Microsoft Desktop Virtualization

Microsoft VDI Suites and Windows VDA Frequently Asked Questions

Licensing Windows for VDI Environments

How does Microsoft license Windows® for virtual environments?

Microsoft licenses Windows for virtual desktops by access device:

- Virtual desktop access rights are a benefit of Windows Client Software Assurance (SA). Customers who intend to use PCs covered under SA have access to their Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) desktops at no additional charge.
- Customers who want to use devices that do not qualify for Windows Client SA, such as thin clients, would need to license those devices with Windows Virtual Desktop Access (VDA) in order to access a Windows VDI desktop. Windows VDA is also applicable to third party devices, such as contractor or employeeowned PCs.

What is Windows Virtual Desktop Access?

Windows VDA is a device based subscription designed to help organizations license devices that do not qualify for Windows Client SA, such as thin clients and contractor-owned PCs, so these devices can access a virtual desktop. Windows VDA is available for \$100/year/ device through all major Microsoft Volume Licensing (VL) programs. Pricing is retail pricing in USD, and prices may vary depending on your location and agreement with Microsoft. Microsoft reserves the right to change prices at any time.

What if I intend to use my PCs to access my VDI environment? Do I still need Windows VDA?

As of July 1st, 2010, the rights to access virtual desktops have been included as a benefit of Software Assurance. Hence, if you intend to use PCs already covered with SA to access your VDI environment, no additional licensing is required. However, if your PCs are not covered under SA, contact your Microsoft representative to understand how to get SA for those PCs, so you can avail of the virtual desktop access rights through Software Assurance today.

How do you calculate the number of Windows VDA licenses required?

Since Windows VDA is based on the number of access devices, the total number of Windows VDA licenses required equals the total number of thin clients and other non-SA devices that will access the VDI environment.

Does Windows Client SA / Windows VDA provide me any licensing rights for applications?

No, Windows Client SA / Windows VDA only provides licensing rights for the Windows client operating system (OS) itself. Please consult with your application vendor to understand application use rights and licensing for virtual environments. In order to access Microsoft® Office in a virtual machine (VM), each device accessing Microsoft Office needs the corresponding license for it.

How much does Windows VDA cost?

At retail, Windows VDA costs \$100/year/device. Pricing is retail pricing in USD, and prices may vary depending on your location and agreement with Microsoft. Microsoft reserves the right to change prices at any time.

I'm buying VDI software from VMware/Citrix/another vendor. Do I still need Windows VDA?

Yes. If you are accessing a Windows client OS as your guest operating system in the datacenter from a thin client, Windows VDA is the appropriate licensing vehicle regardless of the VDI software vendor you choose. The only scenario where you would not need Windows VDA is if you were using PCs covered under Software Assurance as the access devices, since virtual desktop access rights are included as a benefit of SA.

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What benefits does Windows VDA provide? OR What does my Windows VDA subscription include?

Windows VDA delivers a number of benefits:

- Access Windows 7, Windows Vista®, or Windows XP on virtual machines on any combination of hardware and storage
- · Unlimited movement between servers and storage
- Access corporate desktop images from non-corporate PCs
- The primary user of a Windows VDA device has extended roaming rights, so they can access their VDI desktop while roaming outside of the corporate domain from any non-corporate device, such as a home PC or Internet kiosk
- Includes Software Assurance benefits, such as 24x7 call support, training vouchers, access to Enterprise versions of Windows, etc.
- Eligibility for other Software Assurance products, such as Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (MDOP) purchase rights and Windows Thin PC
- Single Windows VDA license allows concurrent access for up to four virtual machines
- Reassignment rights to another device after 90 days, or in the case of end-point failure
- Dynamic desktop licensing enabled through KMS/MAK activation
- Unlimited backups of both running and stored VMs

Why is Windows VDA subscription only?

The optimal model for licensing software-as-a-service is the subscription model. Because Windows VDA lets you deliver desk-tops-as-a-service, Microsoft uses subscription pricing for it. This keeps Windows VDA consistent with the Software Assurance subscription for delivering the same benefit to PCs.

I do not want to pay a subscription. Can I purchase Windows VDA outright?

No, you cannot purchase Windows VDA outright. It is only available as a subscription.

Can I use Windows FPP (retail licenses) to support my VDI implementations instead of Windows VDA?

Windows VDA has been designed specifically for VDI scenarios. Full package product (FPP) licenses obtained through the retail channel for Windows desktop operating systems, such as Windows 7 Professional, Windows Vista Business, and Windows XP Professional were not designed for a VDI scenario, but may be used for VDI in the following situations:

 The physical server on which the virtual desktop is installed is assigned only to one user, and is not shared with other VDI desktops. Microsoft does not recommend this configuration for VDI, as it would lead to increased costs of your virtual environment. 2. In a standard VDI environment where multiple users need access to VMs running on the same server, the access device being used to remote into the VDI desktop is a PC that is licensed with the same version of Windows as the FPP VM. However, customers using Windows-based devices to access virtual desktops can alternatively acquire Software Assurance coverage on those devices with VL upgrade at a much lower cost, and hence avail of virtual desktop benefits without the need to purchase FPP, while getting all of the other benefits of Microsoft Software Assurance at the same time.

The following restrictions on FPP licensing apply to VDI scenarios:

- 1. Each FPP license permits use of only a single VM per user. Hence, each VM needs its own licensed copy of Windows for VDI. For users who need access to multiple VMs, this may prove expensive.
- Multiple simultaneous users cannot share VMs, as each VM licensed with an FPP copy of Windows needs to be assigned to one user at a time.
- 3. The FPP licensed VM can only exist on a single computer at any given time. If you have to move the VM to another server, it has to be completely moved off the original machine.
- 4. Since the access device needs to be licensed with the same version of Windows as the FPP VM, this effectively leads to two desktops with the same OS version, thereby not offering any distinct productivity gains or cost savings compared to just running the FPP on the PC.

With VDA, customers gain the following advantages over FPP:

- 1. Access to all SA benefits for their covered VDI desktops
- 2. Opportunity to purchase MDOP and use Windows Thin PC
- 3. Ability to access multiple VMs from a single licensed device, and the ability to run up to four VMs concurrently
- 4. Access to their VDI desktops from other non-corporate devices, such as a home PC or Internet kiosk

Hence, for customers using non-qualified SA devices, including thin clients, to access their VDI environment, Windows VDA is the only appropriate license for the scenario.

Note: Windows 7 Professional, Windows Vista Business, or Windows XP Professional obtained through VL upgrade, when purchased on top of a qualifying operating system license, has all the limitations of an FPP license, as well as the added limitation of not being allowed to move off the device on which the OS is first installed. This means the VM cannot be dynamically moved across servers, thereby not allowing business continuity and load balancing scenarios, and negating the advantages of VDI.

Do I need to pay for Windows VDA if I use Windows Server as a client operating system in my virtual machine (VM)? OR I've heard that I can avoid paying for Windows VDA by using Windows Server as my VDI desktop OS (ie, run Windows Server OS in a VM as my primary desktop). Is this true?

Running a Windows Server® OS within a VM in a VDI scenario does not require Windows VDA, but there are many reasons why you should use a Windows client OS as your VDI desktop:

- The user experience with a server OS as the desktop is different from using a Windows client OS
- Many applications for end users were written for a client OS and not a server OS. Each of your applications would need to be retested to ensure compatibility with a server OS. Additionally, most vendors do not offer support for client applications running on servers.
- Clients and servers are on different patch cycles, adding to management complexity.
- Most of the VDI ecosystem will support the Windows client in the datacenter, not server OS's.

However, if you do decide to deploy a dedicated Windows Server OS within the VM for every user as their VDI desktop, please note that you will need to pay an RDS-CAL (Windows Server 2008 R2 Remote Desktop Services Client Access License) to correctly license that scenario.

Is Windows VDA a device-based or user-based license? OR Can I pay for Windows VDA per user?

Windows VDA is licensed per access device. There is currently no option to license Windows VDA per user. However, the extended roaming benefit allows the primary user of a Windows VDA device to access their VDI desktop from any non-corporate device outside of the corporate network, thereby providing tremendous flexibility.

If I have a single Windows VDA license for a device, how many different VDI desktops can I connect to at once?

One Windows VDA license entitles the device to connect to up to four VMs concurrently.

Can you explain the extended roaming rights in Windows VDA?

The primary user of a VDA licensed device at work can access their VDI desktop from any device that is not owned or affiliated with the user's organization, without the need for an additional Windows VDA license. This enables VDI users to access their secure corporate desktops through an unmanaged device such as a home PC or an Internet kiosk, without the need for a laptop. However, if the user does not have a primary VDA device a work, and needs to access his VDI desktop from a non-corporate device such as a home PC, then that device would need to be covered with a separate Windows VDA license. Roaming rights are only applicable while roaming outside of the corporate domain, hence any device accessing a Windows virtual desktop within the corporate domain needs to be licensed with either Windows Client SA or Windows VDA.

Can I access my Microsoft Office applications (such as Outlook and Word) while roaming?

The single primary user of an SA / VDA device at work has roaming rights on non-corporate devices outside of the corporate domain. These roaming rights apply to the Windows client OS itself, and not to any applications installed on the OS. In order to get similar roaming rights for Microsoft Office applications on the VM, the device needs to be covered with Microsoft Office SA.

I am a hoster who wants to provide Windows desktops as a hosted service. Do my customers need to pay for Windows VDA? OR

Is there a Service Provider Licensing Agreement (SPLA) for Windows VDA so hosters can provide Windows desktops as a service to third parties?

Currently, there is no SPLA model for Windows VDA. Hence, customers who subscribe to desktops from a third-party hoster will need to pay Microsoft for a Windows VDA license for each device accessing Windows client virtual machines in the datacenter. Additionally, hosters need to ensure they isolate the hardware and other resources for each company. Any hardware running an instance of Microsoft software (OS or application) must be dedicated to a single customer. For example, a SAN device that is not running any Microsoft software may be shared by more than one customer; whereas, a server or SAN device that runs Microsoft software may only be used by one customer.

What licensing programs can I buy Windows VDA licenses from?

Windows VDA is available under the Enterprise Agreement (EA), Select, Open Value, and Campus programs.

What licensing do I need if I want to run Windows in a VM locally on my PC using a Type I hypervisor?

Some virtualization vendors provide technology that enables you to run Windows within a VM on a local PC, using Type I hypervisor technologies. The Windows 7 Professional OEM license that shipped with the PC allows the user to run one copy of Windows 7 Professional in a VM on that PC. However, if more than one VM needs to run concurrently on the PC, it needs to be covered with either a Windows Client SA or Windows VDA license. Each Windows Client SA / Windows VDA license provides the right to run up to four VMs concurrently on the PC, in addition to all other SA benefits, such as 90 day reassignment rights.

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About Microsoft Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) Suites

What are the Microsoft VDI Suites?

The Microsoft VDI Suites enable customers to improve desktop flexibility with comprehensive VDI infrastructure and management software from Microsoft. The VDI Suites simplify licensing and provide better value than competing VDI technologies, making them an excellent value amongst competitive offerings. The two licenses – Microsoft Virtual Desktop Infrastructure Standard Suite and Microsoft Virtual Desktop Infrastructure Premium Suite – improve customer value for Microsoft's comprehensive portfolio of virtualization software.

What are the key benefits of the VDI Suites? As a customer, why should I care?

The Microsoft VDI Suites provide the following three key benefits:

- Simplified licensing: The Microsoft VDI Suites provide a simple licensing vehicle for the Microsoft virtual desktop infrastructure and management components. The VDI Suites complement Windows VDA and follow the same device subscription license model.
- Excellent value: Both offerings, while targeting low-complexity environments with the in-box solution, are significantly less expensive than competitive offerings. Together with partner solutions such as Citrix XenDesktop, an enterprise-ready VDI solution is available at a low price point.
- Comprehensive technology: The VDI Suites provide a complete set of Microsoft infrastructure and management components for VDI, including application virtualization and integrated management in the VDI Standard Suite. The VDI Premium Suite includes full RDS-CAL rights, as well as Microsoft Application Virtualization (App-V) for RDS for session-based deployment scenarios.

What do the VDI Suites mean for partner offerings in the VDI space?

The VDI Suites will provide a great solution for partners who can now more efficiently build on the Microsoft VDI platform to add scalability, manageability, and extensibility components, especially targeted at complex enterprise solutions. We encourage continued partner collaboration based on the VDI Suites. Partners can take advantage of the rich set of APIs that System Center Virtual Machine Manager (SCVMM) and Remote Desktop Services (RDS) offer, including the Remote Desktop Connection Broker.

How do the new VDI Suites change the offering with Citrix?

Microsoft and Citrix have been partners for more than 20 years, and have a joint go-to-market strategy around VDI. The new Microsoft VDI Suites provide the perfect platform for a continued combined solution, helping to make the licensed Microsoft and Citrix solutions more cost-effective and easier to purchase. Microsoft VDI Suites, combined with Citrix XenDesktop "VDI Edition," offer advanced functionality such as Microsoft Application Virtualization, integrated management, single instance management, and Citrix HDX user experience across multiple device and network configurations.

XenDesktop Enterprise and XenDesktop Platinum bring additional capabilities, such as support for session-based desktops and applications, service-level monitoring and reporting, and other enterprise-grade VDI functionality. Customers who want to gain extra desktop deployment flexibility provided with session-based desktop delivery in the VDI Premium Suite can choose to add XenDesktop Enterprise or XenDesktop Platinum, which will provide them with a powerful, session-based desktop and application delivery solution unmatched by VMware.

When are the VDI Suite licenses available and for which programs?

The licenses were added to the Microsoft price list in October of 2009 and are available to Microsoft Volume Licensing customers in the following programs: EA, Open, Select, School and Campus, which are the same programs where Windows VDA is available.

What's included in the Microsoft VDI Suite licenses?

The VDI Standard Suite includes the basic infrastructure and management components required for a VDI deployment. The VDI Premium Suite includes additional desktop and application deployment options that add flexibility and make it a more comprehensive offering. Both are available as a device based subscription, complementing the Windows VDA license.

The Microsoft VDI Standard Suite includes:

- Microsoft Hyper-V[™] Server 2008 R2: A scalable and high performance hypervisor
- System Center Virtual Machine Manager (SCVMM), System Center Operations Manager (SCOM), and System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM): Management functionality limited to VDI only
- Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (MDOP): Allowing customers to implement technologies such as Application Virtualization
- Windows Server 2008 R2 Remote Desktop Services (RDS): Functionality limited to connection broker being able to deliver VDI desktops only

The Microsoft VDI Premium Suite includes all the technologies of the Standard Suite, but provides organizations with additional flexibility options:

- Full Remote Desktop Services functionality: Deliver sessions as well as VDI desktops
- · Microsoft Application Virtualization for Remote Desktop Services

Suite licenses usually provide a discount compared with licensing the individual products; is that the case for the VDI Suites? As a customer who wants to deploy VDI to certain users, what kind of discount do I enjoy by buying the VDI Standard Suite over its individual components?

Both the VDI Standard Suite and the VDI Premium Suite have built-in discounts over the individual suite components. For example, buying the VDI Standard Suite for a dedicated VDI environment delivers a 74% discount over a three-year time period compared with its individual components.

Do the VDI Suites include the Windows VDA license, as well?

No, Windows VDA is not included in the VDI Suite from Microsoft. Organizations need Windows VDA irrespective of the server solution / VDI solution they choose to implement. Windows VDA provides organizations with a cost-effective way to license virtual copies of the Windows client OS for a virtual desktop infrastructure. It provides the best value and the licensing flexibility needed to support the virtual environment where IT administrators can create and deploy desktops dynamically, and move them across multiple combinations of servers and storage.

Windows VDA includes extended roaming rights; do the VDI Suites also come with roaming rights?

Yes, the VDI Suites offer the extended roaming rights that are also found in Windows VDA.

Which specific System Center licenses are included in the VDI Suites? Are there any differences between the Standard Suite and the Premium Suite as far as System Center licenses included?

The VDI Suites include use rights for Virtual Machine Manager Client Management License (SCVMM CML), Configuration Manager Standard Server Management License (SCCM Standard SML), and Operations Manager Standard Server Management License (SCOM Standard SML). The VDI Suites also include use rights for the management servers for SCCM and SCOM. While the SCVMM CML allows customers to orchestrate and manage virtual machines, the use rights included in the VDI Suites for SCCM and SCOM allow customers to manage and monitor the physical host(s) on which the desktop VMs are running. For System Center use rights, there is no difference between the VDI Standard Suite and the VDI Premium Suite.

What is the main difference between the Microsoft VDI Standard Suite and the VDI Premium Suite?

The main difference between the two offerings is that the VDI Premium Suite includes use rights for session virtualization (formerly known as Terminal Services), while the VDI Standard Suite is targeted at users accessing a virtual machine-based centralized desktop (VDI) and does not include use rights for session virtualization scenarios.

What are the restrictions on RDS with the VDI Standard Suite? For example, can I use the Standard Suite to run traditional session virtualization (formerly known as terminal services)?

The VDI Standard Suite provides use rights for all RDS components (RD Connection Broker, RD Gateway, etc.) as long as the host endpoint is a virtual machine (VDI). The VDI Standard Suite does not provide use rights for the traditional session virtualization scenario in which the host endpoint is a server session.

With the VDI Premium Suite, are there any limitations on use of RDS or other components of the suite?

The VDI Premium Suite provides RDS use rights equivalent to the RDS-CAL. Specifically, this includes use rights for all RDS components used in a traditional session virtualization scenario, including App-V for RDS (which is part of the RDS-CAL), above and beyond the use rights as they apply to VDI. Use rights applicable to the System Center components are identical between the VDI Standard Suite and the VDI Premium Suite.

Windows Server 2008 R2 Service Pack 1 now ships with "RemoteFX." How do I license RemoteFX for VDI, do I need a separate license for RemoteFX?

RemoteFX is a feature of Windows Server 2008 R2 SP1, more specifically a feature of the Remote Desktop Services workload in Windows Server 2008 R2 SP1. As such, it is licensed the same way as Remote Desktop Services, either via the RDS-CAL or the VDI Suite (which includes RDS-CAL use rights). For VDI scenarios with RemoteFX, a VDI Standard Suite is sufficient. For scenarios that involve RemoteFX for both VDI and session virtualization, a VDI Premium Suite is required. No additional license beyond the RDS-CAL or VDI Suite is required to take advantage of RemoteFX.

What are the restrictions on System Center for the VDI Suites?

The use rights provided via the VDI Suites for System Center Virtual Machine Manager are for the Client Management License (SCVMM CML) and only allow the management of virtual machines that run desktop workloads (such as Windows 7, Windows Vista, or Windows XP); server workloads (e.g. SQL Server®) cannot be managed with SCVMM CML. The VDI Suites also include use rights for System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM) and System Center Operations Manager (SCOM), but the use rights are limited to management of the physical VDI host, i.e. SCCM and SCOM can only be used to manage and monitor the physical hosts that are running the virtual desktops (VMs). Physical virtualization hosts with mixed workloads, i.e. hosts with virtualized server workloads and VDI workloads running on the same physical machine, cannot be managed with the VDI Suites, and may need additional management licenses.

Can I use the System Center licenses included in the VDI Suites licenses to manage non-VDI environments, such as my Microsoft Exchange Server?

No, the System Center licenses included in the VDI Suites are only valid for the management of virtualized desktop workloads, such as Windows 7, Windows Vista, or Windows XP running in the virtual machines. Server workloads, such as Exchange Server, cannot be managed with the VDI Suite.

Do the VDI suite licenses include software licenses for using System Center products in a VDI environment?

Yes, the right to run System Center software for the purposes of managing the VDI hosts (the physical OS's only), are included in the VDI Suites.

Do the VDI Suite licenses include in-guest VDI desktop management (i.e. the management of my guest OS running in the VM)? If I want to do in-guest management for my desktop VMs in a VDI environment, what additional licenses do I need? Can I use existing Enterprise CAL (ECAL) or Core CAL licenses that I already own for the client access devices to also manage in-guest desktops?

No, in-guest management of the VDI desktop OS is not included in the VDI Suite licenses. In most cases, Core CAL or ECAL licenses are the recommended licenses, in addition to the VDI Suites, to license the management of the in-guest OS (as well as the desktop OS of the accessing device). If you have your client access devices already covered with user ECALs or user Core CALs, then you can leverage these licenses to also manage the in-guest desktop OS for that named user. If your ECAL or Core CAL licenses are device licenses, however, they are specific to the accessing client device and hence cannot be used to manage the VDI desktop OS.

Why is in-guest management of the VDI desktop OS not included with the VDI Suites? Do I have to purchase separate licenses for in-guest management also with non-Microsoft VDI solutions, such as VMware?

Microsoft already provides suite licenses for the management of the physical and virtual desktop OS with its ECAL and Core CAL offerings. To avoid unnecessary overlap with these existing offerings, in-guest management was not included into the VDI Suites. In the case of a non-Microsoft VDI environment, i.e. from VMware, if you need in-guest management for your VDI desktop OS, the same offerings (ECAL/Core CAL) are available, as in-guest management is not included with the VMware VDI solution.

Are there any use right limitations for MDOP when used in conjunction with the VDI Suites?

No. Although MDOP rights can be acquired together with the VDI Suites, MDOP is licensed separately. MDOP licenses acquired with the purchase of the VDI Suite licenses provide the same use rights as MDOP licenses acquired separately.

What if I already own MDOP? Why should I buy additional MDOP licenses through the VDI Suites?

VDI Suite licenses are sold with and without MDOP licenses. If you already own MDOP licenses for those devices accessing a Microsoft VDI environment, you can purchase VDI Suite licenses without MDOP licenses. Please check with your Microsoft sales representative or partner for availability and pricing of this alternative offering.**Can I** use the MDOP license included in the VDI Suite licenses to deploy non-VDI MDOP technology, such as Microsoft Enterprise Desktop Virtualization (MED-V), Advanced Group Policy Management (AGPM), etc?

Yes. When you acquire the VDI Suite license with the MDOP license, the MDOP license provides use rights for all the MDOP components. You can deploy any and all MDOP components to the desktops covered with the VDI Suite licenses and MDOP licenses you acquire together, letting you further optimize your desktop environment.

The VDI Suite licenses can be acquired with MDOP licenses, but I understand that Software Assurance (SA) is a prerequisite for MDOP. So do I get SA as part of the VDI Suites? Or can I deploy MDOP without SA if I buy MDOP licenses with the VDI Suite licenses?

The VDI Suite and MDOP licenses acquired together contain full use rights to all the MDOP components as part of the package, but the same prerequisite for Windows desktop operating system Software Assurance applies. In order to be fully compliant, customers need to cover the device to which they are assigning the VDI Suite and MDOP license with Software Assurance. One option is to license that device with Windows VDA (which is required for VDI with thin clients anyway). If the device is already covered under Windows desktop operating system Software Assurance, then you have the rights to deploy MDOP immediately.

Do I need additional Windows Server licenses or Windows Server CALs in addition to the VDI Suites licenses to deploy Microsoft VDI?

For a dedicated VDI host environment, i.e. an environment with virtualized desktop workloads only, Microsoft Hyper-V Server is a good virtualization platform. For a mixed host environment that also includes virtualized server workloads, Windows Server with Hyper-V is a better choice. Also, depending on the environment, it may make sense to run certain RDS components, such as the RD Connection Broker or RD Gateway, on a separate Windows host requiring a Windows Server license. Finally, other, non-VDI specific shared Windows services (i.e. Microsoft Active Directory® for authentication of VDI users) may run on their own Windows Server environment. Whenever a user or device directly or indirectly accesses any functionality of a Windows Server, then a Windows Server CAL is required. A Windows Server CAL is not required for users or devices connecting to Microsoft Hyper-V Server. The correct number of Server OS licenses is always required.

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How do I know how many VDI Suite licenses I need? For example, I plan to use 100 desktops / thin clients to access my VDI Suite environment, but I have 200 VMs running. How many VDI Suite licenses do I need?

Both VDI Suites are licensed on a per device basis, which means that only the number of devices accessing the VDI environment matters for the number of VDI Suite licenses required. The number of VMs accessed by each device does not matter for the number of VDI Suite licenses needed. This means, for the example in the question, that the correct number of VDI Suite licenses needed is 100.

Are the VDI Suites the only way to license the Microsoft VDI solution?

The VDI Suites have been created as an additional, streamlined offering from Microsoft to license its comprehensive infrastructure and management software for VDI. Alternately, customers can continue to purchase any of the individual product licenses (i.e. System Center, MDOP, RDS) outside of the VDI Suite (and VDI Suite / MDOP offerings) 'a la carte.' For some customers, this may be a preferred way of purchasing licenses for Microsoft VDI. For example, if they already own many or most of the licenses needed to deploy a Microsoft VDI solution.

For customers who buy PCs via OEMs and distributors, how can they license VDI from Microsoft?

The VDI Suite licenses are only available through the usual Volume Licensing channels. Please contact your Microsoft sales person if you are a Volume Licensing customer.