

# Microsoft Software Assurance

## Frequently Asked Questions

Get answers to frequently asked questions on select Software Assurance benefits.

Sequenced alphabetically, you may need to scroll down to view more benefit information.

[Expand all](#)

24x7 Problem Resolution Support

### **How many SA Support Incidents do I get with Software Assurance?**

Your organization's investment in Software Assurance determines the number of phone support incidents you are eligible to receive. When you have at least one Server License covered with Software Assurance (SA) you get a complimentary phone support incident, plus unlimited Web support for all the Servers covered with SA. You are also entitled to an additional phone support incident for every US\$200K spent on System and Application SA, and for every US\$20K spent on Server and Client Access License (CAL) SA.

Since other rules apply, use Microsoft Volume Licensing Advisor or Volume License Service Center reporting tools to [check your benefits](#). Your Microsoft Account Manager or Microsoft partner can also help you calculate the number of incidents you may receive.

### **How do I start using these benefits?**

The first step is to make sure you have been identified as someone who can initiate support requests for your organization. Your organization's Software Assurance Manager identifies you using [Volume License Service Center](#), and gives you a Software Assurance Access ID (SAID) that you will need when requesting support.

Then, depending on the level of support you need, you can either:

Initiate 24x7 Problem Resolution Phone Support Incident by calling Support Customer Care 1-800-936-3500 (U.S. and Canada only); for help outside this area see [Microsoft International Help and Support](#).

**Or**

Initiate a problem resolution request through the [Microsoft Support Web site](#). While access to this electronic support sites is available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, **electronic or Web-based support responses**

**will occur during Business Hours.** As such, Web-based Support Incidents should not be initiated for business critical situations requiring more immediate assistance.

In both instances you'll need to supply,

- Your Software Assurance Access ID (SAID)
- The Product edition and version that shows the issue
- Contact information for person authorized to use Software Assurance support benefits

### **How do I transfer incidents to Premier Support?**

You can convert Software Assurance 24x7 Problem Resolution Support incidents to Premier Problem Resolution Support, by reserving the incidents for Premier using VLSC, and contacting your Technical Account Manager. The conversion ratio will depend on local Premier list prices and can vary by country.

For more information about transferring Software Assurance support incident to Premier Support, contact your Microsoft Services representative or visit the [Microsoft Services Premier Support](#) Web site for more information.

### **Where can I go for more help?**

In the U.S. and Canada, contact support customer care by telephone at 1-800-936-3500. You can also use the "Chat Online" feature available in the right navigation column of this page during the Central European Time (CET) business hours of 08:00 and 17:00.

E-Learning

### **Who gets to use SA E-Learning?**

Anyone in your organization can take advantage of SA E-Learning. In general, the number of licensed copies of qualifying products that your organization has with Software Assurance determines the number of users in your organization that may access E-learning courses for the corresponding product(s).

If you're considering purchasing SA, you can estimate your SA E-Learning benefits using [Microsoft License Advisor](#). This online tool asks about your product decisions, deployment situation, and whether you want Software Assurance and then recommends "best fit" purchase option(s) indicating your estimated SA Benefits.

If you're a current SA customer, you can [check your SA benefits](#) through [Microsoft Volume Licensing Service Center \(VLSC\)](#). You'll need SA Benefits Manager privileges (or other access permissions) to do so.

### **What courses are available, in which languages?**

SA E-Learning offers hundreds of hours of select courses in multiple languages for some of Microsoft's most popular products and are grouped three categories: **Applications** (such as Microsoft® Office 2010), **Systems** (such as Microsoft® Windows® 7), and Server (for example Microsoft® Exchange Server). Select **Systems** and **Applications** courses are offered in English, Chinese (Traditional and Simplified), Czech, French, Danish, Dutch, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese (Brazil), Russian, Spanish, and Swedish. Select Server courses are offered in English, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish.

You can view the [current list of SA eligible courses](#), under **Program Type**, select **SA Systems, SA Applications and/or SA Server**.

### **How long do I have to complete an E-Learning course? Do they ever expire?**

Your right to initiate an SA E-Learning course expires with your Software Assurance coverage. If you start a course before our SA coverage expires, you have one year to complete that course, regardless of your contract expiration date.

### **What's the difference between the Microsoft Software Assurance E-Learning benefit and the Training Vouchers benefit?**

Microsoft Software Assurance [E-Learning courses](#) provide interactive self-paced training, designed to help employees get more out of using a broad range of Microsoft products. The [Training Vouchers benefit](#) is instructor-led technical training provided by Microsoft Certified Partners. It is designed to help IT Professionals and Developers build their technical skills and prepare for deployment of new software.

### **What if I want to access other E-Learning courses that are not part of SA?**

There are more than 1,400 hours of in-depth official Microsoft E-Learning available for IT Professionals, Developers, and Information Workers/home and office users. If you need additional training for your organization there are several ways to supplement your existing benefits. [Find out more](#).

### **Can I use E-Learning with my organization's Learning Management System (LMS)?**

Yes. All courses in the **Applications** and **Systems** course categories can be integrated into an LMS. You can download SCORM-compliant content from Volume License Service Center or order CDs from your reseller. Courses in the E-Learning **Server** category cannot be integrated into your LMS because they provide virtual labs that must be hosted on the Microsoft Web site.

### **Need help deciding?**

This [SA E-Learning Delivery Option Guide](#) gives you a quick overview and tells you what to expect with each delivery options.

This [matrix](#) can help you assess your options and discuss them with others. This one page helps you quickly compare the pros and cons of different delivery options, and is the perfect complement to the SA E-Learning Delivery Option Guide.

### **How can I tell when staff members complete their coursework?**

If you manage training for others and need reporting SA E-Learning offers two solutions, each tied to the method you choose for allocating E-Learning Benefits among your staff.

- **Learning Central:** Learning Central gives you more control over which courses staff members take because it lets training managers or direct managers create and assign training plans for individuals. Using this web-based administration method is a good choice when you want to:
  - Assign training to complement new product deployments, systems upgrades, etc.
  - Funnel relevant training to technical and non-technical groups (accounting, sales, systems support)
  - Have direct managers customize skill-development plans for individual employees
- **E-Learning Access Codes and the Business Administration Center (BAC):** If you assign SA E-Learning Benefits using VLSC to distribute access codes, you will be able to view reports through the Business Administration Center (BAC). Recall that when you give an employee an E-Learning access code he or she may choose between hundreds of courses. Using this more open course allocation and reporting method is a good choice when you want to:
  - Track training initiatives tied to new product introductions
  - See how your E-Learning benefits are being used throughout your entire organization
  - Create customized reporting on the consumption and completion of select E-Learning courses

### **Want to know more about learning assessment?**

[Software Assurance E-Learning Resources](#) offers detailed guidance on Learning Central and BAC reporting options.

### **Where can I go for more help?**

[Software Assurance E-Learning resources](#)

Home Use Program

### **What products can I get through HUP?**

While the list of products varies by region, offering, application, version and language, HUP typically offers your qualifying employees Microsoft's most popular and newest Office System products, for a fraction of what they would pay to own the products outright. As an example, your qualifying employees who use Office Professional Plus 2010 on their work computers at your company, would be eligible to acquire the HUP equivalent (Office Professional Plus 2010 HUP or Office 2008 for Mac), for use on their home (or mobile) computers.

To address the needs of multilingual individuals who routinely create or edit documents and presentations in different languages, HUP offers you optional Office Language Packs that enable Document Proofing Tools, Localized User Interface, and Help and User Assistance Tools for 37 different languages.

Please visit the [HUP Web site](#) to see current offers.

### **How much does it cost?**

Customers pay \$9.95 for the license and download of each product available. Physical back-up media is available for an additional \$12.00 (includes shipping/not available for Language Packs). Prices can change and do vary outside the U.S. See the [HUP Web site](#) for current offers.

### **What do I need to do to offer HUP to my employees?**

Offering the HUP to your employees is easy. First your organization's Software Assurance Manager will need to log into Microsoft Volume Licensing Service Center (VLSC) and [activate your Home Use Program benefits](#). Once activated, your Software Assurance Manager will get a HUP program code that he or she can send to employees using the email templates, banner ads or other [downloadable marketing resources from HUP](#).

Employees getting this information will use their HUP program code and work email address to [validate their eligibility](#). Once accepted, they'll get a confirmation email that allows them to make purchases directly through the HUP Online Store.

### **Do I have any other responsibilities?**

As the Volume Licensing customer you are not responsible for your individual employee's compliance with the Home Use Program end user license terms. Those terms are between Microsoft and the individual employee. We do require that you limit Home Use Program access to employees and tell them when they should discontinue use of the Home Use Program software, for example if your Software Assurance coverage ends or the employee leaves employment.

### **Where can I go for more help?**

For HUP Office product support, visit the [Office Product Support Solution Center](#).

## Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack

### **What is the Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack for Software Assurance?**

The Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (MDOP) for Software Assurance is a dynamic desktop solution available to Software Assurance customers, which helps reduce application deployment costs, enables delivery of applications as services, and allows for better management and control of enterprise desktop environments. It enables organizations to manage their software assets, predict and accelerate software deployment and management, and enhance IT responsiveness and end-user uptime.

### **What is included in MDOP for Software Assurance?**

There are six key technologies in the Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack for Software Assurance:

- Microsoft Application Virtualization (App-V)
- Microsoft Enterprise Desktop Virtualization (MED-V)
- Microsoft Advanced Group Policy Management (AGMP)
- Microsoft Asset Inventory Service (AIS)
- Microsoft Diagnostics and Recovery Toolset (DaRT)
- Microsoft System Center Desktop Error Monitoring (DEM)

### **Where can I learn more about MDOP?**

- Visit the MDOP website at <http://www.microsoft.com/mdop>
- Technical documentation is available at MDOP TechNet site <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/mdop>
- News and updates are available in MDOP blog at <http://blogs.technet.com/mdop>
- Read Customer Testimonials on MDOP technologies at <http://www.microsoft.com/casestudies>

### **Do I have to license Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack for Software Assurance on 100% of my desktops?**

Only if your license agreement requires enterprise-wide coverage of selected products. Otherwise, you have the option to purchase as many licenses for the Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack for Software Assurance as you like—up to the number of Windows desktops covered with Software Assurance. We strongly recommend that the Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack for Software Assurance purchase be made on the same enrollment as the Windows desktop Software Assurance coverage to ensure that the coverage period is coterminous.

### **Can the Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack be added to an existing Enterprise Agreement (EA)?**

Yes. The Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack for Software Assurance can be added to existing EA or Select Licenses as long as the Windows Desktops are covered under Software Assurance.

### **Where can I get MDOP?**

MDOP subscribers can download the software through the [Volume Licensing Service Center](#).

### **How can I evaluate MDOP?**

Five of the MDOP technologies (App-V;MED-V; AGPM; DART and DEM) are available for test and evaluation through certain [MSDN](#) and [TechNet](#) subscriptions in accordance with MSDN and TechNet agreements. Please note there is no trial available for the Asset Inventory Service.

New Product Versions

### **If my organization has Software Assurance, can we upgrade to the new version of any product?**

You may upgrade to the latest version of any underlying licensed product for which you have Software Assurance coverage.

### **What determines eligibility to receive new versions of product releases – the availability of the product on the monthly Price List or availability of the product for download on the Microsoft Volume Licensing Service Center (VLSC)?**

For Software Assurance customers, eligibility to receive new versions of products is the earlier of either:

- the month Microsoft makes licenses for that product available for ordering (on the Price List), or
- the month the product is available for download from the Volume Licensing Service Center (VLSC).

Software Assurance customers have rights to the next version of a product as long as their Software Assurance coverage continues through the month of the availability of the product.

We recommend you stay in touch with your Microsoft reseller or Microsoft account manager for news of new products and their availability.

### **What happens if my organization drops Software Assurance in the same month that a new product is made available on the VLSC? Can I still download and use the new product?**

Yes. Active Software Assurance coverage always expires at the end of a month no matter what day within the month your organization originally signed the agreement. For new product version rights this means that you can still download eligible new products posted to the VLSC during that final month.

## Planning Services

### **How do I convert Training Vouchers to a Planning Services voucher?**

Your Software Assurance Manager can increase the service level for your Planning Services by converting unused training days using the [Volume License Service Center](#). See more information in the [Software Assurance Quick Start Guide](#).

### **How many days/hours of Planning Services will my organization receive?**

The number of days and hours depends on the number of qualifying Office Application licenses and the number of Core CAL suites and Enterprise CAL suites for which Software Assurance is acquired. There are several resources you can use to [check your benefits](#). You can also ask your Microsoft Partner or Account Manager or consult the Microsoft [Product List](#) for more information.

### **How do I find qualified consultants who deliver these services?**

Planning Services may be delivered by certified Microsoft Partners or Microsoft Consulting Services. You can search for Planning Service Providers [here](#). Your Microsoft Resellers or Account Manager can also help you locate qualified consultants to suit your planning needs.

### **Do the Planning Services include deployment of software?**

Desktop Deployment Planning Services, SharePoint Deployment Planning Services, and Exchange Deployment Planning Services deliver pre-determined services that result in a deployment plan; the actual deployment of the software is not included.

TechNet for Software Assurance

### **What is the difference between TechNet Online Concierge Chat, Managed Newsgroups and the TechNet Plus Direct Subscription?**

*TechNet Online Concierge Chat* provides live, instant-message access to a Microsoft resource that can help you find technical resources and get answers to non-technical questions. You can use this benefit when you have questions about where to find downloads, patches, or knowledge base articles. *TechNet Managed Newsgroups* let you submit technical questions through the TechNet online forums and Microsoft support professionals monitor the newsgroups to help ensure accuracy of the answers provided.

*The TechNet Plus Direct Subscription* through Software Assurance provides one of your IT Professionals with fast and convenient access to all Microsoft full-version software for evaluation, with no time or feature limits; two complimentary Professional Support incidents—valued at approximately U.S.\$900 each; Beta software (the latest releases available prior to public release); e-Learning courses; and access to the

TechNet Plus Library—the latest content, tools, security, user documents, and support Knowledge Base—updated regularly. Eligibility varies by licensing program and the number of qualifying products with Software Assurance.

### **Who gets to use these benefits?**

The number of IT professional given access to *TechNet Online Concierge Chat* and *TechNet Online Managed Newsgroup* varies by the type and level of your volume licensing agreement and products purchased. [Check your benefits](#) or contact your Microsoft Reseller for more information.

*TechNet Plus Direct Subscription* through Software Assurance provides one IT professional on your staff with access to *TechNet Online Concierge Chat* and *TechNet Online Managed Newsgroup*, plus:

- Access to all Microsoft full-version software for evaluation, with no time or feature limits.
- Two complimentary 24x7 Problem Resolution Support incidents (valued at approximately US\$900 each), which gives you around-the-clock help for business-critical issues with phone support for all Microsoft server products, Windows, and the Microsoft Office System.
- Access to the latest beta software releases, available prior to public release.
- A selection of free Microsoft E-Learning courses to help prepare for certification or build technical skills.
- Access to TechNet Plus Library, which includes the latest content, tools, security, user documents, and support Knowledge Base.

If more IT professionals in your company want TechNet Subscriptions, you may be eligible for volume discounts through your Volume License agreement. Contact your Microsoft Volume Licensing Reseller for more information.

### **How do I start using these benefits?**

Your Software Assurance Manager gets the process started by using the Microsoft Volume Licensing Service Center VLSC to activate and assign TechNet for SA benefits to individuals in your organization. Once activated and assigned, each TechNet Direct Plus Subscriber (or TechNet Concierge Chat and Newsgroup service user) will register him or herself individually by associating their subscriber ID with a Windows Live ID.

### **How can I purchase additional TechNet Plus Direct Subscriptions?**

Purchasing through Microsoft Volume Licensing can offer significant savings on multiple subscriptions. If you already have a Volume License Agreement, contact your Microsoft Volume License Reseller to purchase TechNet Plus.

You can [find more information](#) for upgrading, renewing and purchasing TechNet subscription(s) choosing an option that's best for you.

### **Where can I go for more help?**

You can learn more about TechNet services and subscriptions by visiting the [TechNet Website](#) For questions about TechNet: In the US & Canada call Toll-Free (800) 344-2121, Mon-Fri 6:30am-5:30pm Pacific Time. Elsewhere, please visit [TechNet Subscriptions Worldwide](#) for the customer service center in your region.

### Training Vouchers

#### **Who gets to use SA Training Vouchers?**

While the technical nature of available courses make Training Vouchers suited to IT professionals and developers, anyone in your organization can use them. The number of training days available varies by licensing program and the number of qualifying licenses you have with SA. Typically, your SA Benefits grant you 2 days of voucher training for every 50 application pool licenses (e.g. Office) covered by SA. For systems pool licenses (e.g. Windows client upgrade) this ratio is 1:50. For details, refer to the [Microsoft Product List for Volume Licensing](#).

If you're considering purchasing SA, you can estimate your SA Training Voucher benefits using [Microsoft License Advisor](#). This online tool asks about your product decisions, deployment situation, and whether you want Software Assurance and then recommends "best fit" purchase option(s) indicating your estimated SA Benefits.

If you're a current SA customer, you can check your SA benefits through [Microsoft Volume Licensing Services Center \(VLSC\)](#). You must be registered to use this tool.

#### **What courses are available?**

Available courses are those that have been created for IT Professional or Developer participants. Courses that are NOT eligible include those created for end users – for example Microsoft Office Excel, Word, and PowerPoint. Microsoft Hands-on labs, First Look Clinics, and beta courses also are not eligible for Software Assurance Training Vouchers. You may accommodate end user education through your SA E-Learning Benefits. SA TechNet offers advanced education for IT Pros.

All courses are taught at CPLs by Microsoft certified trainers using Microsoft official courses. Use [Microsoft Learning Class Locator](#) to find a classroom training site in your area.

You can view the [current list of SA eligible courses](#), under **Program Type**, select **SA Training Vouchers**.

#### **How long do we have to use the Training Vouchers?**

The right to access training vouchers expires with your Software Assurance coverage. If you create a training voucher and reserve it with a qualified Learning Solutions partner before the expiration of your Software Assurance coverage, the voucher remains valid for 180 days after the date it was created. Any training voucher not reserved with a Learning Solutions partner before the end of your Software Assurance coverage will expire.

### **How can I use Training Vouchers to get more Planning Services Days?**

Planning Services provides structured planning services from Microsoft partners to help you lower the cost and complexity of deploying new software and can help you maximize the value of your existing software.

Consulting engagements are held on customers' premises and result in a high-level deployment plan that incorporates best practices derived from Microsoft Consulting Services and qualified partner engagements. SA Planning Services include:

- Desktop Deployment Planning Services
- SharePoint Deployment Planning Services
- Exchange Deployment Planning Services
- Business Value Planning Services

You can increase the number of engagement days by converting unused Software Assurance Training Voucher days into Planning Services days on a three-to-one basis (three Training Voucher days equal one Planning Service day). Your Software Assurance Manager can manage this conversion using the [Volume Licensing Service Center](#). For details, refer to the [Microsoft Product List for Volume Licensing](#).

### **Where can I go for more help?**

[Software Assurance Training Voucher Resources](#)

[Microsoft Learning Support](#)

Windows 7 Enterprise

### **What is the difference between Windows 7 Enterprise and Windows 7 Professional?**

Windows 7 Enterprise is a premium business operating system that is available exclusively to Microsoft Software Assurance customers. It is not available from retailers or through original equipment manufacturers (OEMs).

In addition to the data protection, application compatibility and simplified IT management features that are part of Windows 7 Professional, Windows 7 Enterprise offers distinct business value. It improves productivity

of branch office users through BranchCache™ and connects mobile users to the corporate resources with DirectAccess. Federated Search enhancements provide easy access to the data. Windows 7 Enterprise also helps you protect sensitive data stored on thumb drives and other transport devices with Windows BitLocker™ To Go Drive Encryption, and gives you the power to control applications that are allowed to run on user PCs with AppLocker™, providing yet another way to limit the risk of malicious software.

Because the Multilanguage User Interface (MUI) is included, Windows 7 Enterprise offers you the ability to roll out, support and maintain the same multilingual image worldwide with a single installation and offer seamless interaction to users with different language preferences.

### **Can I deploy Windows 7 Enterprise on computers that are not covered by Software Assurance?**

No. Windows 7 Enterprise is available only to Software Assurance customers.

### **How can I benefit from virtualization technologies deploying Windows 7 Enterprise?**

As a Software Assurance customer, you can benefit from virtualization technologies to speed deployment of Windows 7 Enterprise, while reducing costs to your organization.

You can use MDOP Application Virtualization (App-V) to seamlessly deliver the right applications to the right users without lengthy per PC installation, and manage application updates and patches centrally. App-V reduces application-to-application conflicts while significantly reducing your application testing time. You also have the option to deploy and manage virtual PC images using MDOP Med-V, and enable key enterprise scenarios including resolving application compatibility with a new version of Windows. Also as a Software Assurance customer, when you deploy Windows 7 Enterprise, you can install up to four copies of the operating system in a virtual machine for a single user on a single device, which can support your IT testing and other usage scenarios. For further use right details, please refer to the [Product Use Rights](#) document.

Effective July 1, 2010 Software Assurance customers will no longer pay extra for Windows Virtual Desktop Access (Windows VDA, formerly called VECD). This means you can use your Windows PCs already covered under Software Assurance as access devices to your [Virtual Desktop Infrastructure \(VDI\)](#) at no additional costs. Removing this annual fee represents a meaningful savings, enhances deployment flexibility and helps simplify licensing Windows for customers building virtual desktop infrastructure environments.

### **Where can I get more information about Windows 7 Enterprise?**

More detailed product information including reviews, analyst reports and customer case studies is available from [Windows Enterprise Products Web site](#).

You can find additional technical information on the [TechNet Windows 7 TechCenter](#).

[Software Assurance Topics](#)

## Review the Benefits

- **New Products**
- **Deployment**
- **Training**
- **Support**
- Specialized Benefits
  - Cold Backups
  - Windows Fundamentals
  - Enterprise Source Licensing
  - Spread Payments

## For Your Organization

- Large (500+ PCs)
- Midsize (250-500 PCs)
- Small (5-250 PCs)
- Academic
- Document Library

## Use Software Assurance

- [Check My Benefits](#)
- [Use My Benefits](#)
- [Maximize My Benefits](#)
- [Sign into VLSC](#)

## Microsoft Volume Licensing Site Map

- **Evaluate**
- [Volume Licensing Overview](#)
- [Customer Testimonials](#)
- [Industry Research](#)
- [Media Coverage](#)
- [Licensing Briefs](#)
- [Product Licensing Information](#)
- [Software Assurance](#)
- **Decision Tool**
- [Microsoft License Advisor](#)
  - **Programs and Offerings**
  - [Open License](#)
  - [Open Value](#)
  - [Open Value Subscription](#)

- Select License
- Select Plus
- Enterprise Agreement
- Enterprise Subscription Agreement
- Enrollments for the Enterprise Agreement
- Microsoft Online Services
- ISV Royalty Licensing
- Services Provider License Agreement
- Financing
- Software Assurance
- **Activate Benefits and Products**
- Use Software Assurance
- Download Software
- Product Activation and Key Information
- **Manage My Agreements**
- Volume Licensing Service Center
- Fulfillment News
- Build a Customized Product Use Rights Document
- **Information For**
- Home Users
- Industries: Charity, Education, Government, Health
- Independent Software Vendors (ISVs)
- Services Providers
- Microsoft Partners