

Windows Administrators Meeting
November 9, 2012
Notes (taken by Steve Kunz [ITSYS])

Meeting Started (9:00)

Announcements

- KMS Changes: Beata Pruski [ITSYS] discussed changes in the KMS system effective November 5, 2012. On that date the original two KMS servers were retired from the pool “ks.iastate.edu” and replaced with two new KMS servers. The new servers are capable of activating Windows Vista, Windows 7, Windows 8, Windows Server 2008, Windows Server 2012, Office 2010, and Office 2013. **[Update since the meeting]** Some issues were reported at the meeting with some systems not being able to activate following the upgrade of the KMS servers. These issues have since been resolved and corrective actions by desktop/server admins are no longer necessary. If you see any problems activating any of the Microsoft products listed above send email to Beata Pruski [ITSYS] at bapruski@iastate.edu.

Terminal Services License Servers -- [LAS and ITSYS]

Andrew Albinger [LAS] and Steven Spencer [LAS] talked about their use of Microsoft Terminal Services within various departments within LAS. LAS is using terminal services as remote “lab space” and for software they don’t want to license/install on individual computers (for example, large stat packages). LAS listed about six departments using terminal services with a total of about 3,000 device and user CALs. The “device licensing” model is no longer working for LAS as people continue to have more and more devices per person (hence the CAL cost rises). They would like to move to “user licensing”. John Clark [LAS] commented that some new Microsoft applications used Terminal Services as a backend (Multipoint being one example). Some other products (such as a Western Digital storage server) also integrate Terminal Services into the product).

Darin Dugan [ITSYS] and Beata Pruski [ITSYS] talked about various scenarios to address the Terminal Services licensing issues. Beata Pruski [ITSYS] worked with the College of Engineering about three years ago to address the issue with Terminal Services licensing using Windows Server 2008 license servers. Documentation on ITS recommendations based on that project is here:

<http://www.tech.its.iastate.edu/windows/admin/W2K8TermServ.pdf>

Darin Dugan indicated that current license servers running Windows Server 2008 R2 do not do “auto discovery” any more (as addressed in the above document). However, as in the past “user CALs” are based on the “honor system” and it is up to the manager of the license server to assure they have purchased enough “user CALs” to match (or exceed) the number retrieved by the user community. Three scenarios exist for a Terminal Services License Server environment at ISU.

- 1) ITS-hosted global license server: Provided a sufficient number of CALs can be licensed, IT Services could host one license server for all departmental remote desktop servers. This wouldn't necessarily require licensing the entire campus, but would require usage monitoring for compliance if a limited number were purchased. License compliance by ITS.
- 2) ITS-hosted shared license server: Multiple departments purchasing their own CALs could agree to share a license server hosted by IT Services and pay for their own licenses as required. The license server would be limited to specific remote desktop servers and reporting would help to ensure that departments are purchasing sufficient CALs. License compliance by ITS.
- 3) Departmental license servers: Any department can set up and run a license server. Per-device CAL reporting works on the box. Per-user CAL reporting could be facilitated by adding the license server to the "Terminal Server License Servers" Active Directory group, or possibly delegating similar permissions to a specific group at a specific OU (faculty/staff only). License compliance by each department running a license server.

Mike Lohrbach [ITSYS] talked about the costs of running a Terminal Services Licensing Server under the current Microsoft agreement (EES - Enrollment Education Solutions). CAL costs would be:

- Faculty/staff: RDS CAL, \$4.80 per FTE. About \$30K per year.
- Students: RDS CAL, \$3.00 per FTE (but you may also consider the External Connector). About \$90K per year.
- RDS External Connector, \$686.16 per server

In summary, to license "users across the board" on a ITS-hosted global license server (Scenario 1 above) it would cost ITS about \$120K per year.

Discussion by people at the meeting started by Jim Wellman [ENGR] asking the question if VDI could provide an alternative to Terminal Services. John Clark [LAS] responded that cost studies to him indicate that Terminal Services is much more cost efficient than VDI. Steve Heideman [CHEM] added that Terminal Services has a "remote-app" capability not provided by VDI. It appeared that VDI and Terminal Services both have their strong points depending on the need.

The discussion ended with the assurance from ITS that this discussion would be carried on into the next CCSG meeting as we continue to assess the needs (both immediate and future) of Terminal Services at ISU. If you have any feedback and can provide the number of Terminal Services CALs (either user or machine) your college/department is using please send it to Steve Kunz at skunz@iastate.edu.

Open Discussion

Chris Thach [CIRAS] asked about the current status of the user provisioning changes related to staff leaving the university and affiliate account sponsorship. Steve Kunz [ITSYS] commented that all the feedback provided in the last week is being taken under consideration by the CIO office, internal auditors, and ITS staff. Look for announcements next week on changes based on the feedback provided.

Meeting Adjourned (10:05)

Next meeting is scheduled for December 14 (provided a sufficient agenda exists).