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Building Virtual Desktop Infrastructure for the Future

Your guide to Microsoft's game-changing Windows Virtual Desktop

Microsoft Partner
Azure Expert MSP
Microsoft

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From pandemic response, to your 'forever' virtualized desktop solution:

An unmissable opportunity

Windows Virtual Desktop (WVD), Microsoft's Desktop as a Service (DaaS) equivalent to Office 365, is going to be big. If, as all indications suggest, adoption levels match those of its hugely successful stable-mate, WVD will undoubtedly have a major impact on the world of end-user computing in 2021 and beyond.

WVD turns everything you ever thought about Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) on its head: from total cost of ownership, through licensing and application performance to user experience. In short, it's something you need to know about.

In this document, we look at 'why WVD?' and 'why now?'. We'll tackle the key use cases and look at management approaches. Plus, with Proof of Concept funding from Microsoft, we'll look at the steps you can take to build your VDI of the future, today.

With forecast **68% growth** through 2021, DaaS is expected to be this year's fastest growing IT services segment.[1]

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Why Windows Virtual Desktop and why now?

The COVID-19 crisis turbo-charged the already-accelerating trends of remote working.

2020 was the year that home and flexible working went from a 'nice to have' to a global business imperative. And it all happened in a matter of weeks. Even for businesses already virtualizing their end-user environments, the impact was significant. For those that hadn't started, the pressure on IT to deliver was unprecedented.

Moving forward, with an estimated 47% of firms allowing employees to permanently work from home, the genie is out of the bottle. Having been forced to deploy in haste, IT departments are now recognizing the need to turn tactical deployments into high performing, cost effective, forever remote working strategies. VDI is a major part of the puzzle – and the opportunities don't end with remote working.

With Office 365 near ubiquitous in enterprises today, WVD perfectly complements this and other Azure based applications and services. But while WVD delivers desktop and application virtualization in the cloud, this isn't just another VDI.

Evaluating Windows Virtual Desktop today offers enterprises an unmissable opportunity to capitalize on what's likely to become the fastest growing SaaS offering since Office 365.

7 reasons why WVD is game-changing

→ Significant cost savings compared to traditional VDI options

→ Fast to deploy, modern VDI – aligned to cloud-first IT objectives

→ Only pay for Azure consumption – free to use service with select Windows 10 and Microsoft Office 365 licenses

→ Tightly integrated with Office 365 and Azure-hosted applications

→ Scales up and down to align Opex to business usage

→ Dramatically simplifies VDI management

→ Automatic and seamless security updates

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The need for change in end-user computing

Benefits and challenges of the rise of VDI

There are multiple paths to an effective end-user computing experience. The right choice is the one that best fits the enterprise.

Over the past five years, however, we have seen growth in virtual desktop infrastructures deployed in data centers. Fewer organizations now rely solely on a 'fat client' estate to deliver applications and desktop services to their distributed users. And there are very good reasons for this.

A data center-hosted VDI simplifies and offloads much of the end user device lifecycle burden, but requires Capex investment in fixed capacity footprint that reduces flexibility.

A cloud-hosted VDI offers an Opex-based model with the elasticity to scale up and down on demand, and the assurance of a secure and centrally-governed end-user environment. More important perhaps, it allows IT organizations to swiftly and securely provision the appropriate compute resources and applications to different user groups. This gives everyone access to the apps and service they need, when they need them, and as user requirements change over time.

Data center VDI is not all plain sailing. Moving from fat to thin client (VDI) models introduces new levels of deployment and lifecycle management challenges. IT organizations now need to build (or buy in) a new set of data center and virtualization skills. And, while environments are virtual, the ability to upscale relies on available capacity in the data center. If you don't have it, you can't adapt quickly and align cost with increases and decreases in demand. Plus, with latency growing as more people connect from home, experience issues are on the increase.

Then there's the cost. With the need to buy expensive VDI licenses, pay for always-on storage and compute, and spend money on managing it all, it's not hard to see how TCO spirals in the data center.

In a world where IT budgets are under pressure, and demands for enterprise agility are growing, a new approach is needed. With its out-of-the-box simplicity, and ability to leverage the near-infinite scale of Azure, Windows Virtual Desktop offers that radically different, and much needed option.

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Understanding Windows Virtual Desktop

The Windows Virtual Desktop difference begins in Azure and ends on the bottom line.

Windows Virtual Desktop takes the cost and complexity out of empowering your users – giving enterprises the ability to quickly, efficiently and securely deploy virtual applications and services on corporate or employee-owned devices.

In the same way that IT organizations don't worry about managing the underlying tooling in Office 365, they don't need to do so with WVD either. With WVD licensing included with selected Windows 10 and Microsoft Office 365 licenses, only Azure predictable monthly consumption costs are required for the service. WVD takes care of the clients, gateways, load balancing and all the other technical elements needed to run a capable VDI. Windows 10 multi-session support adds another cost saving element by allowing multiple concurrent interactive sessions on a single license.

In short, everything you need to deliver virtual desktops at scale comes pre-installed. And, with the rest of your world already in or moving to Azure, it offers the unique integrations and the very best application performance.

An Ensono Windows Virtual Desktop Managed Service delivered a 62.5% cost mitigation for a UK enterprise client – with the project delivered from start to go-live within 4 weeks.

Key use cases

Delivering the new normal
➜ Supporting home and remote workforce
➜ Enabling Bring Your Own Device and mobile workforce
➜ Addressing unexpected peaks in demand

Elastic workforce
➜ Simplifying mergers and acquisition
➜ Supporting short-term employees
➜ Securing contractor and partner access

Cost optimization in IT
➜ Driving VDI TCO reduction
➜ Releasing resource capacity
➜ Enabling Capex to Opex transformation

Specialized workloads
➜ Delivering high performance and legacy apps
➜ Creating development and test environments
➜ Enabling high security/regulatory environments

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Why work with an expert on your journey?

Windows Virtual Desktop is good on its own. It's brilliant with Ensono.

WVD delivers the best virtual desktop experience today. It is modern, fully integrated with the enterprises' Office 365 and Azure services, and creates an attractive TCO. In reality however, not all in-house IT teams possess the VDI skills or the resources to optimize this environment, while larger enterprises, planning at-scale deployments, will be looking to build on Microsoft's standard set of features.

This is where Ensono comes in – providing a set of enhanced services (in additional to dynamic scaling) to simplify management, drive down cost, and maximize the potential of this game-changing VDI.

As one of a select number of partners with Windows Virtual Desktop Advanced Specialization, we have invested in a wide range of advanced automation, monitoring, reporting and tools to address the very specific needs of major enterprise clients.

Our Microsoft expertise, together with over 20-years VDI and end-user computing experience, not only gives enterprises the option of obtaining help with the design, deployment and day-to-day management, it ensures Microsoft's native toolsets are configured perfectly to the individual client.

Enhancing value, improving TCO

Ensono has added enterprise grade auto-scaling to Microsoft's native solution. This allows rapid on-demand provisioning of VDI services to users, eliminates delays and manual effort. Crucially, dynamic scaling also automates cost optimization by shutting unused capacity down when it is not required.

Optimize and manage with Ensono

➜ Cost control through a fully-managed WVD DaaS
➜ Rapid application delivery, patching and upgrades
➜ Integration with existing on-premise and cloud apps and resources
➜ Proactive security, data protection and compliance
➜ Dynamic scaling to right size infrastructure and reduce cost

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Key client enhancements by Ensono include:

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Enhanced Security
To ensure speed of response to security threats, and to protect your WVD environment and business users, Ensono simplifies deployment of security updates across the estate, without impacting end-user experience. This enhancement includes image patching, automated draining, and refreshing session hosts with new security updates.

High Availability
Ensono monitors not only your WVD environment and Azure core components through Azure monitoring capabilities, it also monitors the WVD components that are spun up above these platform services to guarantee high availability and performance. This Ensono 24x7 comprehensive solution monitoring ensures end user service availability- automatically raising tickets pro-actively on the solution to enable rapid response to early or emerging issues and preventing end-user impact.

Enterprise Integration
Windows Virtual Desktop doesn't live in a vacuum: the VDI is only part of the enterprise's technology stack. Ensono will ensure this is seamlessly integrated with your entire Microsoft Azure and third-party environments.

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Support at every stage of the Windows Virtual Desktop journey

But where do you begin?

A good place to start is an Ensono Discovery Workshop. Our experts will join you to discuss your options and the potential value WVD can deliver across your enterprise.

We can help validate your vision with a fully-funded business case, and then work with you at every stage of your journey from service activation, through ad-hoc support, right through to a comprehensive Azure managed service.

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Datacenter Transformation Award
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It's time to change

Contact us today at Info@ensono.com

Kickstart now with a Microsoft funded Proof of Concept.

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