



Parallels RAS and Microsoft Office 365: Deliver a Superior, Cloud-Optimized Employee Experience

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Microsoft Office 365™ is fast becoming the industry standard, with companies rushing to adopt the solution to maximize flexibility and bring down budget costs. However, the online version lacks certain features to maximize the end-user experience and improve employee productivity. This is where a comprehensive, affordable virtualization can be useful.

When used together, Parallels® Remote Application Server (RAS) and Microsoft deliver an enhanced method for employees to access Office 365. With increased security and management options, Parallels RAS delivers a superior employee experience on any device or platform—anywhere.

Exceptional, Fully Functional BYOD User Experience

Today, employees expect to be able to access shared resources on their mobile devices while enjoying a first-rate experience. The IT team needs to deliver Windows applications to PCs, Mac® computers, and all major mobile devices. Office 365 allows users to access their documents from virtually any device. However, the application's full functionality is only completely enabled on Windows-based workstations. For instance, filtering, deduplication, and pivot creation are limited in the online, mobile, and Mac versions of Excel.

When combined with Office 365, Parallels RAS provides users with a Windows desktop-like experience with full functionality, no matter what device they choose to use. The all-in-one, cost-effective application and desktop delivery solution enables Office 365 users to access, edit, and share documentation, anywhere, on any device.

Additionally, Parallels RAS reduces latency and improves overall application performance because it keeps applications and data closer together on the server farm.

Enhanced Security

Data can easily slip into the hands of malicious users when utilizing Office 365 applications, especially when dealing with mobile devices. Businesses benefit from a reinforced data-security framework when using Parallels RAS. Its virtual application-delivery technology means that no data is actually stored on the device.

Moreover, Parallels RAS centralizes and protects sensitive data with encryption and data segregation, in addition to authentication and DMZ deployment options. Administrators can easily enforce security policies to all clients, reducing data leakage. For instance, they can disable the clipboard to avoid users copying and pasting sensitive information from applications and local machines.

Streamlined Teamwork

Working on documentation used to become complicated when email chains dragged on, and feedback was lost among the hundreds of messages received daily. Internal employees and partners, vendors, and external agencies need to have streamlined ways to connect and implement changes on shared documentation.

Parallels RAS and Office 365 make it easy to work together, approve edits, and deliver electronic signatures. Working with co-authors—whether they be internal employees or external shareholders—is simple and easy to understand. With Parallels RAS and Office 365, making changes and seeking approval is easy and doesn't require long email chains. The combined solutions improve document and data security while making employees more productive.

Centralized Management and Integration

When using line-of-business (LOB) applications integrated with Office 365, installation of the Microsoft desktop software is a common requirement. Without virtual session sharing, it can be more difficult to provide a complete solution. Additionally, it can be tedious for the IT team when they have to physically install or update Office 365 on various machines across the workplace.

Parallels RAS enables businesses to deliver a common and in-house managed version of Office 365 to all devices. Centrally managing application configuration and updates decreases organizational and support

costs, and it also avoids breaking plug-in or customized software connected to Office 365. New versions only need to be tested once before being deployed to the organization, reducing the total cost of ownership (TCO).

If you are already using Microsoft Remote Desktop Services (RDS), it makes sense to centralize and integrate LOB applications with Office 365. However, Parallels RAS allows you to do it more easily and with more reliable, high-availability connections than when using RDS alone.

Office 365 Licensing Advantages

There's a difference between deploying Office 365 and deploying the Office suite on a Microsoft remote desktop server and Parallels RAS environment. With the Office suite, you'd assign a volume license to the end-user device from where the remote desktop session is launched. In this configuration, the license covers any user logging on to the device for the Office software. With Office 365, licenses are instead assigned to users. As long as the user's subscription is featured with Office 365 ProPlus, they will be permitted to use Office applications in a remote desktop session. In addition, Office 365 ProPlus features, abilities, and more are included in Office 365 Enterprise E3 and E5.

Feature	Office Professional Plus 2013	Office Professional Plus 2016	Office 365 ProPlus	Office 365 Business	Office 365 Business Essentials	Office 365 Business Premium	Office 365 Enterprise E1	Office 365 Enterprise E3	Office 365 Enterprise E5	Office 365 Enterprise F1
Desktop virtualization	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No

Office 365 ProPlus is supported on user-dedicated virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI). Office 365 ProPlus only supports RDS when purchased through a Volume Licensing Program. Learn more at technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/office-applications-service-description.

Shared Computer Activation (SCA) is the feature that allows multiple users to run Office 365 ProPlus programs (such as Microsoft Word or Excel) on a shared device or virtual machine. Best of all, when using a deployment of Office 365 ProPlus with SCA enabled, the user's total count of five installations on a device is not affected.

Many organizations can experience important cost savings using Office 365 ProPlus, E3, or E5. Since the licensing is based on users rather than devices, one user with many devices will still consume only one license, regardless of server or VDI deployments.

Efficient, Cloud-Ready Management and Support

Organizations that move to Office 365 are often aiming to simplify IT networks. Hybrid deployment should not make this goal more difficult to achieve. The centralized, easy-to-use Parallels RAS dashboard allows IT staff to have full control over Windows applications and desktops within the virtualization environment.

Capital expenditures can be lowered when unexpected demands come by leveraging the Parallels RAS cloud-ready solution. With hybrid cloud technology, organizations can manage their on-premise, Microsoft Azure, and Amazon Web Services™ (AWS) public cloud deployments from a single, intuitive dashboard.