

EMA Product Brief: Desktop Virtualization with Quest

Abstract

Businesses of all sizes face a number of significant problems in the modern desktop computing environment. A new approach to many of these issues is desktop virtualization – providing a complete desktop-style computing environment that is not tied to a physical PC.

This ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES® (EMA™) Product Brief reviews one such solution – vWorkspace, a leading desktop virtualization solution. In reviewing this product, EMA looked for its ability to address issues that our research has highlighted as critical for desktop virtualization success. These include an ability to accommodate different user types, broad hardware and software compatibility, ability to overcome network and latency concerns, high availability and scalability, and how it addresses certain human issues.

EMA believes that Quest vWorkspace addresses all of these key recommendations, with an integrated approach to diverse use cases; wide compatibility with multiple platforms, applications, and operating systems; features for remote access and latency remediation; built-in scalability and high availability; and technologies to improve the end-user experience in very specific ways.

HIGHLIGHTS

Vendor name: Quest Software

Product name: vWorkspace

Production function: Desktop Virtualization

Host Operating Systems Support: Windows XP, Vista, Windows Server 2003 (32 & 64 Bit), Windows Server 2008

Remote Client Operating Systems Support: Windows XP, Vista, CE, Linux, and Wyse Thin OS

Hypervisors supported: ESX/VI3, Hyper-V, Parallels Virtuozzo, Virtual Iron, Xen, and others

Vendor contact:

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Web: www.vWorkspace.com

Pricing information: Starting at \$50 per concurrent user

Availability: Immediate

EMA recommends any enterprise that is contemplating a desktop virtualization deployment should investigate Quest vWorkspace.

Key Issues in Desktop Computing

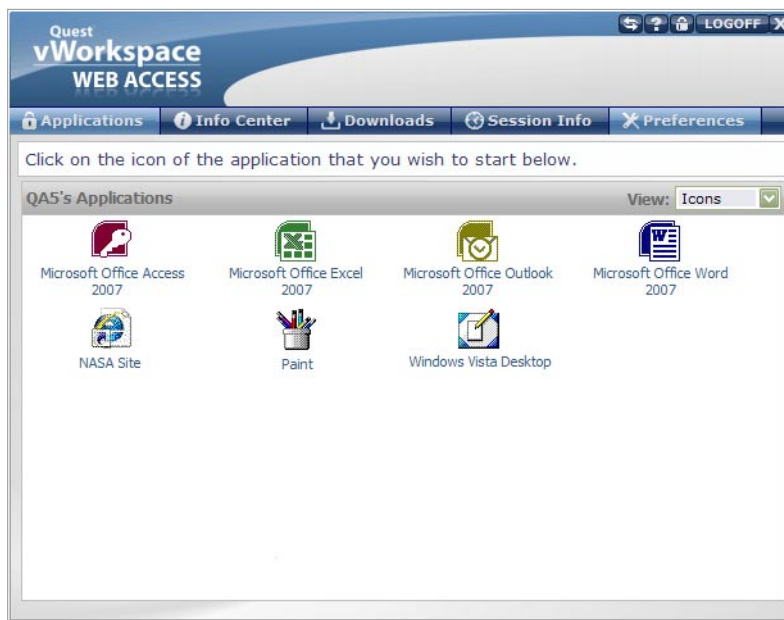
Businesses of all sizes face a number of significant problems in the standard desktop computing environment. Physical desktops and laptops typically are costly to provision and support; generate complexity, performance, availability, and failure rates that limit productivity; expose data and systems to security and compliance risks; and reduce effective mobility and resource utilization.

Desktop virtualization is a relatively new technology aimed at addressing all these issues and more. This technology allows end users to access a complete desktop-style computing environment – including anything from a single user application to an entire operating system – without being tied to the specific physical PC or other hardware resources that are supporting those capabilities.

In reality, desktop users run a continuum from process worker, through knowledge worker, to power user, with many slight variations in between. It is critical to look carefully at each worker, and sometimes provide a combination of different desktop virtualization techniques, depending on their work patterns and responsibilities. Desktop virtualization therefore tends to come in several different technical implementations, in order to accommodate these different use cases.

About Quest vWorkspace

vWorkspace (formerly known as Virtual Access Suite) from Provision Networks (a division of Quest Software) is a desktop virtualization solution providing a comprehensive enterprise-grade feature-set for application delivery, virtual desktop provisioning, management, and brokering, allowing centralized delivery of diverse applications and desktops.



vWorkspace delivers several remote desktop virtualization technologies – including blade-based dedicated systems, virtual machine-based shared systems, and terminal services-based common desktop models – all as part of a single solution. Particularly significant is its ability to allow end users to access individual applications or entire desktops simultaneously

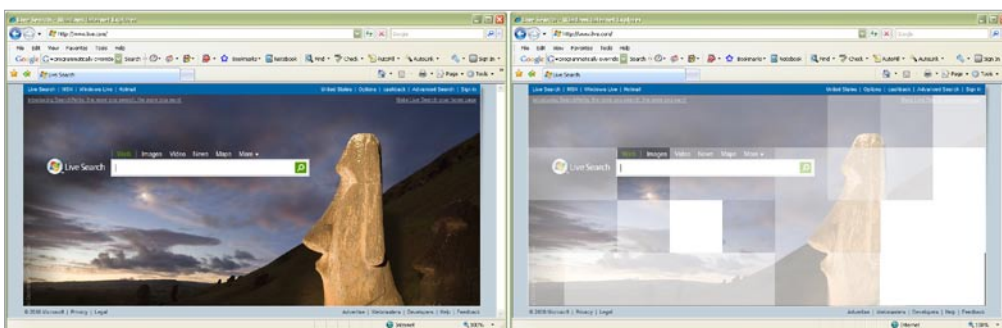
using these multiple technologies, without seeing any difference in appearance or usability. For example, an end user may access standardized enterprise applications (SAP, CRM, order-entry, or HR applications) from a terminal services-based common desktop environment; access personalized productivity applications (Word, Excel, Outlook, etc.) from a personal virtual machine-based shared system (running under VMware ESX, Hyper-V, or Xen); and access more compute-intensive applications (database applications or statistical analysis) from a blade-based dedicated system – all from the same user interface.

The vWorkspace Connection Broker is a key differentiator, with sophisticated features such as:

- Policy- and role-driven provisioning – virtual desktops are provisioned, configured, and secured in the right place at the right time based on individual user roles and corporate policies
- Resource management – CPU utilization, memory allocation, resource pooling, performance optimization, ability to power manage unused desktops and dynamically size desktop pools, to maximize utilization of available resources

The vWorkspace Connection Broker is a key differentiator, and alongside it, the Quest EOP delivers an enhanced user experience.

- High scalability – options for persistent or non-persistent brokering, distributed load balancing, request queuing, thread pooling, and automated failover ensure fast user response, high availability, disaster recovery, and business continuity
- Desktop lifecycle management and automation – various tasks such as operating system actions, application updates and upgrades, and running scripts can be scheduled for automatic execution
- Local user experience – support for local interactions such as a universal printer driver, ability to locally synchronize PDAs and smartphones, and support for multiple monitors and high resolution video displays



Quest EOP (left) vs. Microsoft RDP (right). Shown here mid-load, EOP's smooth graphics have already finished loading, while RDP continues to load in graphic blocks.

Another specific differentiator for vWorkspace is the Quest Experience Optimized Protocol (EOP) – an add-on to vWorkspace that extends the standard Microsoft remote desktop protocol (RDP). Using RDP alone for remote desktop virtualization leads to slower graphic and application response, poor compatibility with local devices, and limited support for multimedia. When deployed alongside vWorkspace, Quest EOP addresses these issues to deliver an enhanced user experience, with additional features including:

- Bidirectional audio support, allowing a virtual desktop implementation of interactive audio applications such as VOIP and dictation, as well as collaboration
- Improved support for multimedia videos, including acceleration technologies for Adobe Flash, browser-based content, and other graphics
- Latency reduction through features that mask potential network issues, such as local keyboard echo, for instant presentation on the user's screen

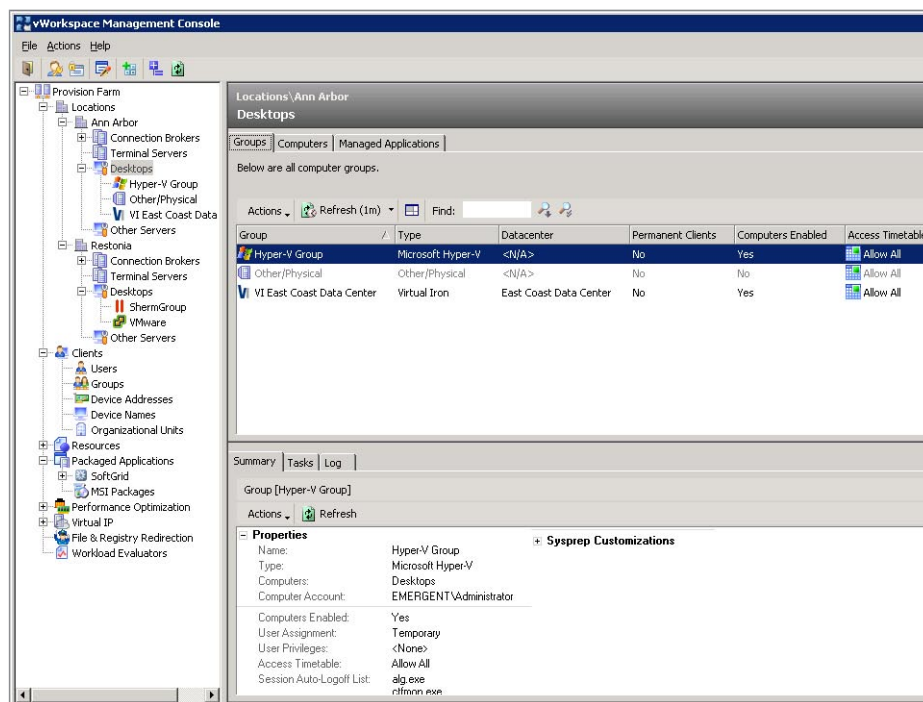
Key Benefits of Quest vWorkspace

Significant benefits of Quest vWorkspace include:

- Greater productivity – intelligent centralized provisioning provides end users with access to new systems, applications, and services much faster, often without IT staff intervention
- Better, faster, cheaper management and support – central management reduces costs and resource requirements, and means that desk-side visits are virtually eliminated, even following hardware problems
- Improved security and compliance – applications and data are centrally managed, so critical corporate data remains centrally protected, even if a laptop is lost or stolen

- Workforce mobility – users are no longer tied to physical PCs or locations, so they can access their virtual desktop from any system in the world, quickly and securely
- Workforce flexibility – IT can provide fast and secure temporary access to corporate systems and data for contractors, outsourcers, home workers and other flexible resources
- High availability – users can quickly recover from local failures, using any healthy system to access their applications and data, and get back to work quickly, with minimal disruption
- Improved performance – high-powered computing is available from shared data center resources, and users can access additional resources to improve performance without local PC upgrades
- Minimize desktop costs – users can access these high-powered compute resources from very simple local systems – even thin clients or Web terminals – reducing the cost of desktop hardware and extending hardware refresh cycles

Moreover, with a combination of features and benefits, Quest vWorkspace satisfies the computing needs of the multiple end user constituents – including process workers, knowledge workers, and power users – with a single desktop virtualization solution.



Pricing and Availability

Quest software is priced on a concurrent user basis. Pricing for the different editions is as follows:

- vWorkspace - Desktop Services Edition: \$50 per Concurrent User
- vWorkspace - Enterprise Edition: \$99 per Concurrent User
- vWorkspace - Experience Optimization Pack: \$40 per Concurrent User

Annual maintenance is priced at 20% and 25% of the initial purchase price per year for Gold and Platinum packages respectively. Both packages include access to patches and product upgrades, as well as full technical support by telephone and online. Gold allows support 9am to 5pm during the week. Platinum allows support 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

Quest vWorkspace is available immediately.

EMA Perspective

EMA research shows that many enterprises fail to fully achieve expectations from their desktop virtualization deployments. This makes the choice of a desktop virtualization solution, and the approach to both deployment and management, especially critical.

In recent independent research, EMA has previously published detailed recommendations for desktop virtualization deployment that will increase the likelihood of success¹. Key among these recommendations, EMA believes IT must accommodate user differences with different technologies and approaches; ensure wide application and technology compatibility; accommodate potential network issues with technology and process solutions; ensure high availability through server resilience and scalability; and deal with human issues by delivering quality features and reasonable expectations backed with achievable SLAs.

EMA believes that Quest vWorkspace addresses all of these key recommendations, with an integrated approach to diverse use cases; wide compatibility with multiple platforms, applications, and operating systems; features for remote access and latency remediation; built-in scalability and high availability; and technologies to improve the end-user experience.

With many sophisticated features that provide distinct and unique benefits for both IT and business users, EMA believes that Quest vWorkspace is an excellent solution, and should be among a limited shortlist for any enterprise that is contemplating a desktop virtualization deployment.

¹ See Virtualization and Management: Trends, Forecasts, and Recommendations, http://www.enterprisemanagement.com/research/ema_product.php?product=5000_1590

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