

Frequently Asked Questions

Find answers to frequently asked questions about Microsoft System Center Essentials 2010.

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General

Q. [What is System Center Essentials 2010?](#)

A.

Microsoft System Center Essentials 2010 (Essentials 2010) is a management solution in the System Center family of IT systems management products specifically designed for midsize businesses. Essentials 2010 provides a unified IT management solution that enables IT professionals in midsize organizations to proactively manage their IT environment with increased efficiency.

Q. [Why did Microsoft build Essentials?](#)

A.

Simply stated Microsoft has listened to a lot of input from IT professionals working in midsize businesses and is building a unified IT management solution for them. Microsoft understands that the IT departments of midsize businesses face similar IT management challenges as the enterprise. Yet, most midsize businesses are resource and people constrained, and existing management solutions are designed for larger organizations. IT professionals in midsize organizations currently have to use a variety of tools to manage their IT environments. Most of these tools are "point" solutions rather than comprehensive management tools.

Q. [Can I try Essentials 2010 now?](#)

A.

Yes. You can find instructions to download and try the Evaluation release of Essentials 2010 [here](#).

Q. [Can I upgrade my trial version of Essentials to a full product?](#)

A.

Yes. At any point during the 90-day evaluation period you can purchase Essentials 2010 through retail or volume license, and enter the product keys to convert the product to a full working version in the

Licensing Wizard (Programs - System Center Essentials 2010 - System Center Essentials 2010 Licensing Wizard). No re-installation is necessary. For pricing and licensing information, go [here](#).

Q. [Can I upgrade my RC version of Essentials 2010 to the Final Release version?](#)

A.

No. As per the beta end-user license agreement, Essentials 2010 beta versions are not authorized for installation in production environments, so we do not support upgrading from RC to the release version of Essentials 2010.

Q. [When will Essentials 2010 be released?](#)

A.

Microsoft announced the release to manufacturing of Essentials 2010 on April 19th, 2010.

Q. [In what languages will Essentials 2010 be available?](#)

A.

Essentials 2010 will be available in the following languages: English, German, French, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Japanese, Spanish, Korean, Italian, Russian and Portuguese.

Features and Specifications

Q. [What types of IT management tasks can I perform with Essentials 2010?](#)

A.

Essentials 2010 provides the following IT management capabilities.

- Proactive monitoring and troubleshooting diagnostics for your Windows-based servers, Windows-based clients, applications and network devices.
- Update management for Microsoft and third-party applications and devices.
- Quickly create new virtual servers using provided templates and wizard based walk-through.
- Convert an existing physical server to a virtual server (P2V) running on Microsoft's Hyper-V hypervisor.
- Import and convert existing VMware VMs to Hyper-V for virtual server standardization and integrated management.
- Software deployment of MSI and EXE installed software packages, including third-party applications.
- Install Windows 7 on existing Windows XP and Windows Vista PCs.

- Hardware and software inventory with 50+ attributes collected for things like available disk space, RAM, and installed applications with version number.
- Integrated reporting including 50+ reports for things like inventory, update deployment status, and automated daily health status reports for your IT environment.

Q. [Is Essentials 2010 a "bundle" of Microsoft Operations Manager \(MOM\) and Microsoft Systems Management Server \(SMS\)?](#)

A.

No. Essentials is a unified IT management solution built on the following foundation technologies:

- System Center Operations Manager 2007
- Windows Server Update Services 3.0
- SQL Server 2008
- Microsoft Update

Q. [What kinds of devices can I manage with Essentials 2010?](#)

A.

From a single console, Essentials 2010 allows you to manage your Windows-based servers, Windows-based clients, applications, services and SNMP v2 and v3-capable network devices.

Q. [What Microsoft Windows operating systems are supported for management with Essentials 2010?](#)

A.

- Windows 2000 Pro SP4, Windows XP SP2 (x86 and x64), Windows Vista (x86 and x64), and Windows 7
- Windows 2000 Server SP4, Windows Server 2003 SP1 and R2 (x86 and x64), Windows Server 2008 and 2008 R2

Q. [If I have branch offices, how many Essentials 2010 servers do I need?](#)

A.

Essentials 2010 is a single server solution, so it does not require a connection to other Essentials 2010 servers.

Q. [What operating system and hardware do I need to run Essentials 2010?](#)

A.

Operating System:

- Microsoft Windows Server 2008 R2 Standard or Enterprise Edition, X64
- Windows Server 2008 Standard or Enterprise Edition with Hyper-V, x86 or x64 (x64 required for virtualization management)
- Windows Server 2008 Standard or Enterprise Edition without Hyper-V, x86 or x64 (x64 required for virtualization management)
- Windows Server 2003 Standard or Enterprise Edition, x86 or x64, with Service Pack 2 (SP2) or later
- Windows Small Business Server 2008, x64 only
- Windows Essentials Business Server 2008, x64 only

Hardware Requirements:

- 20 GB of available hard disk space (1 GB on the system drive); 150 GB of available hard disk space if planning virtualization management CPU can be x86 or x64-based, at least 2.8 GHz
- 4 GB of RAM

Q. [Can I upgrade to Essentials 2010 from Windows Server Update Services \(WSUS\) 2.0 or 3.0?](#)

A.

Yes. The Essentials 2010 setup process allows you to upgrade from an existing installation of WSUS 2.0 or 3.0. This upgrade will preserve existing update information like update binaries and metadata plus groups and approvals. You can find specific guidance in the [System Center Essentials 2007 Migration Guide](#).

Q. [Can I migrate to Essentials 2010 from an existing installation of Microsoft Operations Manager \(MOM\) 2005 Workgroup Edition?](#)

A.

Yes. Essentials 2010 provides support for migrating management packs from both Operations Manager 2005 and Operations Manager 2005 Workgroup Edition. You can also choose to establish side-by-side operation with Essentials 2010 to preserve mission critical data. You can find specific guidance in the [System Center Essentials 2007 Migration Guide](#).

Q. [What happens if I grow beyond the 50 Server and 500 Client management limits of System Center Essentials 2010; can I migrate to System Center Operations Manager 2007 and System Center Configuration Manager 2007?](#)

A.

Yes. You can find specific guidance in the [System Center Essentials 2007 Migration Guide](#).

Pricing and Licensing

Q. [How many servers, clients and network devices can I manage with Essentials 2010?](#)

A.

Based on customer feedback, there will be some changes to the Essentials 2010 licensing model and scale limitations:

1. The new licensing model is based on physical Windows-based client and server devices instead of Windows operating system instances. This means you could run several virtual servers on a single physical server and license just the single physical server.
2. Customers will be able to purchase the Essentials management server separately and then purchase one Client Management License (CML) and one Server Management License (SML) for each physical client or physical server they want to manage.
3. The total server management limit is raised from 30 to 50 Windows Server operating system instances. You can still manage up to 500 Windows-based clients. Essentials 2010 will still not track or limit the number of SNMP-capable network devices you want to manage, however performance parameters may limit you to approximately 75 network devices.

Q. [How much will Essentials 2010 cost?](#)

A.

We will release updated pricing information at product general availability on June 1, 2010.