



Partner-Hosted Microsoft Office

Licensing guide for Partners

With the Microsoft Services Provider License Agreement (SPLA), you can create and deliver a hosted Microsoft Office solution. This guide will take you through the required licensing components for providing a partner-hosted Office solution to your end users.

Required licensing for hosted office

Offering a hosted office solution requires the appropriate licensing of the entire software solution stack. The software solution stack includes Windows Server, Remote Desktop Services, and Microsoft Office¹. See below for more information.

Windows Server

You must license Windows Server in support of your hosted office solution. Windows Server is licensed in the following two licensing models in the SPLA program:

1. Per Core: Essentials, Standard, and Datacenter Editions

A Windows Server core license is required to be assigned to each physical core on the servers running the Hosted Office service.

2. Per User Subscriber Access License ("SAL"): Standard and Enterprise Editions

A Windows Server SAL must be assigned to each unique end user that's authorized to access instances of the server software.

Remote Desktop Services

A SAL for Remote Desktop Services ("RDS") is required for each unique end user authorized to access the hosted Office service. Device SALs aren't available. From the Services Provider Use Rights ([SPUR](#)):

"The delivery of a Desktop Application, such as Office, that is used by providing direct or indirect access to server software that hosts the graphical user interface, such as Windows Server (using

¹ The Services Provider Use Rights (SPUR) defines the use rights for products available in SPLA. <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/licensing/product-licensing/products>

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the Windows Server Remote Desktop Services functionality or other technology), requires a Windows Server Remote Desktop Services SAL.”

Note that the Windows Server RDS SAL is required for delivering a graphical user interface even if you aren’t using RDS services.

Microsoft Office

A SAL for Microsoft Office is required for every unique end user who’s authorized to access the hosted Office service. Device SALs aren’t available. The following editions of Microsoft Office are available through the SPLA program:

- Office Standard
- Office Professional Plus

Counting User SALs

All end users authorized to access the hosted Office service require all appropriate SALs for included products listed above for each month in which they’re authorized to access the hosted Office service, regardless of the frequency or duration of their usage. To remove the reporting obligation for an individual end user, the end user’s access must be removed from the hosted Office service.

Limited free usage through SPLA

The SPLA agreement provides for limited, 60-day end user evaluations per end user. You don’t need to report usage for end user evaluations. Conditions apply; see your SPLA agreement for details.

Frequently asked questions

1. Can I only count users who are accessing or actively using the hosted Office service each month?

No, you must count all unique end users who are authorized to access your service. From the [SPUR](#):

“You must acquire and assign a SAL to each user that is authorized to access your instances of the server software directly or indirectly, regardless of actual access of the server software.”

2. I’m not using the Remote Desktop Services functionality in Windows Server, but I’m hosting Office; do I have to report the RDS SAL?

Yes. Providing direct or indirect access to a graphical user interface requires the RDS SAL. By providing end users access to Office (a graphical user interface), you’re providing indirect access to the Windows Server. From the [SPUR](#):

“The delivery of a Desktop Application, such as Office, that is used by providing direct or indirect access to server software that hosts the graphical user interface, such as Windows Server (using the Windows Server Remote Desktop Services functionality or other technology), requires a Windows Server Remote Desktop Services SAL.”

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3. Can I use the Windows Desktop Operating System as part of my hosted office solution?

No. Windows Desktop Operating Systems may not be used to deliver any hosted solution involving remote access or delivery of a software service, such as a hosted office service.

4. Can I stream my hosted office solution to a device and have it run locally at the end user site?

No. SPLA doesn't provide rights to stream Office to a device and have it run locally by the end user.

5. How can I assure my end users that the hosted office solution I'm offering is properly licensed?

While Microsoft doesn't confirm an individual company's license compliance, there are steps you can take to help your end user understand your compliance with Microsoft's licensing requirements:

- Ensure your marketing materials don't create confusion around how your solution might comply with Microsoft licensing requirements.
- Review and abide by the trademark guidelines for the products you're licensing; see www.microsoft.com/trademarks and your SPLA agreement.
- Provide an FAQ that describes how your solution meets the Microsoft licensing requirements for a hosted office solution.

Resources

Microsoft Services Provider License Agreement Program

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/licensing/licensing-programs/spla-program.aspx>

Microsoft Hosting

<http://www.microsoft.com/hosting/>

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