



Windows Server VDI for Service Providers

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Optimize VDI for xSPs and ISVs

Microsoft Service Provider Licensing Agreement (SPLA) licensing can be very tricky and costly when it comes to VDI. For VDIs using Windows 7, 8, and 10, SPLA does not make it simple for any service providers (xSPs) to keep costs below \$100 per virtual machine per month. The alternative for these desktop-as-a-service (DaaS) customers is to deploy Windows Server Datacenter instances instead.

In the past, this typically meant RDSH (“session per user”), which is adequate for a lot of cases, though there are times when VDI (“VM per user”) makes more sense (persistent desktops, users who need admin rights, and more.). In these cases, the “workaround” is to continue using VDI, with Windows Server as the “client” OS in the VDI instance instead of Windows 7 or Windows 8. Service providers who do this typically enable the “desktop experience” add-on; the server OS looks and feels like a client OS, but behind the scenes it’s actually a server OS.

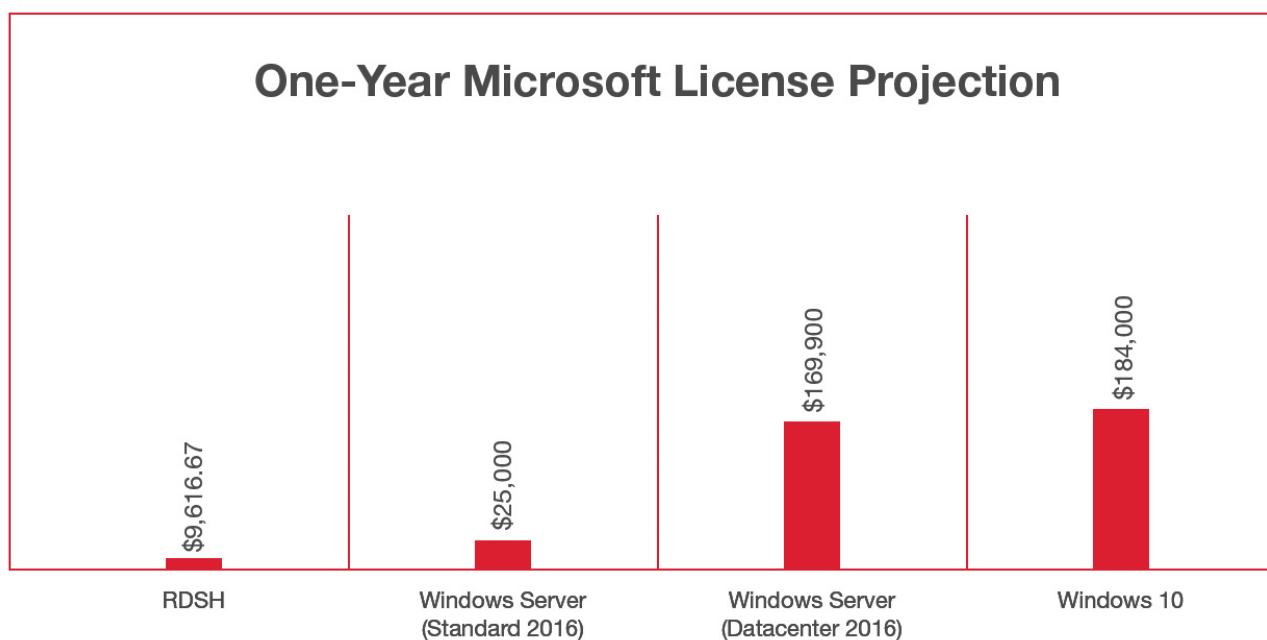
Microsoft SPLA Pricing for Two Processor Model

First we need to understand how Microsoft pricing works in this case. The below table shows the breakdown of licensing costs for SPLA.

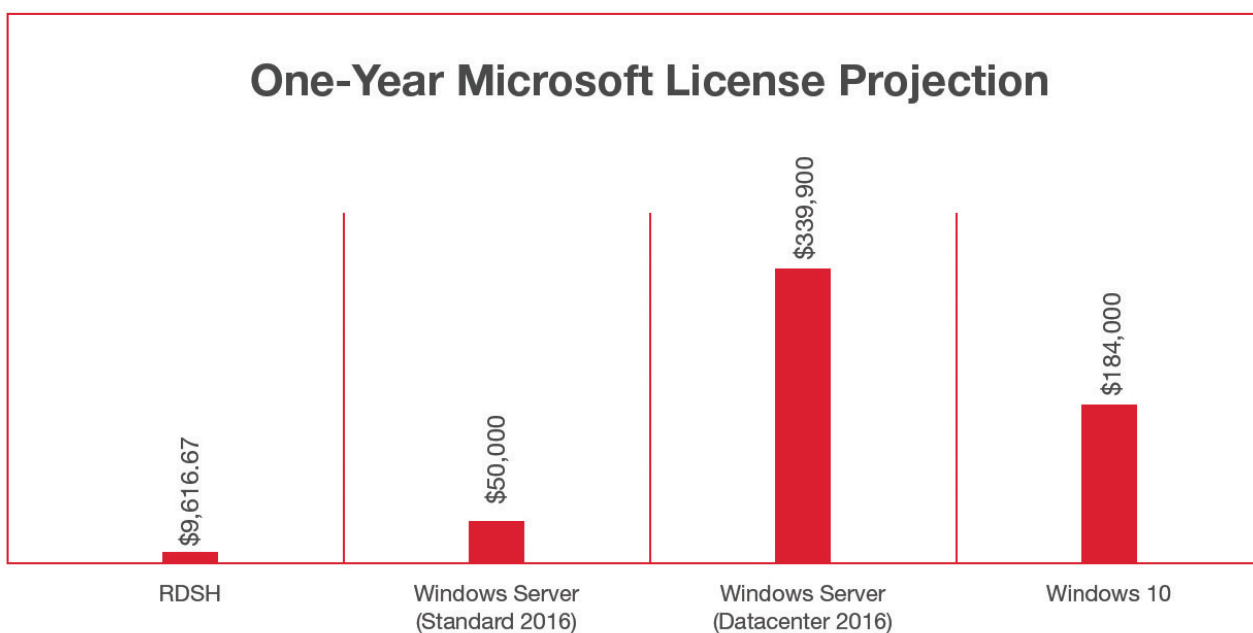
Operating System	Price	Mo. Cost	VDI Cost per user	Parallels RAS License
RDSH	\$7.95	\$50	\$9.62	\$3.50
Windows Server (Standard) 2016	\$50	\$50	\$25	\$3.50
Windows Server (Datacenter) 2016	\$339.90	\$339.90	\$169.95	\$3.50
Windows 10	\$84	\$184	\$184	\$3.50

Note: Prices above are US currency and might be different outside US Market

Let's compare how VDI could be deployed looking at Microsoft licenses for 1,000 users using SPLA without software assurance and a two processor pricing model.



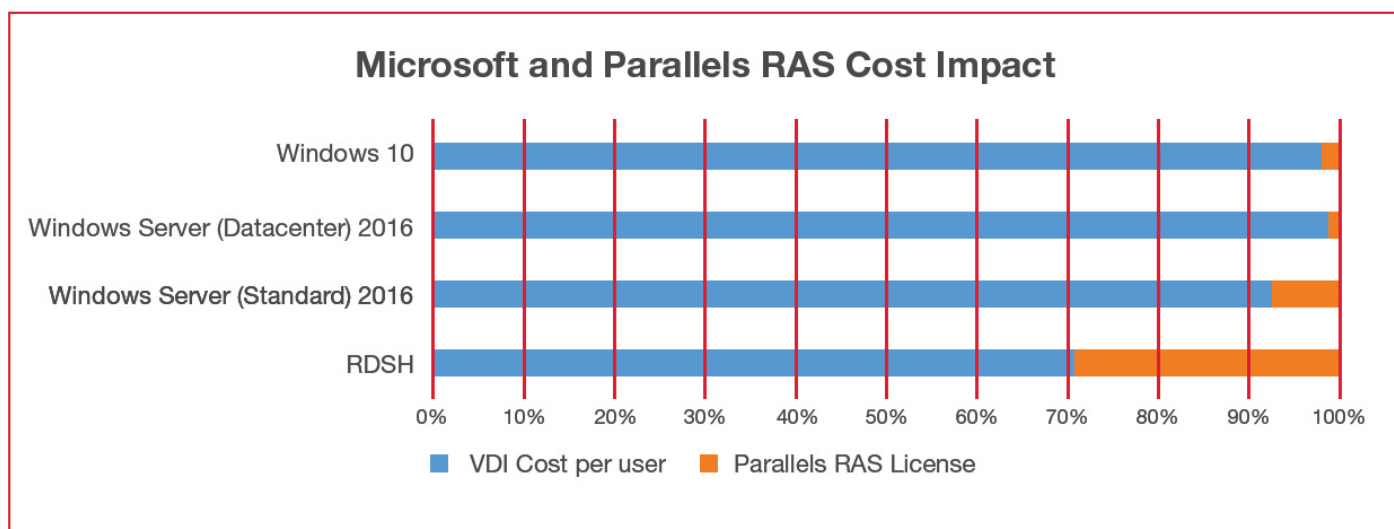
Windows Server 2016 Standard Edition is very competitive, and when using Datacenter for VDI there is no advantage in two-to-one users per VM instance.



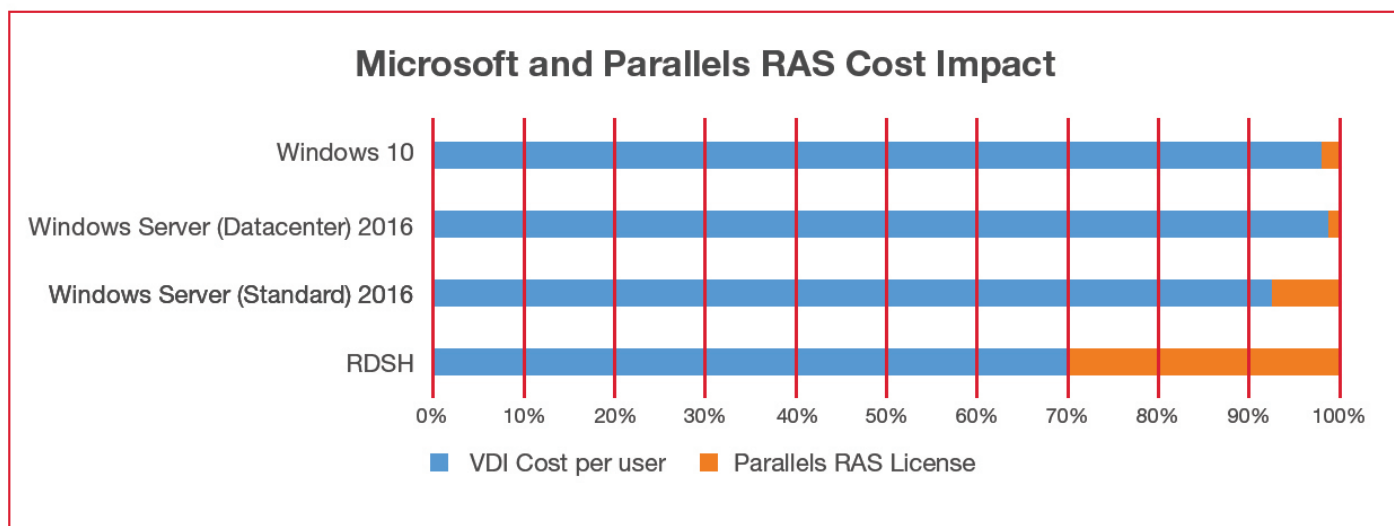
Therefore, Windows Server 2016 Standard Edition is the best option to offer DaaS solutions.

Parallels RAS and Microsoft SPLA Costs Breakdown

The below table shows how Parallels® Remote Application Server (RAS) pricing affects DaaS deployments.

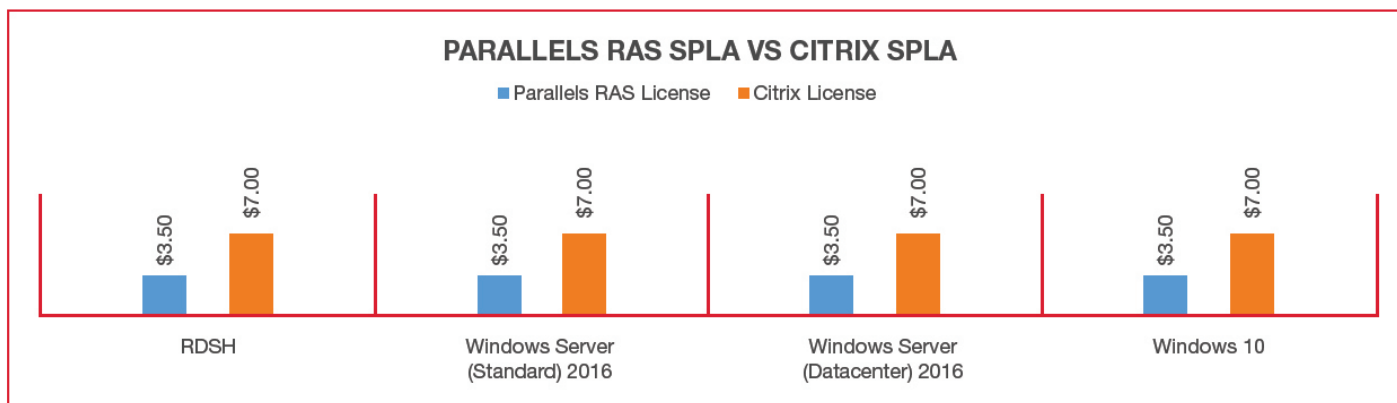


Here is the breakdown for one-to-one user per VDI.



Parallels RAS Cost Comparison with Citrix

The next step is see how Parallels RAS licensing compares with a Citrix SPLA model.



Other Considerations

The service provider and independent software vendor (ISV) need to be cautious when/if a customer wants to pay for their Windows desktops on a monthly basis from a service provider.

If a customer also wants to use a client OS, then Microsoft will allow that to happen as long as the customer uses their own Windows client licenses, which they bought in full upfront rather than renting from the service provider.

Takeaways

- Microsoft VDI licensing can be expensive, and the alternative is to use Windows Server 2016 instead of Windows 10. This will save a lot of Microsoft licensing costs. Savings are between 55% and 75% when Windows Server 2016 Standard is used for VDI.
- Windows Server VDI and Parallels RAS combined together is 60% cheaper than using a Citrix VDI solution.
- To save even more in licensing and hardware costs, push RDSH. The majority of VDI use cases can be delivered using RDSH.

About Parallels RAS

Parallels Remote Application Server (RAS) is a comprehensive virtual application and desktop delivery solution that allows your employees to access and use applications and data from any device. Seamless and easy to deploy, configure, and maintain, Parallels RAS supports Microsoft RDS, Citrix XenServer, VMware ESXi, Microsoft Hyper-V, Nutanix Acropolis (AHV), and KVM.

Key Benefits of Parallels RAS

- Access Windows applications and desktops on any device, anywhere.
- Easy to deploy, configure, and manage.
- Step-by-step intuitive wizards for streamlines RDSH configuration.
- Instantly deliver and manage multiple virtual machines with RASprep and pre-tested templates.
- Create PowerShell scripts to automate processes.
- Out-of-the-box smart load balancing, printer and scanning redirection, and more.
- Flexible delivery options for applications and desktops.
- RDSH and VDI.
- Containerized applications via Turbo.net.
- Hypervisor agnostic—supports Microsoft Hyper-V, VMware, Citrix, and Nutanix Acropolis.
- Straightforward, all-inclusive licensing.
- Innovative mobile clients for iOS and Android, improving employee productivity on-the-go.
- Native clients for Windows, Mac®, Linux, Chrome OS™, and Raspberry Pi.
- Clientless web access with customizable logo and color scheme options for HTML5 Client.
- Restrict or allow access to applications and desktops with unique filtering rules.

References

- Microsoft SPLA Guide
- Insight Microsoft Price List