



Windows Server 2012 R2

Remote Desktop Services Licensing Data Sheet



Remote Desktop Services (formerly known as Terminal Services) accelerates and extends desktop and application deployments to any device, improving remote worker efficiency, while helping to keep critical intellectual property secure and simplify regulatory compliance. Remote Desktop Services enables virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI), session-based desktops, and applications, allowing users to work anywhere.

Microsoft RDS provides three deployment choices so customers can have the flexibility to deploy the right type of VDI desktop for their users, all from a single platform. Customers can host either:

Session Based Desktops	Pooled Virtual Machines (VMs)	Personal Virtual Machines (VMs)
Shared Windows Server install with multiple user sessions	Non-dedicated/non-persistent individual Windows client VMs	Dedicated Windows Client VMs

Licensing Overview

While RDS is shipped with Windows Server software, it is licensed separately through a Client Access License (CAL) model. This means that each accessing end point (i.e., a User or a Device) must be covered by an RDS license to access Microsoft VDI infrastructure. And this CAL is an additive CAL, which means that in addition to a Windows Server CAL, customers must acquire a Windows Server RDS CAL for each user or device that:

- Directly or indirectly accesses any of the RDS product functionality, and/or
- Directly or indirectly interacts with the graphical user interface of the server software using RDS functionality or other third-party technology

For example, to access RDS functionality in Windows Server 2012 R2, Windows Server 2012 CALs and Windows Server 2012 RDS CALs are required along with the server software licenses.

Note: Up to two users per server may remotely connect to the Windows Server operating system simultaneously to perform administrative functions without needing any RDS CALs. Additional administrative users need the appropriate RDS CALs.

Licensing Options

- **RDS CAL** is the most comprehensive license with full feature functionality, including sessions-based technology and virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) technology. RDS CAL is available in all channels through Volume Licensing, OEM and Retail programs.

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- **VDI Suite** is a cost-effective subscription option that includes the management capability through System Center Virtual Machine Manager. Functionality is restricted to virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) technology only.
- **RDS CAL External Connector** offers an alternate way to license end-points, i.e., per server rather than per user or device. This option provides full feature functionality and is limited to providing external users/devices access to Volume Licensing customers' servers running applications and workloads related to the customer's internal business.
- **RDS Subscription Access License (SAL)** is a license provided by service providers to allow access to RDS services on their shared server software in multi-tenant hosting environments. RDS SAL is acquired by service providers through the Microsoft SPLA Program.

License Option	Per User	Per Device	Per Server	Subscription Only
RDS CAL	•	•		
VDI Suite*		•		•
RDS CAL External Connector**			•	
RDS SAL	•			•

*VDI Suite provides RDS CAL (restricted to VDI only) and a System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM) Client Management License (restricted to VMM use only).

All licenses (except VDI Suite) include the rights to use App-V with Remote Desktop Sessions/Terminal Server technology.

Pricing Overview

The pricing for a single RDS client access license (L) is:

Open NL ERP Price	
Device CAL (L)	\$102
User CAL (L)	\$118
VDI Suite w/o MDOP (per month)	\$1.07
RDS External Connector (L)	\$10,180

Open No Level (NL) ERP. For specific pricing, contact your Microsoft reseller. Microsoft does not determine pricing or payment terms for licenses acquired through resellers.

RDS User CALs Extended Rights through Software Assurance

Today, RDS CALs permit remote access to the Windows Server GUI (Graphical User Interface) running on a customer's on-premise server and RDS SALs (Subscriber Access License) if running on a shared-server environment. Effective January 1 2014, RDS User CALs will have Extended Rights through Software Assurance. In addition to the on-premise access, RDS User CAL customers will also be able to access the Windows Server GUI running on Windows Azure or on a third party's shared server, without acquiring a separate RDS SAL.

To leverage this benefit customers should meet following requirements:

- Maintain Software Assurance coverage on the RDS User CALs
- Use dedicated VOSE (Virtual Operating System Environment) in Windows Azure or third party's shared servers
- Access Windows Server session-based desktops and/or applications running on shared server environments
- Limit access by internal users only i.e. by company employees, vendors and contractors and not by external users such as customers
- Assign each on-premise RDS User CAL to the same named user on Windows Azure or a third party's shared servers

This RDS User CAL Software Assurance benefit allows each User to access RDS functionality only on one shared server environment (i.e. Windows Azure or a third party server) in addition to access the respective on premise servers. The customer must acquire extra RDS SALs (Subscriber Access License) if the same User needs to access RDS functionality on additional shared server environments.

To avail this benefit, please complete and submit the License Mobility Verification form to either Windows Azure or an Authorized Mobility Partner where the hosted graphical user interface will be running. More details are available in Appendix 2 of the Software Assurance benefit section of the PUR (Product Use Rights).

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RDS CAL versions

An older version RDS CAL cannot be used to access a newer version of the corresponding server software. The only exception to this rule is when the newer server software is an R2 release. For example, a Windows Server 2012 RDS CAL can be used to access Windows Server 2012 R2 server software.

On the other hand, a newer version RDS CAL can be used to access an older version of the server software as defined in the interoperability matrix at:

<http://social.technet.microsoft.com/wiki/contents/articles/14988.rds-and-ts-cal-interoperability-matrix.aspx>

Resources

- Learn more about the licensing requirement: <http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/about-licensing/briefs/terminal-services.aspx>
- Find latest Products Use Rights: <http://www.microsoftvolumelicensing.com/userights/DocumentSearch.aspx?Mode=3&DocumentTypeld=1>
- Learn more about the product and its latest features: <http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/hh831447.aspx>
- Learn more about the Software Assurance program: <http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/software-assurance/default.aspx>
- Find a list of Authorized Mobility Partners to use your enhanced SA benefit: http://download.microsoft.com/download/7/9/b/79bd917e-760b-48b6-a266-796b3e47c47a/Authorized_Mobility_Partners.pdf
- Purchase or renew RDS CAL licenses through Microsoft Partners: <http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/how-to-buy/how-to-buy.aspx>

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: How do I license Windows desktop operating system with VDI?

A: If you are accessing the virtual Client OS (Windows) through your VDI infrastructure, it always requires a license regardless of the VDI technology used, whether RDS, Citrix XenDesktop, VMware View or others. For example, pooled and personal virtual machine based deployments access Windows Client desktops, and hence they require a Windows license for the virtual desktop in addition to the RDS license.

Windows for virtual desktops is licensed by access device. In the case of a primary work device, Software Assurance (SA) is recommended if the device uses Windows Pro, or else Virtual Desktop Access (VDA) is recommended if it is a thin-client or a non-Windows device. If the device is a secondary work device then a Companion Subscription License (CSL) is recommended.

For details, please read the following:

<http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/about-licensing/briefs/win8-virtual.aspx>

Q: How do I license Microsoft Office in an RDS environment?

A: If you are accessing any proprietary application through your VDI infrastructure, it may require a license in addition to the RDS license.

Microsoft licenses its on-premises desktop applications on a per-device basis. Per-device licensing means a customer must obtain a license for each device 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 generally required for each device from which the application is accessed.

To learn more about licensing Microsoft Office on RDS, please read: <http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/about-licensing/briefs/remote-desktop-services.aspx>

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Q: Do I need to license RDS when using a third-party technology?

A: An RDS CAL is required for any technology used to directly or indirectly interact with the Windows Server GUI. This includes (but is not limited to) using Microsoft Remote Desktop Services or other third-party software that enables multi-user scenarios on Windows Server. Examples of such third-party software include Citrix XenApp, Citrix XenDesktop, Ericom PowerTerm WebConnect, Quest Virtual Access Suite, and GraphOn Go-Global.

Q: How do I license Microsoft Remote Desktop app?

A: There is no separate license needed for Microsoft Remote Desktop app. You are allowed to use this app for iOS (iPhone and iPad), Mac OS X and Android devices with a Windows Server 2012 RDS CAL. If you have the Windows Server 2012 RDS CAL directly or through Software Assurance, you can download the Microsoft Remote Desktop app from the respective application stores at no extra cost and start using them.