



## Can we trust Microsoft on Desktop Virtualisation?

IT Managers looking to reduce costs through the deployment of Thin Clients and a Virtualised Desktop environment may be finding that user misconceptions are a difficult hurdle to get over, now we have a report from Microsoft to consider suggesting that VDI is 11% more expensive than PCs running a Windows 7 Operating System.

### What do we learn from this Microsoft white paper?

Well, given that it is relatively easy to manipulate TCO numbers, we can certainly conclude that Microsoft remains anti VDI, if indeed anyone was in any doubt. After all, its main finding is that the software costs are the biggest contributor to this overall position and it is Microsoft through VDA (basically a tax on virtualisation) that is the main component. After all, if Microsoft were pro VDI and wanted it to take-off they would never have introduced VECD, VDA or MDOP.

Microsoft also concludes that hardware cost are reduced by 32%, illustrating that savings relating to the deployment of Thin Clients far outweighs the additional cost of servers and storage.

So why does VDI come out more expensive in this report? Sure there are the additional costs associated with Citrix XenDesktop or VMware View licensing but it is the cost of licencing the desktop O/S on a subscription basis that tips the scales. This is of particular concern to organisations that do not have a current Enterprise Agreement or their Windows Desktop O/S under a current subscription. This is because Microsoft licensing rules state that if you virtualise a XP or Windows 7 desktop O/S either a VDA licence or an O/S subscription is required and this is an annual cost of approximately £45k per year for every 500 virtualised desktops or Thin Clients. However, in this paper Microsoft have only considered one flavour of Desktop Virtualisation, that of streaming the Windows 7 O/S.

So, given all the really good features of Thin Clients and a virtualised desktop, such as low power consumption, improved security, no local storage, increased MTBF, longer lifecycles, centralised management etc., how can we tweak the Microsoft costings in our favour? To begin with, why stick to a single method of virtualisation?

### A Blended approach

Categorise your users, as many do not need a full featured, high performance, PC operating system environment and can be satisfied by a low cost virtualised environment delivered essentially by terminal services (RDS in Server 2008). If 30% of users can be targeted in this way the overall business case figures tip in favour of desktop virtualisation.



This blended approach, best described by Citrix in their FlexCast model, ensures that users are targeted with the best virtualised solution for their needs. High end power or knowledge" workers will certainly need better video performance and a more feature rich environment, but these users may only make up the top 10-20% of the workforce, thus matching users to service and delivering the best ROI and TCO models.

At Foresight we have always believed that local authorities and public organisations should utilise this approach to Desktop Virtualisation and as such stress the importance of understanding your users' requirements. This is the first exercise that should be undertaken before commencing a Desktop Virtualisation project and we can provide the spreadsheet modelling to ease the complexity associated with calculating the overall costs and savings. The output from our cost modelling spreadsheet will enable organisations to create the business case or management brief to help get the project sponsored and supported from the top.

*To find out more please contact us:*

By email: [natasha@foresightconsulting.co.uk](mailto:natasha@foresightconsulting.co.uk)  
By e-form: [www.foresightconsulting.co.uk/contact\\_us.html](http://www.foresightconsulting.co.uk/contact_us.html)  
By phone: 01245 361795