

Better Technologists

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Better Technologist, Powered by VMUG: Here's What We Covered at the September Town Hall

If you joined us for our special edition Town Hall on September 15th, thank you — with 230+ of you live from six continents (shoutout to Korea for staying up late and Germany, Austria, Italy, and the UK for tuning in from across the pond), it was one of our best-attended sessions yet. If you missed it, you can watch the [full recording here](#), and here's what you need to know.

Why We're Making This Announcement Now

We've been doing this for over 10 years, across 150,000+ members and 300+ annual meetings worldwide, and it's you, the VMUG community, that tells us where to point VMUG next. Lately, you've been telling us the same thing in different ways: the industry is moving faster than ever, and navigating it is genuinely hard.

Here's the stat that stopped us in our tracks: **68% of members report spending 20+ hours a week on technologies alongside VMware**, not competing hypervisors, but the modern apps, AI workloads, data center builds, and adjacent infrastructure decisions that sit on top of or around your VCF platform. VCF itself is stable, but your job has expanded well past it.

We asked you to rank your biggest challenges, and the results were clear:

- **AI adoption** — the runaway number one. As one member put it during the session, it feels like building the plane while flying it.
- **Security** — still top of mind, and increasingly inseparable from AI. Shadow AI, proprietary data ending up in public tools, and questions about what's actually training on your IP are now security conversations, not just IT conversations.
- **Cost optimization** — driven by everything from subscription pricing models to memory prices to 90-day equipment lead times.

Introducing Better Technologist, Powered by VMUG

That's the gap this campaign is built to close. Three things won't change:

1. **VCF content is here to stay.** VMUG is, and remains, the VMware User Group. Every Connect, virtual event, and webinar will keep delivering VCF content.
2. **We're not becoming a multi-hypervisor community.** If you're evaluating other platforms, that's your call, but when you come to VMUG, we're talking VCF.

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3. **We're covering everything adjacent to your role, deliberately.** Data center build-outs, power and cooling, networking silos, AI infrastructure, cost modeling, the stuff that isn't VCF but is absolutely part of being a technologist running it.

You've already seen this show up in our programming: our recent Rack & Stack Virtual Event had zero VCF content by design, bringing in outside experts (including the Executive Director of the Independent Electrical Contractors association) to talk power and connectivity for AI-scale workloads. Operate and Optimize followed the same model.

Modernizing at Scale, our Future-Ready Architects and career-skills event runs September 17, and our next Global Virtual Event lands **November 5**, featuring Broadcom's Paul Turner as our opening Keynote.

A Growing Partner Ecosystem

Part of delivering on "adjacent to VCF" means bringing in partners who solve problems VMUG hasn't traditionally covered. At VMUG Connect Orlando, you'll see returning favorites like AWS, HPE, comdivision, and Rackspace alongside newer names worth knowing:

- **Tigera** — security solutions that work both inside and outside the VCF ecosystem, including hypervisor-level protection.
- Partners like **Intel**, whose newer chip lines are increasingly relevant to the power and cooling conversations many of you are having.

We're actively growing this list. During the town hall members asked live for SHI, AMD, and Metalsoft, among others, and we're following up on every one of those. If there's a partner you want in the room, [let us know](#), that's exactly how conversations like these start.

Real Talk From the Chat

Some of the best moments came from your questions. One member described the uphill battle of justifying VMware spend to executive leadership after years of price increases, a challenge that resonated widely, with peers sharing that establishing clear service-level objectives with leadership has helped shift the conversation from cost to value.

Another raised the classic org-chart problem: virtualization and networking teams operating in silos, each loyal to their own platform. The honest take: those teams don't need to compete, VMware's Cisco/ACI integrations exist precisely so both platforms can coexist, but bridging that gap organizationally is still on you, and it's a real, common pain point we're building content around.

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What This Means for You

Nothing about VMUG's VCF foundation is going away. What's changing is that we're widening our scope to match how your job has changed, because staying narrowly focused on one platform doesn't reflect how you spend your week anymore, and it never fully did.

Two ways to keep the momentum going:

- [VMUG Connect Orlando](#) — October 21–22, in person, with a full slate of VCF 9.1 content, Explore session replays, and the sessions solving the problems you face daily.
- [VMUG Advantage](#) — use code **TOWNHALL** for 10% off. Members get certification exams at half price (\$125 vs. \$250), no prerequisites required, and passing your VCP-VCF certification now comes with three years of personal-use VMware Cloud Foundation licenses for your home lab.

We covered a lot in this Town Hall! Thanks for showing up, asking hard questions, and telling us honestly where you need us. That's what makes this a true global network.