

# Windows Server 2012 R2 Remote Desktop Services Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



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## Q1. What pricing and licensing changes are there with the Windows Server 2012 R2 release of Remote Desktop Services (RDS)?

- I. With the release of Windows Server 2012 R2, you will be able to purchase a RDS Device CAL for US\$102 and a RDS User CAL for US\$118. The pricing represents Open No Level (NL) ERP. For your specific pricing, contact your Microsoft reseller.
- II. Windows Server 2012 RDS CALs can be used with Windows Server 2012 R2, i.e. there will not be any new Windows Server 2012 R2 RDS CALs required.
- III. By next year, RDS CALs with active SA (Software Assurance) will permit access to Windows Azure or an Authorized Mobility Partner's shared Windows server software running in a dedicated operating system environment (virtual machine) using RDS functionality or other technology, without acquisition of a separate RDS SAL (Subscriber Access Licenses). More details will be released during the Windows Server 2012 R2 release.

### **Resources:**

- To learn more about Microsoft VDI, please visit:  
<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/enterprise/products-and-technologies/virtualization/vdi.aspx>
- To learn more about the product enhancements, please visit:  
<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/dn283323.aspx>
- To learn more about the SA program please visit:  
<http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/software-assurance/default.aspx>
- To find a list of Authorized Mobility Partners, please visit:  
[http://download.microsoft.com/download/7/9/b/79bd917e-760b-48b6-a266-796b3e47c47a/Authorized\\_Mobility\\_Partners.pdf](http://download.microsoft.com/download/7/9/b/79bd917e-760b-48b6-a266-796b3e47c47a/Authorized_Mobility_Partners.pdf)

## Q2. Do I still need a separate CAL to access Remote Desktop Services?

Yes. The licensing requirements for Remote Desktop Services (RDS) have not changed with Windows Server 2012 R2. Customers are still required to purchase an RDS CAL in addition to a Windows Server CAL to access RDS functionality or to host a graphical user interface on Windows Server using RDS or other. For example, to access RDS functionality in Windows Server 2012 R2, you need Windows Server 2012 CALs and Windows Server 2012 RDS CALs along with the server software.

## Q3. When exactly do I need a Remote Desktop Services (RDS) CAL?

Microsoft licensing policies for Windows Server Remote Desktop Services require that in addition to a Windows Server CAL, you must acquire a Windows Server 2012 RDS CAL for each user or device that (i) directly or indirectly accesses any of the RDS functionality and/or (ii) directly or indirectly accesses the server software to host a graphical user interface using RDS functionality or other technology. Note: No RDS CALs are required for up to two users to access instances of the server software for administration purposes.

To learn more about RDS licensing, please read the Volume Licensing brief at:

<http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/about-licensing/briefs/terminal-services.aspx>

**Q4. Do I need an RDS CAL if I am using a third-party technology like Citrix XenApp, Citrix XenDesktop, Ericom PowerTerm WebConnect, Quest Virtual Access Suite, GraphOn Go-Global, etc. to directly or indirectly access the server software to interact with the GUI?**

Yes. 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 multiuser scenarios on Windows Server.

**Q5. What version of the RDS CALs do I need?**

As long as the physical operating system environment (POSE) is only used for virtualization management, your RDS CAL only needs to correspond to the Virtual operating system environment (VOSE) the user/device accesses. The CAL must correspond to the CAL requirement at release of the version of the server software or a later version of the CAL. For example, you need at least a Windows Server 2012 RDS CAL to access RDS on Windows Server 2012 R2 servers. However, newer version RDS CALs can be used with 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>

**Q6. How do I buy the RDS CAL licenses?**

Just like other Microsoft products, you can purchase or renew RDS CAL licenses through Microsoft Partners. To learn more, please read:

<http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/how-to-buy/how-to-buy.aspx>

**Q7. How do I license Microsoft desktop applications such as Microsoft Office in a Windows Server Remote Desktop Services environment?**

Microsoft licenses its on premise 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. Office 365 ProPlus does provide a user-based subscription version of Office that may be more economical.

To learn more about licensing Microsoft Office on RDS, please read:

<http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/about-licensing/briefs/remote-desktop-services.aspx>

**Q8. How do I license Microsoft Windows desktop operating system for use with virtual machines running in the datacenter?**

Microsoft volume licensing program offers various ways of licensing windows in virtual machines. Please read the following for details:

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