

Licensing of Microsoft Desktop Application Software for Use with Windows Server Remote Desktop Services

This brief applies to all Volume Licensing programs.

Table of Contents

Summary	1
What's New in This Brief	1
Details	1
Licensing Windows Server Remote Desktop Services.....	1
Licensing Microsoft Desktop Applications for Use with Windows Server Remote Desktop Services	2
<i>Dos and Don'ts</i> of Using the Microsoft Office with Windows Server Remote Desktop Services: Sample Scenarios	2
Frequently Asked Questions	4
Summary	6

Summary

This licensing brief addresses the most commonly asked questions about licensing Microsoft Office in a Windows Server Remote Desktop Services environment. This brief is limited to answering questions about Office per device on-premise licenses and does not include per user Online Services customer scenarios.

What's New in This Brief

This replaces a previous version published in March 2011. It has been updated to reflect the latest release of Microsoft Office.

Details

Licensing Windows Server Remote Desktop Services

The Remote Desktop Services functionality of Windows Server operating systems provides the Windows operating system experience to users at client computers (desktop PCs) remotely accessing Windows Server across a network. Remote Desktop Services functionality enables a company to use a single point of installation from which its users accessing Windows Server can remotely run desktop applications, save files, and use network resources through a hosted graphical user interface as if those applications and other resources were installed locally on their desktops.

One or more Windows Server licenses are required for each server running the Windows Server operating system. Additionally, a Windows Server CAL and an incremental Remote Desktop Services RDS CAL are required for each user or device using Windows Server Remote Desktop Services.

Licensing Microsoft Desktop Applications for Use with Windows Server Remote Desktop Services

Microsoft licenses its desktop applications on a per-device basis. Per-device licensing means a customer must obtain a license for each desktop on or from which the product is used or accessed. For example, when a desktop application is accessed remotely across an organization using Windows Server Remote Desktop Services, a separate desktop application license is required for each desktop from which the application is accessed.

Use of Microsoft desktop applications in a Remote Desktop Services environment requires that the suite/edition, components, language, and version of the license acquired for the desktops from which the desktop application is remotely accessed matches that of the copy of the application being accessed. For example:

- ▶ **Product (or suite):** Microsoft Office Standard 2013 and Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2013 are different products (or suites). A desktop licensed for Office Standard 2013 may not remotely access and use Office Professional Plus 2013.
- ▶ **Components:** A license for a suite (e.g., a Microsoft Office suite) for the accessing desktop must have exactly the same components as the copy of the Microsoft Office suite being remotely accessed.
- ▶ **Language:** The English/multilanguage version of the Microsoft Office suite may not be accessed remotely from a desktop, which is licensed for a single language version of the Microsoft Office suite. Likewise, remote access to a licensed copy of Microsoft Office Multi-Language Pack 2013 requires the accessing desktop be licensed for the Office Multi-Language Pack 2013.
- ▶ **Version:** Microsoft Office 2013 and 2007 Microsoft Office 2010 are different versions. You may not remotely access the Microsoft Office 2013 from a desktop that is licensed for Microsoft Office 2013.

Microsoft Office retail (full packaged product) and original equipment manufacturer (OEM) products released in 2007 or later do not permit network use.

Windows Server is licensed under a server/Client Access License (CAL) model. The server/CAL model provides both user and device licensing options. Customers with more devices than users can license users rather than devices. In contrast, Microsoft desktop applications are licensed under a device-based model. This means, while user CALs permit a particular user to access the server software from any device in a Remote Desktop Services environment, a Microsoft desktop application license permits that user to access the application only from the desktop to which the license is assigned.

Remote Desktop Services can be used by both Windows desktops and non-Windows desktops (e.g. Linux PCs or thin client devices). Microsoft desktop applications must be licensed for each and every desktop from which they are remotely accessed regardless of whether that desktop is a Windows desktop.

Dos and Don'ts of Using the Microsoft Office with Windows Server Remote Desktop Services: Sample Scenarios

Remote Desktop Services functionality provides a rich Windows desktop experience and delivers Microsoft desktop applications such as Microsoft Office to users of hardware running earlier operating systems that are licensed for those applications. Remote Desktop Services can help you centrally manage and support deploying Microsoft Office in your organization.

Note: Every device that uses Windows Server Remote Desktop Services to remotely access Microsoft Office requires a Remote Desktop Services CAL, in addition to Windows Server CAL and a Microsoft Office license. Dedicate a Microsoft Office license for every desktop on or from which you plan to use or access Microsoft Office, even if that use is only occasional. Examples of desktops that might access Microsoft Office using Windows Server Remote Desktop Services functionality include Windows-based workstations, Macintosh computers, and UNIX workstations. The servers hosting the applications do not require Microsoft Office licenses.

Scenario 1: Remote Use in a Call Center

A customer has 50 Windows-based desktops in a call center and would like to use Microsoft Office on all of these. Two servers running Windows Server Remote Desktop Services support using Microsoft Office on these desktops. The customer needs to acquire 50 Microsoft Office licenses—one for each desktop that accesses Microsoft Office on the servers.

Even if a desktop is expected to use Microsoft Office infrequently, the customer still needs to acquire and assign a Microsoft Office license to that desktop. If 20 of these desktops never use Microsoft Office, then the customer only needs to acquire 30 Microsoft Office licenses. In addition, the customer needs RDS CALs and Windows CALs for each device or user and one or more Windows Server licenses for each server.

Scenario 2: Call Centers with Multiple Shifts

A customer has 100 Windows-based desktops in a call center and would like to use Microsoft Office on all of them using Remote Desktop Services. The workers who sit at these desktops work in three eight-hour shifts, so the 100 desktops support 300 workers. Whenever a shift change takes place, the current worker closes Microsoft Office and logs off of the server so that a new worker can log on and begin running Microsoft Office.

The customer needs to acquire 100 Microsoft Office licenses—one for each desktop from which Microsoft Office is used. Windows Server licenses and Windows and RDS CALs are also required. Device-based CALs may be the right option when the users outnumber the devices.

Note: The number of desktops, and not the number of workers, is important to this licensing scenario.

Scenario 3: Desktop Licenses for Employees

A customer has 40 Windows-based desktops and 30 employees who use Microsoft Office on all 40 desktops.

The customer needs to acquire 40 Microsoft Office licenses. This is consistent with the per-device licensing policy.

Scenario 4: Laptops as Secondary Portable Devices

A customer has 20 portable desktops (e.g., laptop computers) in addition to 100 desktop devices licensed under a Select Agreement.

Under Select and Open Programs, Microsoft Office licenses include secondary or portable device rights for those 20 laptops. Users may not remotely access Office software running in a Windows Server Remote Desktop Services environment from those 20 secondary, portable devices. Secondary portable device rights do not cover network use.

Scenario 5: Laptops as Qualified Desktops

An Enterprise Agreement customer has 20 portable desktops (e.g., laptop computers) that already have Microsoft Office licensed and installed on them.

Under an Enterprise Agreement all devices should be counted as qualified desktops and separately licensed for Enterprise products (e.g. Office), including those 20 portable devices. The users of these 20 portable desktops occasionally connect to a server running Windows Server Remote Desktop Services to access Microsoft Office remotely while they are using a dial-up or broadband connection. As long the 20 portable desktops are licensed for the same edition, language, and version of Microsoft Office being remotely accessed, that use is covered under the licenses assigned to those 20 portable desktops. For both the licensed desktop and the separately licensed portable desktop, Microsoft Office may be used locally or accessed remotely using Remote Desktop Services or similar functionality.

Note: Do not deploy and use Microsoft Office with Windows Server Remote Desktop Services with the expectation to just count and license the greatest number of desktops from which Microsoft Office is accessed at any one time. The Microsoft Office licenses may not be shared or used concurrently for different desktops. Even if you have fewer sessions active at any given time than the overall number of desktops from which you access the software, you must still count all of the desktops. Every desktop must have a license regardless of whether it is used at any given point in time.

Scenario 6: Call Center Desktop License Count

A customer has 50 Windows-based desktops in a call center. All desktops use Microsoft Office on a recurring basis, but only 25 desktops ever use Microsoft Office at any given time.

The customer still needs to acquire 50 Microsoft Office licenses. Microsoft desktop applications require any desktop from or on which Microsoft Office is accessed or used be licensed regardless of the number of desktops using the software simultaneously. Microsoft desktop application licenses cannot be used concurrently (shared across multiple desktops simultaneously or assigned to more than one desktop).

Scenario 7: Remote Access from a Home Device

Company employees remotely access a corporate network from home, using desktops that they own. While connected, the employees use Remote Desktop Services to access Microsoft Office on a corporate-owned server.

A Microsoft Office license for the version of Microsoft Office running on the server is required for the home desktop in this scenario. The company can enable this scenario by purchasing Work At Home (WAH) Licenses for the employees' home desktops. Customers with active Software Assurance can also acquire Home Use Program (HUP) licenses for their employees' home desktops. In addition, customers with active Software Assurance can also use their Roaming Use Rights to remotely access Microsoft Office software from qualified 3rd party devices. Please contact a Microsoft licensing specialist or Microsoft Volume Licensing Partner for more information about "Work at Home," "Home Use Program" and "Roaming Use Rights" options available for Microsoft Office.

Frequently Asked Questions

This following information addresses the most commonly asked questions about licensing Microsoft Office in a Windows Server Remote Desktop Services environment.

1. **What are the use terms for desktop applications in a Remote Desktop Services environment (where the application runs on the server and not on the client desktop)?**

Device-based licensing means a license must be obtained for each desktop on or from which the product is used or accessed. You may not share a license for the product with another desktop or assign it to different desktops. Therefore, in a Remote Desktop Services environment, you must acquire a license for all desktops that access the product running on the server.

Note: Microsoft Office retail (full packaged product) and original equipment manufacturer (OEM) products released in 2007 or later do not permit network use.

2. **The Volume Licensing PUR says I can use desktop application software on a network device. What does this mean?**

Under the network use provision, you may run the software on a network server for access and use from your licensed desktops using Remote Desktop Services (or similar functionality).

3. **Is there a separate desktop application licensing model for use of software with Windows Server Remote Desktop Services?**

No. Use of applications with Windows Server Remote Desktop Services does not change Microsoft's per-device desktop application licensing model. Each desktop on or from which the software is accessed or used requires a desktop application license.

4. **In addition to licensing the desktops that are accessing Microsoft Office using Remote Desktop Services, do I need to purchase a license for Microsoft Office for the server that is hosting the application for other desktops to access?**

No. A license is not required for the copy installed on the server.

5. **Can I install a retail or OEM version of Microsoft Office on a network server?**

Microsoft Office retail (full packaged product) and original equipment manufacturer (OEM) products released in 2007 or later do not permit network use.

6. **If a desktop is licensed for a Microsoft desktop application, can I use that application both locally on the desktop and remotely using Remote Desktop Services?**

Yes, if that license was acquired in Volume Licensing. Volume Licensing desktop application licenses give the customer the right to locally install the software and also to use the same software remotely from a network server using Windows Server Remote Desktop Services (or similar technology). Local installation is not a prerequisite for network use. In some cases, local installation may not be technically possible or desired.

However, Microsoft Office retail (full packaged product) and original equipment manufacturer (OEM) products released in 2007 or later do not permit network use, but only locally installed software.

7. **If I already have a desktop license for a desktop application, what additional licenses do I need for a desktop to use the software from that desktop remotely in a Remote Desktop Services environment?**

In addition to the license for the desktop application, you need Windows Server and Remote Desktop Services Client Access Licenses for that desktop for remote access using Remote Desktop Services.

8. **I have installed Microsoft Office on a network server for access and use using Windows Server Remote Desktop Services. I have acquired Remote Desktop Services User Client Access Licenses for each of my employees. I want my employees to be able to access Microsoft Office from any company managed desktop. What licenses are needed to properly license Microsoft Office within this environment?**

Since Microsoft Office is licensed through a device-based licensing model only, each desktop that is used to access Microsoft Office using Remote Desktop Services must have a separate Microsoft Office license dedicated to it. Licenses for Microsoft Office cannot be shared across desktops to support concurrent use. In addition, you may not reassign a license within 90 days of the last assignment. Furthermore, Microsoft Office retail (full packaged product) and original equipment manufacturer (OEM) products released in 2007 or later do not permit network use.

9. **I have installed Microsoft Office on a network server for access and use using Windows Server Remote Desktop Services. I want my employees to be able to access Microsoft Office from 3rd party devices. What licenses are needed to properly license Microsoft Office within this environment?**

With active Software Assurance for Office in Volume Licensing, you can exercise your roaming rights benefit to enable users to remotely access the Office software on a qualified third-party device, regardless of the technology used to access the software. Roaming rights do not permit the Office software be installed and run locally on the third-party device. Roaming rights also apply only to the primary user of a licensed device with Software Assurance coverage, and are subject to the limitation on the number of users in the base license terms.

10. **I have just purchased several new desktops from an OEM with preinstalled licenses for Microsoft Office Professional 2010. Can I install the software on a network server and use these desktops to remotely access it? What if the copy running on the server is licensed under my Volume Licensing agreement—does that change the answer?**

The answer is no in both cases. First, the OEM license does not permit access and use from a network server. Even if you are licensed under your Volume Licensing agreement to use the software on a network server from licensed desktops, your OEM Office licenses do not permit you to access the Volume Licensing software on the server. The OEM versions and Volume Licensing editions of Microsoft Office are not the same. However, within 90 days of purchase, you can acquire Software Assurance coverage for your OEM licenses under your Volume Licensing agreement. Doing so gives you rights to a Volume Licensing Office Standard edition (please refer to the Volume Licensing Product List for a more complete description of the rules related to purchasing Software Assurance for

OEM software). You may use the software locally on those licensed desktops enrolled in Software Assurance or remotely from a network server (e.g., using Remote Desktop Services).

11. **I have Office Professional Plus 2013 installed on a network server. Can I access this copy of Microsoft Office using Remote Desktop Services from a desktop that has Office Professional Plus 2010 installed and is covered by Software Assurance?**

Yes. To use Office Professional Plus 2013 in this scenario, you would need to be licensed for Office Professional Plus 2013. A desktop that is licensed for and has Office Professional Plus 2010 installed and is covered by active Software Assurance is considered to be licensed for Office Professional Plus 2013.

Summary

This licensing brief should answer most questions about how to license Microsoft Office in a Remote Desktop Services environment. The general rule is "one license for each desktop accessing Microsoft Office," which is the per-device licensing policy.

If you have further questions, please contact your local Microsoft authorized reseller or Microsoft sales representative.

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