



**VMBACKUP**  
Hyper-V | VMware

# Altaro VM Backup vs. Dell AppAssure

## Product comparison

# Comparison of Altaro VM Backup vs. Dell AppAssure 5.4

While Dell AppAssure Provides decent agent based backup protection with some advanced features, the price and complexity make it a product that only enterprises with dedicated IT resources will install and use.

## Executive Summary

- AppAssure is an enterprise grade backup application with some nice features, but those features come at a price. Most SMBs and medium sized businesses will simply not have the budget to afford this application. **It carries a hefty price tag.**
- **Extra Features add great value in the support for SQL and virtual stand by VMs, but they require a specific skillset to leverage properly.** Most small in house IT teams will have to train up to use the product, which will increase the time for implementation.
- **Lack of support for some of the new virtualization and storage technologies** will make it difficult to use for those organizations that are running the newest technologies. AppAssure seems to lag behind somewhat in adopting new features, thus people needed support for newer installs will find it lacking.

## AppAssure 5.4 Weaknesses against Altaro VM Backup

- **Expensive:** Being owned and developed by an enterprise targeting company apparently also requires enterprise sized prices. **AppAssure is more than double the cost of Altaro VM Backup** when priced out for a single 2 CPU VMware ESXi host and more than 4 times the cost of Altaro VM Backup when priced out for a single Hyper-V host. Most small and medium sized businesses simply aren't going to be able to afford this.
- **Complex Architecture:** AppAssure comes in a number of different formats, including a physical appliance based installation. However, if you want to utilize your own infrastructure and go with a virtual appliance instead, you're looking at a complicated installation and configuration process. The download page for AppAssure has 5+ different downloads on it depending on the type of workloads that need to be protected. This makes it more likely a customer is going to need to have someone with the proper skill set in design, installation, and management to use this solution effectively. Additionally, AppAssure cannot be installed on Windows Server Core, which will rule out installation on a large number of Hyper-V Hosts. A full GUI is required for Installation.
- **Agent Based:** Most servers (With the exception of VMware hosts) will require the installation of an agent. So, not only does the appliance itself need to be installed, agents need to be installed manually, or pushed from the console with a problematic bulk installation utility that did not work during our POC. This is especially bothersome for customer's with large numbers of endpoints to protect. It takes more time to install and manage, and it's one more link in the chain to troubleshoot when things are not working correctly.
- **Lack of support for most current Virtualization and Storage Technologies:** AppAssure does not support Cluster Shared Volumes in Hyper-V on any OS newer than 2008 R2. This will be a



problematic issue for anyone running the latest generation of Hyper-V infrastructure. Additionally, ESXi 6.x is not on the supported OS list as of the time of this writing.

















### AppAssure 5.4 Strengths over Altaro VM Backup

- **SQL Data Object Level Restores:** AppAssure has the ability to do object level restores into a SQL Database. This makes sense for Dell, and AppAssure is targeted at the enterprise and that is a required feature for most businesses of that size. This ability gives AppAssure an edge over Altaro VM Backup in SQL Support.
- **Restore to Dissimilar Hardware:** AppAssure contains a technology called Universal Recovery Capability, which allows AppAssure to restore to completely different hardware. As Altaro VM focuses on virtualized environments, this has not been a focused need. Therefore, businesses that may require this feature would likely lean towards AppAssure in this instance.
- **Virtual Standby VMs:** AppAssure has a feature that comes quite close to workload fault tolerance. The feature is Virtual Standby VM and it has the ability to send a copy of all disk writes to a virtual machine that is in a standby mode. Thus, when a disaster event occurs, the workload can quickly be failed over to this virtual machine, and then back again once the production workload is back online. While not a feature most SMBs would utilize it is useful in environments that require a high level of redundancy.

### Feature comparison

	Altaro VM Backup 6	Dell AppAssure 5.4
Size of install files	<b>183MB</b> Main installer.	<b>1.1GB</b> Main Installer – Does not include add-ons
Time to Install	<b>Less than 5 minutes</b> If the .Net Framework is already installed.	<b>30 minutes or more</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>15 Minutes or more</b> after installation is a reasonable estimate as the product is agent based.
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>Dedicated Resources Recommended:</b> This could either be a physical appliance or it could be a dedicated virtual machine running the AppAssure application.

	including a desktop operating system. Does not need to be a dedicated environment.	
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> The UI is easy to navigate, but some of the controls can be buggy from time to time, making it difficult for novice users to navigate the system.
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>Very High</b> Enterprise target product comes with the associated price tag.  <b>SQL Physical Server:</b> \$1,799 <b>Exchange Physical Server:</b> \$2,499 <b>Windows Physical Server:</b> \$1,199 <b>VMware Host (per CPU):</b> \$1,199 <b>Hyper-V Host:</b> \$2,499  <b>Physical Appliance Pricing:</b> Requires a quote from Dell
Price for 1 virtualization host (2 sockets)	<b>\$395 - \$585</b> (Standard / Unlimited Edition, incl. 1 year SMA*)	<b>\$2,400 - \$2,500</b> depending on Hypervisor. (Support not included)
Price for 5 virtualization hosts (2 sockets per server)	<b>\$1,975 - \$2,925</b> (Standard / Unlimited Edition, incl. 1 year SMA)	<b>\$12,000 - \$12,500</b> depending on Hypervisor. (Support not included)
Pricing structure	<b>Straightforward</b> Priced per host.	<b>Complicated</b> Different prices based on the target workloads to protect. (See Above)
Maintenance and Support cost	<b>25% Of initial license fee</b> First year included with initial license purchase.	<b>25% Of initial license fee</b>
Quality of Support	<b>99% client satisfaction</b> 56s avg response time – phone 95m avg response time – email 76s avg response time – live chat	<b>Support for AppAssure seems to be generally well liked</b> Support reviews are generally positive additionally Dell provides free

		community related support via their community forums that seem to be widely popular.
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		 (Not CSV Capable with Server 2012/2012 R2)
Agentless		 (for Hyper-V virtual machines)
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		 (For VMware VMs, Hyper-V VMs require an agent)
Tape Support		 (via a third part integration)

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