Remote Desktop Session Host Servers

This document contains general hardware recommendations for Remote Desktop Session Host servers running the Horizon Suite. Also documented here are any concerns or caveats regarding the configuration or operation of the Horizon Suite software.

Hardware

For the best performance and end-user experience, any Remote Desktop Session Host server hosting Horizon Software user sessions should be configured with fast storage and low-latency/high-throughput network hardware. Our general hardware recommendations are as follows:

Component	Recommendation
Processor	Any Intel or AMD x64 processor 2.0 GHz or faster **1 core per concurrent user**
Memory	8GB base for OS/software **1GB additional per concurrent user**
Storage	At least 250GB **10GB additional per user**
Network	1Gbps NIC and infrastructure required 2.5Gbps or 10Gbps NIC and infrastructure recommended

Virtualization

Horizon recommends virtualization whenever possible. This makes deployment, configuration, migration, and recovery easy and quick as well as enabling more reliable VM-based and virtual disk-based backup methods. When virtualizing servers for a Horizon Software deployment, the following hardware recommendations are for the Horizon Software host server VM, not the hypervisor host! The hypervisor host hardware specs should be determined accordingly to *cumulatively* support the hardware recommendations of **all servers** being virtualized on that host.

Operating System

The Horizon Software suite can be installed and used in a Remote Desktop environment consisting of any server(s) running a currently-supported Windows Server operating system as per the Microsoft Fixed Lifecycle Policy. Currently-supported versions of Windows Server are:

- Windows Server 2025
- Windows Server 2022
- Windows Server 2019
- Windows Server 2016 (Extended Support)
- Windows Server 2012 R2 (Extended Support)

Software Considerations

Antivirus/Antimalware/Data Protection Software

Any workstations or Remote Desktop Session Host servers accessing the Horizon Software file share should have the share excluded from scanning to prevent network traffic and disk issues. Ideally, any server-based network share or mapped drive should be excluded as those would be scanned locally on their respective host server, this included the Horizon Software file share.

Windows Defender

In our testing, we have seen Windows Defender cause significant latency issues with Horizon Suite programs. Even when a third-party security suite/software is being used, Windows Defender sometimes remains active and consumes significant resources to scan files and programs both locally and across remote file shares. If Windows Defender cannot be completely disabled, exclusions should be created for Horizon Suite programs and directories on any workstation or client server accessing the Horizon Software file share.

SMB

Horizon Suite programs depend on the Server Message Block (SMB) protocol to operate and access data from the Horizon host server. For best performance, SMBv2/3 should be enabled on your Horizon host server and any workstations or Remote Desktop Session Host servers accessing the Horizon Software file share. You can check the SMB protocols on your device using these instructions.

As per Microsoft's recommendation, the SMBv1 protocol should be disabled on at least all Windows devices as applicable in your environment. Since Windows 10 Fall Creators Update and Windows Server version 1709 (RS3), the SMBv1 protocol is no longer installed by default.

Horizon recommends using the latest version of SMB supported in your environment, though no older than SMBv2.

File-Based Backup Software

Any file-based backup software installed on a Remote Desktop Session Host server should be configured to exclude backing up network shares or mapped drives, including the primary Horizon Software file share. This file share should be backed up using a supported method from the host server.

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