

## Parallels Remote Application Server vs VMware Horizon

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## Introduction

VMware Horizon® View™ is a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) management software; it requires a hypervisor solution to connect to, store, and retrieve base machines and their clones (virtual desktops).

Its main use is to connect to hypervisors and use virtual machines from the hypervisor as a base image to create virtual desktops (clones) and manage who can connect to them.

## Installation, Setup, and Hypervisor Support

### VMware Horizon View

VMware Horizon View can be installed via normal MSI on a Windows® server as long as it is part of an Active Directory (requirement). It can be used to manage virtual desktops on VMware® products, such as VMware ESXi™ and VMware vCenter®, only. (Both vCenter and ESXi are required for VMware Horizon View.)

The installation is very straightforward, but only provides basic functionality. If you require other features, such as the ability to update the base machine so that all clones are automatically updated (for example, with Windows update or updated software), an additional server called VMware View® Composer™ has to be installed on a stand-alone server. In addition, if you need users to connect over the Internet using a secure port (like RAS Secure Gateway), an additional server, called Secure Server, has to be installed on a stand-alone server.

### Further Requirements and Manual Setup

Each of the VMware Horizon View components require additional components, and some require manual setup. For example:

- Composer server requires an MS SQL database and native SQL driver installed, and a system DSN has to be manually set up.
- Persona Management server is only available with the enterprise edition of VMware Horizon View (which provides persistent, dynamic user profiles across user sessions on different desktops) requires an MS SQL database and a File and Print Server to function.

## Parallels Remote Application Server

Parallels® Remote Application Server (RAS) is very easy to install by running a normal MSI file installation and does not have any requirements. Once installed, the administrator can easily add a hypervisor of choice by following a simple wizard. Parallels RAS supports a wide variety of hypervisors, thus allowing administrators to run a mixed environment.

Parallels Remote Application Server can be installed on both Active Directory® networks and stand-alone machines/servers using local authentication.

## Feature Comparison

### Hypervisor Support

VMware Horizon View

VMware Horizon View only supports VMware hypervisors, mainly VMware vSphere®, ESXi/ESX, and vCenter.

### Parallels Remote Application Server

Parallels Remote Application Server supports many different types of hypervisors, giving administrators a wider option of software to use. For more information on hypervisors using Parallels Remote Application Server, refer to the following link.

## Feature Comparison

Similar to Parallels Remote Application Server, VMware Horizon View can connect to multiple hypervisor servers (as long as they are VMware) and manage VDIs running on multiple servers.

### High Availability

Both VMware Horizon View and Parallels Remote Application Server infrastructures support multiple servers to ensure high availability.

In a VMware Horizon View network, additional servers have to be added manually, going through the same original installation procedure. Parallels Remote Application Server servers can be added remotely from an easy-to-follow wizard.

### Load Balancing for TS Sessions, VDI Hosts, and Desktops

An out-of-the-box installation of Parallels Remote Application Server has an enabled and preconfigured load balancer. Administrators can choose from two different load-balancing methods: resource-based or round robin.

To enable load balancing when using VMware Horizon View, administrators have to set up and manually configure a separate appliance on the hypervisor, or use a third-party tool.

RDS load balancing is very difficult to set up with VMware Horizon, as it uses scripts and distribution, making the process very complicated.

### Publishing of Applications

VMware Horizon View can only be used to publish virtual desktops from multiple hypervisors. If you have purchased the Horizon Advanced or Horizon Enterprise editions, you can also publish applications and desktops from RDS. If you have purchased the standard Horizon edition, you cannot publish applications and desktops from RDS, although you can mitigate application publishing with VMware ThinApp® package delivery. Parallels Remote Application Server has one package that allows you to publish from both desktops and applications, from all VMs running on all supported hypervisors, including RDS. Applications can be accessed over SSL without requiring any additional components.

### Keeping Virtual Desktops Up to Date

In Parallels Remote Application Server, administrators can apply security patches and update the software on the base image, and newly generated clones will be automatically updated.

In a standard VMware Horizon View installation, administrators have to manually update every virtual desktop, or alternatively, create new base images and recreate and reconfigure all the cloning rules. Or, they can purchase an additional component, Composer Server, to allow them to automatically update all clones.

### Wider Variety of Virtual Desktops

Both Parallels Remote Application Server and VMware Horizon View can generate clones from Windows 7, 8, and 10 operating systems.

Administrators can also use Parallels Remote Application Server to generate virtual desktops from Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8, and Windows 10. If the hypervisor is Parallels RAS, you can create guest clones of a server-based operating system with Parallels Remote Application Server.

### Security

Both VMware Horizon View and Parallels Remote Application Server can be integrated with two-factor authentication servers for improved security and protection of published resources.

## Ease of Use and Centralization

### VMware Horizon View

Setting up VMware Horizon View can be very difficult and lengthy because of the list of requirements and additional components installation requires.

The setup of virtual desktops can also be complicated and lengthy. The administrator has to make a snapshot of the master image on the hypervisor, and then from the VMware Horizon View configuration console, has to configure the VDI's options via a lengthy wizard.

### Parallels Remote Application Server

To configure clones on Parallels Remote Application Server, administrators easily use a centralized location (Parallels Application Server Console) for configuring clones following a three-step wizard.

## User Access: Accessing Published Resources and Virtual Desktops

Users can use native clients, or the HTML5 portal, on both Parallels Remote Application Server and VMware Horizon View to access published portals.

### Parallels Remote Application Server Advantage

The HTML5 portal is available in an out-of-the-box installation of Parallels Remote Application Server. To enable the HTML5 portal on VMware Horizon View, administrators must install and configure an additional plugin called VMware Horizon View HTML Access.

## Pricing

Parallels Remote Application Server pricing is very simple. The amount you pay is based on the number of users, and all features are included in the price.

VMware Horizon View licensing and pricing is complicated. You have to decide which edition to use (including different features) and prices start from \$150 per connection. [Click here to read more.](#)

## Complete Virtualization and Cost-Cutting Solution

### VMware Horizon View

VMware Horizon View is only a VDI management solution for VMware hypervisors.

### Parallels Remote Application Server

On the other hand, Parallels Remote Application Server is a complete desktop virtualization and application delivery solution that allows administrators to publish desktops, applications, and virtual desktops from a wide variety of servers and hypervisors. Parallels RAS also offers a Replace Desktop feature. It replaces the desktop of the client machine with a thin-like client OS, without replacing the client's actual OS. This feature is very simple to implement. Once enabled, the client's device is restarted and the OS is replaced with a fully functional thin client OS.

When using Parallels Remote Application Server, administrators have both a complete desktop virtualization and application delivery solution, with a user and client management solution.

## Unique VMware Horizon View Features

**Windows Firewall:** Upon installing a VMware Horizon view component, the installation asks if it can automatically configure the firewall to allow all required connections (easy to set up).

**Web-based Configuration:** VMware Horizon View configuration is web-based, and can easily be accessed from everywhere. Note: To emulate the same behavior, the Parallels Remote Application Server Console can be published as an application and accessed via an HTML 5 browser.

**Specific Windows Features for Virtual Desktops:** VMware Horizon View allows administrators to configure specific storage for Windows user profiles. Therefore, each time a user accesses a machine, he or she can have the same profile. Persona Management does not support RDS, but VMware User Environment Manager™ does support it.

**Active Directory Support:** VMware Horizon View operates on Active Directory, therefore, newly created clones can be configured to be automatically added to a specific Active Directory OU (Organizational Unit). This allows the administrators to better manage machines and create specific Group Policies for virtual desktops.

## Conclusion

VMware came into the industry from a pure VDI solution, whereas Parallels Remote Application Server came from RDS. VMware might be more suitable for VDI users, however, Parallels Remote Application Server will excel with RDS users. When considering both VDI and RDS solutions, RDS is cheaper than VDI.

As a VDI management tool, VMware Horizon View is very difficult to set up, configure, and use. Even though it is a dedicated VDI management solution, it has a number of shortcomings when compared to Parallels Remote Application Server VDI module. An out-of-the-box installation of VMware Horizon View is limited in functionality, requiring additional add-ons (some at an additional cost) to provide basic functionality.