manager
Time to Install	<b>Less than 5 minutes</b> If the .Net Framework is already installed.	<b>Less than 5 minutes</b>
Time to first backup	<b>Less than 5 minutes</b> Depends mainly on the speed in which the operator can configure a backup target.	<b>30 Minutes or more</b> after installation is a reasonable estimate as the UI is not labeled well, is confusing, and provides little guidance.
Major Requirements	<b>Hyper-V: No separate system necessary.</b> The entire product can be installed on a Hyper-V host.  <b>VMware:</b> The management console can be installed on any compatible Windows system,	<b>Hyper-V: No separate system necessary.</b> The entire product can be installed on a Hyper-V host.  <b>VMware:</b> For VMware VMs the application has to be installed

	including a desktop operating system. Does not need to be a dedicated environment.	manually on each individual VM. Increasing the time of implementation.
Ease of use	<b>Very simple to use</b> A novice user should be able to perform both backups and restores without much effort.	<b>Moderately difficult to use.</b> Settings are not well-explained and error messages are cryptic and generally unhelpful.
Admin maintenance required	<b>Minimal</b>	<b>Minimal to moderate;</b> if all is well, should require minimal intervention. Problems could take time to sort out.
Cost of ownership	<b>Low</b> Maximum \$585 per host.	<b>Moderate</b> Very basic functionality provided at low cost.  <b>Basic VM/File Protection: \$528 per host</b>  <b>For full featured protection/management with all add-ons and premium support, cost comes out to \$1,567 for a single Hyper-V host. (1 yr Priority Support Included.)</b>
Price for 1 virtualization host (2 sockets)	<b>\$395 - \$585</b> (Standard / Unlimited Edition, incl. 1 year SMA*)	<b>\$1,567 (All Capabilities)</b>  1 yr Priority Support Included
Price for 5 virtualization hosts (2 sockets per server)	<b>\$1,975 - \$2,925</b> (Standard / Unlimited Edition, incl. 1 year SMA)	<b>\$4,335 (All Capabilities)</b>  1 yr Priority Support Included
Pricing structure	<b>Straightforward</b> Priced per host.	<b>Complicated.</b> Several different add on licenses for different features and management capabilities.
Maintenance and Support cost	<b>25% Of initial license fee</b> First year included with initial license purchase.	<b>\$164 per Hyper-V Host, Physical Box, and VMware VM, Per Year</b>  Included in Prices Shown Above
Quality of Support	<b>99% client satisfaction</b> 56s avg response time – phone	<b>Support reviews are mixed.</b> Some people have had good experiences, others have had open



	95m avg response time – email 76s avg response time – live chat	issues for months at a time with no resolution.
Fit for SMB organizations (1-50 hosts)	<b>Perfect fit</b> Altaro provides a product with a feature set and pricing model that fits well with SMB needs and budgets.	<b>Too complicated and expensive.</b>
CSV-aware / Support for vCenter		
Agentless		 (for Hyper-V VMs)
Offsite replication w/ WAN Acceleration		
Start VM Directly from Backup		
Live Backups of Windows VMs		
Live Backups of non-Windows VMs		
Hyper-V and VMware Support		 Not via the VMware APIs
Tape Support		

\* SMA = Software Maintenance Agreement that covers software updates and Technical Support.