

# CDW AND MICROSOFT: ENABLING BUSINESS FROM ANYWHERE



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In 2020, 'going to work' took on a different meaning. Almost overnight new, remote workforces were established, and working from home became the norm for millions of employees. But even prior to the pandemic, many organisations were embracing a new distributed workforce, where the focus wasn't on where you worked, but how you worked.

Organisations today must ensure their employees can be productive from anywhere, and from any device. A huge part of that is the user experience; employees want the familiarity of their office desktop, and to access everything they need to do their job, seamlessly and securely.

One way to achieve this is with Windows Virtual Desktop (WVD). When it comes to maintaining 'business as usual', WVD enables users to access applications and data from anywhere, while retaining administrative control for IT teams. It can run over a thin client, desktop or laptop, from wherever there is internet access. This means simplified access via any device type or location and simplified control.

## WHAT IS WVD?

A fully cloud-native platform, WVD is a comprehensive desktop and app virtualisation service running in Microsoft Azure. And how does it differ from other virtual desktop platforms? Launched in 2019, WVD is the only virtual desktop that delivers a combination of simplified management, multi-session Windows 10, optimisations for Office 365 ProPlus, and support for Remote Desktop Services (RDS) environments.

This means that users can still have the full Windows 10 desktop experience that they would in the office, whilst working remotely. In fact, WVD has been designed with simplicity, scalability and security in mind.



## Simplicity

The thing that sets WVD apart from other virtual desktop systems is how easy it can be to set up and manage. Partnering with CDW offers customers the benefit of leveraging Microsoft's infrastructure delivered via the Platform as a Service (PaaS) model, and CDW's expertise and customer service. Microsoft takes care of the core components of facilitating user access and load balancing, maintenance, administration and updates, while CDW can manage the end-user desktop element such as image management, policy updates, scaling, updates of the desktops or new image release. All of which contributes to a significant reduction in costly admin overheads, maintenance and integration requirements. It also removes a large chunk of the complexity usually associated with the application of desktop delivery – the front-end components – and freeing up valuable time and resources for the IT team.

Furthermore, existing Microsoft 365 customers may be eligible to utilise WVD at no extra cost, based on their licence, therefore only paying for their consumption in the cloud.



## Security

In an uncertain business landscape, organisations need to react quickly to changing market scenarios. WVD can quickly scale in line with your business' requirements, as and when you need it – such as needing to stand up a new remote workforce almost overnight.

There is no upfront investment in servers and other hardware, licences (where customers are eligible) or additional memory, or time waiting for rollout and installation. WVD is hosted on Azure, a public cloud platform, meaning you can scale the number of your virtual machines (VMs) up or down on demand – the right capacity when you want it, ensuring cost management efficiencies throughout the peaks and troughs of demand. Just log in to the portal and specify how many additional machines you need to add, or remove.

In fact, updates in Spring 2020 have brought additional functionality to WVD and simplified management, making it easier than ever for IT admins to get up and running within minutes, and to spin virtual environments up and down on demand.

CDW can even help you scale within different areas of the business, based on their individual requirements – whether that's how powerful the machine is, or how many machines are needed to accommodate the number of users accessing them. We will assess your different teams' needs and usage, and deploy the best solution so you gain maximum return on investment.





## Multi-session capabilities

Windows 10 is tailored for the user experience. One of the key differentiators for users around WVD is that it is the only virtual desktop platform on which you can run a Windows 10 multi-session. Whereas traditionally you would need a dedicated machine per user, now multiple users can access a Windows 10 environment. This provides users with the familiar Windows 10 experience, while IT can benefit from the cost advantages of multi-session and use existing per-user Windows licensing.

## Seamless collaboration – from anywhere

IDC forecasts that by 2021, 60 percent of the top global 2000 companies will have adopted a future-workspace model: "a flexible, intelligent, collaborative virtual/physical work environment", to improve employee experience and productivity. Microsoft 365 was designed for collaboration, creativity and productivity, combining comprehensive calling and meeting capabilities, bringing together conversations, videos, meetings, files, Office apps, and third-party integrations into a single hub.

WVD provides access to all the communication and collaboration features within the Microsoft 365 platform. From wherever the user may be, the familiar Windows experience is seamless and consistent. It also enables teamwork with geographically dispersed teams now able to work from one resilient platform, connected through a centralised location.



## Scalability

Another must-have with any system that enables remote working is security – highlighted by a sharp rise in cyber-attacks after the shift to homeworking. However, Microsoft's investment in security is second-to-none. WVD, combined with the M365 licensing SKUs, can protect customer environments, as seen with the powerful features such as Azure Security Center and Azure Sentinel that are built into the Azure platform.

- 90+ compliance offerings
- 3500+ global security cybersecurity experts
- 6.5 trillion global signals daily
- \$1billion annual cybersecurity investment

To consume WVD you need a hybrid identity – Azure Active Directory (AD) plus Windows, or Azure AD domain services. You can implement extra security measures like multi-factor authentication (MFA) for an additional layer of authentication to protect against unauthorised access. Other security options include encryption of disks at rest and customer managed security keys, which provide further confidence that your data is secure.

## Ensuring compliance

CDW helped one occupational health services provider overcome complexities in its disparate application landscape and establish a better framework for managing cloud services.

The company's development team – which was dispersed around the globe – needed to access their development environments, while adhering to industry compliance requirements. Using WVD, CDW established hierarchical management groups in the cloud, using a privileged access model to govern three main areas: a sandbox environment for experimentation, a test area with greater controls and a production area that is locked down.

This simplified access for remote teams, encouraged innovation, improved clarity of management and reduced the risk of non-compliance and unwarranted access that could disrupt vital business services, all whilst maintaining control and compliance.

# Why CDW?

As one of only a handful of direct Cloud Solution Providers to work with Microsoft, CDW has the expertise you need to get the most out of your WVD deployment.

What sets CDW apart is our high levels of technical skills and industry expertise. We have certified specialists in Microsoft 365, Azure, security solutions and governance. Further, we have qualified architects and consultants that have many years' experience in end user computing, with their knowledge ranging across all and existing technologies.

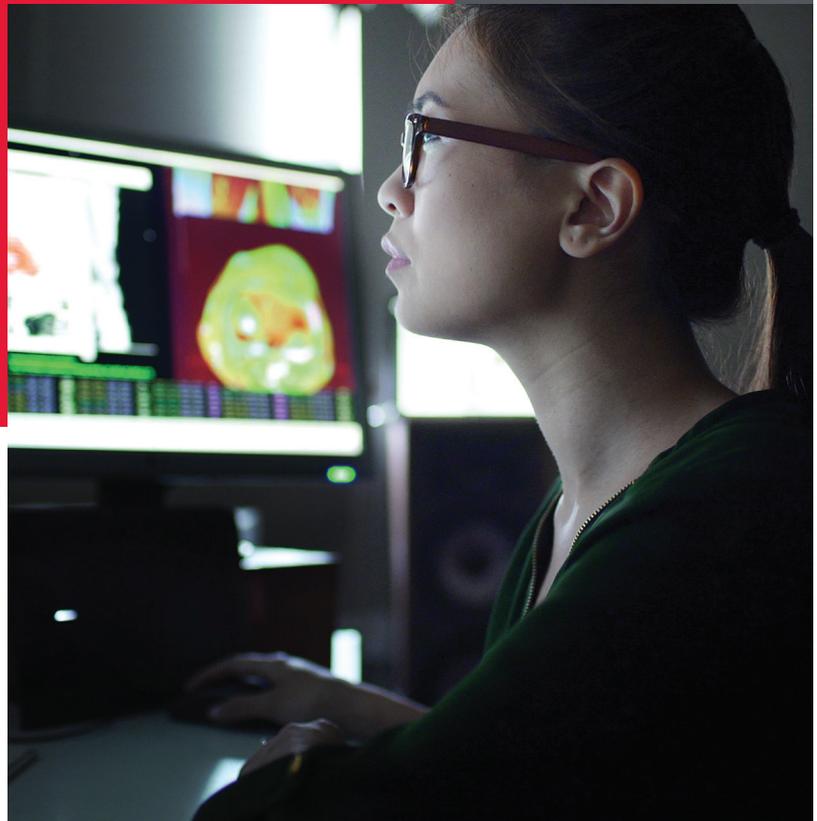
Our Microsoft Certified Solutions Architects have the skills, knowledge and capability to tailor your WVD set-up to your business requirements, laying the groundwork with a comprehensive audit, proof of concept and consultation process. CDW also offer a WVD proof of value service. By implementing the platform for a small subset of users you can experience the solution and see how it will integrate with your existing software and tools.

We are also aware, however, that the reality of managing a cloud environment can be challenging. It requires a specific set of skills, and many IT teams already have a full-time job managing existing infrastructure and services. So not only can we design and deploy your WVD solution, we can support it day-to-day with a new managed service, CDW CloudCare® for Windows Virtual Desktop. Structured to suit your needs, the offering ranges from basic design, build and deploy through to a fully managed service.

Alongside our expertise, we have relationships with an extensive ecosystem of WVD partners, including hardware providers, independent software vendors and other value add partners to deliver an entire solution stack, tailored to the customer's requirements.

Organisations now understand that work is no longer a place you go, but a thing you do. Ensuring your employees can work remotely simply, seamlessly and securely is essential, as is deploying a solution that is a perfect fit for your organisation.

Email us here, or speak to your Account Manager today about how CDW can help you deploy WVD, to enable your employees to be productive from wherever they are.



## CONTACT

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/23-04-2020-who-reports-fivefold-increase-in-cyber-attacks-urges-vigilance>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerid=EMEA44255218>

