

Overview

RingCube's vDesk 4.0 is a high-performance enterprise workspace virtualization solution that increases VDI projects' return on investment by expanding the rollout of VDI across your organization. No longer is VDI restricted only to structured task workers - you can now include employees who require highly personalized desktops which reduces VDI's cost per user and increases economies of scale.

vDesk offers a virtual desktop experience together with VDI offerings from Citrix and VMware. With vDesk, each user gets a vDesk workspace, which they can use to personalize their desktop. The workspace is a lightweight container that can be stored on shared storage (typically SAN/NAS). The workspace contains any user or department-installed applications (sometimes referred to as "entitlement based applications"), and any data and settings the administrator allows the user to store there. Since vDesk workspaces only contain user changes, this radically reduces storage requirements, while enabling each user to create their own unique desktop.

vDesk has the following advantages:

- Provides full personalization for VDI, including support for department/user installed and entitlement based applications
- Dramatically reduces the cost of VDI storage
- Can either replace or work with user profile management tools

Requirements

VDI Infrastructures	VMware View 4.5 and later Citrix XenDesktop 5.0 and later (MCS)
Hypervisors	VMware vSphere 4.1 and later Citrix XenServer 5.6 and later
Operating Systems	32-bit Windows 7 (Enterprise and Professional), RTM and SP1 32-bit Windows XP Professional (SP3)
OS for vDesk Citrix Tools	Windows Server 2008, 32- or 64-bit
(For XenDesktop Only)	Windows Server 2008 R2, 64-bit

Best Practices for the Base VM

It is recommended that Windows updates as well as updates to applications be disabled on the base VM. The best practice is to use recompose/image update to update pool VM applications and OS.

It is recommended that Windows components such as Internet Explorer and Windows Media Player be part of the base VM, not a user specific app. It is recommended that System Restore and Windows backup be disabled on the base VM.

It is recommended that the following Citrix applications – Receiver, Online plugin, Offline plugin, Dazzle and Access Gateway – be part of the base VM.

Best Practices for MS Office

When upgrading Office versions (example, Office 2007 to 2010) on the base VM, choose the option to keep the current version. This ensures that user installed applications that require executables from the older version of Office still continue to function. Shortcuts for the older Office applications can be removed to avoid clutter.

Best Practices for Anti-Virus Applications

RingCube suggests following the recommendation of the VDI vendor (Citrix, VMware, Oracle etc...) regarding the deployment of AV suites. The general recommendation by the VDI community is to deploy an AV application that is designed for a VDI environment. Examples are McAfee MOVE, Trend Micro Deep Security, etc. Some of these solutions also take advantage of the security APIs built into hypervisors, such as VMware vShield.

In addition, traditional AVs that are not designed for VDI, can also be installed on the base VM. vDesk now provides the added advantage of persisting AV definition updates for pooled desktops that are non-persistent.

It is not recommended or common practice to install AVs directly into vDesk as a user specific application.

AVs that have been tested with vDesk 4.0 are listed below.

- McAfee MOVE
- McAfee Virus Scan Enterprise 8.7
- Trend Micro OfficeScan 10.5
- Symantec Endpoint Protection 11
- Trend Micro Deep Security 7.5

Limitations and Some Known Bugs with vDesk 4.0

Bug 12540 Applications that write to the boot partition do not install in vDesk. Examples are certain retail licensing applications that write to the boot partition for license tracking. These applications must be provisioned as part of the base VM.

Product Links:

VMware: <http://www.ringcube.com/VMware.html>

Citrix: <http://www.ringcube.com/citrix.html>