

Software Assurance frequently asked questions



Quick Reference Value at each stage of software management

ENHANCEMENTS TO SOFTWARE ASSURANCE EXTEND THE VALUE OF YOUR CUSTOMERS' IT INVESTMENT AT EACH STAGE OF SOFTWARE MANAGEMENT THROUGH VALUABLE BENEFITS SUCH AS UPGRADES, TRAINING, DEPLOYMENT, AND SUPPORT.

How does a customer purchase Software Assurance?

Any Microsoft Volume Licensing reseller offers Software Assurance through Microsoft Volume Licensing programs. It is acquired with the corresponding license you wish to cover.

When does Software Assurance coverage expire?

Software Assurance coverage begins at the time the customer and Microsoft both accept the agreement and expires at the same time as the volume licensing agreement.

How does a company track Software Assurance benefits?

Access to Software Assurance benefits reports is available through the Microsoft Volume Licensing Services (MVLS), a password-protected Web site that serves as a license management tool for customers located at www.licensing.microsoft.com.

If a customer has Software Assurance on their servers, do they have to get Software Assurance for their CALs in order to receive the server support benefits? Yes, for products licensed using the server/client access license (CAL) model, Software Assurance is needed for both the server license and for all CALs accessing that server.

My customer has some server licenses. Can they get Software Assurance to cover them? Software Assurance can only be acquired at the time of the initial license purchase.

Does my customer call someone different for support under Software Assurance than who they call for Premier support incidents? The same well-trained and experienced support professionals that assist customers today are there to answer Web or telephone questions. Note that as part of Software Assurance, customers are given an SA Access ID that they will be asked to supply when contacting Microsoft for problem resolution requests. Customers can access their SA Access ID number through their benefits administrator.

What is Software Assurance Membership? Software Assurance Membership (SAM) is an integrated set of support services and benefits provided to all Enterprise Agreement (EA) and Open Value Company-Wide customers. It is also available to Select License customers who have selected the SAM box for one or more product pools on their Select License enrollment. SAM is designed to reduce costs across the entire product lifecycle and requires that all new license orders are purchased with Software Assurance (SA) for any product pool—Applications, Systems, or Servers.

How can my customer get assistance with their

Software Assurance benefits? Once the customer license agreement is authorized, the person assigned in their organization to receive ongoing notices about the license agreement (notices contact) will receive an e-mail with instructions for initiating benefits registration. For immediate help accessing benefits, customers may contact the Microsoft Software Assurance customer support team at 1-866-230-0560 or e-mail mvshelpa@msdirectservices.com.

How does my customer access the new benefits that have been added to Software Assurance? The new and enhanced Software Assurance benefits will be available for activation in Spring 2006. They can access the new benefits through the MVLS Web site just like the existing benefits currently available.

What is the difference between the enhanced support benefits and what was previously available under

Software Assurance? With the current product support benefit, an assigned set of individuals have access to Web support for standard servers, and business hour phone support for enterprise servers covered under Software Assurance. With the enhanced product support benefit, your customer will have incident support which includes 24x7 phone support for any type of server or desktop software regardless of Software Assurance coverage. This allows more flexibility in how to use the support benefit.

What is the Desktop Deployment Planning benefit? For the first time, customers have access to desktop deployment planning support with the license purchase. Planning is the critical first step to assessing issues involved with scaling out an enterprise-wide deployment. Customers can access the planning support provided with Software Assurance to jumpstart this process and engage with a partner to deliver additional service.

The Windows PUR (product use rights) currently allows customers to install a second license on their machine. How is the Windows Vista Enterprise, Virtual PC Express benefit different than what is already provided in the PUR? Under the PUR, customers can install a second OS license, however they are not able to run these simultaneously. Virtual PC treats each installation as if accessing a separate machine and allows simultaneous usage of the OS, regardless of version, on a single desktop.

For additional information on Software Assurance, visit www.microsoft.com/licensing

PLAN

Version Rights Customers receive new software version releases to deploy at their pace as they become available. This protects their investment while providing access to the most advanced software available. Version rights reduce the costs associated with acquiring new version releases and immediately utilize the latest technology.

Spread Payments Customers can take advantage of greater flexibility in managing technology expenditures with the option to make annual payments instead of one upfront payment. Spread payments reduce initial costs and enable annual forecasting to help plan software budget requirements up to three years in advance.

DEPLOY

NEW: Desktop Deployment Planning Services Customers can execute a thorough desktop deployment project with the fundamental analysis, business case, process management planning, and technical procedures needed. Customers can redeem this benefit through their deployment partner as well as through Microsoft Consulting Services (MCS).

NEW: Information Work Solution Services for Small and Mid-size Customers Provide a direct approach for increasing the impact of individuals, teams, and organizations on a business. One and two day planning workshops focus on business value and architecture infrastructure.

Microsoft Windows® Pre-Installation Environment Build custom solutions that speed up deployment through automation. WinPE is a version of Microsoft Windows XP Professional that replaces DOS and can run Windows setup, scripts, and imaging applications. IT staff will spend less time and effort keeping desktops updated.

USE

NEW: Microsoft Windows Vista Enterprise¹ Lower deployment and management costs. Windows Vista Enterprise is optimized for large organizations and includes features like data protection that safeguard lost or stolen PCs, application compatibility, and the ability to deploy a single image in multiple locations around the world.

NEW: Microsoft Windows Vista Enterprise, Virtual PC Express for Software Assurance Migrate legacy applications during an operating system upgrade in a safe, protected way. Windows Vista Enterprise, Virtual PC Express supports a single instance of a virtual operating system (in comparison, Virtual PC 2004 supports multiple instances). Windows Vista Enterprise, Virtual PC Express will be made available to customers in early calendar 2006, ahead of Vista Enterprise.

ENHANCED: Microsoft Training Vouchers Customers can receive vouchers for training on select courses from Microsoft Certified Partners for Learning Solutions, the premier authorized training channel for learning products and services on Microsoft technology. More than 1,600 learning partners worldwide offer official Microsoft instructor-led, online, and self-paced courses, and consultative learning services.

Microsoft eLearning Employees can access individual, on demand Microsoft software courses. Microsoft eLearning can be delivered online or offline and includes simulations, hands-on exercises, and learning assessments.

Home Use Program Employees can get a licensed copy of Microsoft Office desktop programs for use on their home computer. Eligible software includes the most widely-used Microsoft Office desktop programs.

Microsoft Employee Purchase Program Significant discounts are available on the retail pricing of Microsoft's most popular productivity and consumer products. Using the same software at home and at work provides employees flexibility, while great consumer products offer fun and excitement.

Enterprise Source Licensing Program Customers can access Microsoft Windows source code for internal development and support. Eligible customers with 1,500 or more licensed desktops can make adjustments and improvements to systems and related applications, implement improved debugging to help maintain security, and protect against viruses and other computer hazards. Eligibility and availability are subject to Microsoft terms and conditions.

MAINTAIN

ENHANCED: 24x7 Problem Resolution Support² Customers can continuously connect with Microsoft for their support needs. 24x7 Problem Resolution phone support for all products, in addition to unlimited business hour Web support for Standard and Enterprise edition servers, allows customers to select the right level of support when they need it. Customers with Premier contracts can apply incidents earned through Software Assurance towards Premier support to receive higher service levels.

"Cold" Backups for Disaster Recovery Be prepared with complimentary "cold backup" server licenses for the purpose of disaster recovery. To qualify for this Software Assurance benefit, customers will need a Microsoft server license as well as all corresponding CALs (if required by the software) enrolled in active Software Assurance.

TechNet Plus – Managed Newsgroups and Subscription Media Tap into TechNet Online Concierge Chat and post messages in Managed Newsgroups. IT professionals can access TechNet Plus Subscription content. The TechNet Subscription Media also includes access to beta release candidate software and evaluation copies of the latest applications.

TRANSITION

ENHANCED: Extended Hotfix Support Enter into Extended Hotfix Support Agreements (EHSA) as hotfix issues arise. Annual fees and required sign-up periods associated with EHSA are included in the Software Assurance agreement – increasing peace of mind and reducing support cost. A Premier or Essential Support Agreement is a prerequisite for eligibility.

NEW: Windows Fundamentals for Legacy PCs¹ Customers will get the same security and manageability as Windows XP SP2 and benefit from a smooth migration path to the latest hardware and operating system. Windows Fundamentals for Legacy PCs is a Windows-based operating system solution designed for customers with legacy PCs, running legacy operating systems, who are not in position to purchase new hardware.

Benefits Entitlement Chart – COMMERCIAL OFFERINGS

LIFECYCLE STAGE	BENEFIT	OPEN LICENSE	SELECT LICENSE	OPEN VALUE	OPEN VALUE COMPANY-WIDE	SELECT LICENSE SAM (INCLUDES ACADEMIC), ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT, ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT SUBSCRIPTION			
						250 SA LICENSES	2500 SA LICENSES	6000 SA LICENSES	15,000 SA LICENSES
PLAN	New Version Rights	Every License covered under Software Assurance may be upgraded to the newest version.							
	Spread Payments	Not Available	Payments for License and Software Assurance can be spread into equal annual payments.						
DEPLOY	Packaged Services – <i>New!</i>	Desktop Deployment Planning	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	At \$60K in Microsoft Office Applications SA spend, you receive 1 day of service.	At \$150K in Microsoft Office Applications SA spend, you receive 3 days (total) of service.	At \$600K in Microsoft Office Applications SA spend, you receive 5 days (total) of service.	At \$1.25M in Microsoft Office Applications SA spend, you receive 10 days (total) of service.
		Information Work Business Value Discovery	Not Available		You may convert 2 Training Vouchers to receive 1 day of service	Not Available			
		Information Work Architectural Design Session	Not Available		You may convert 4 Training Vouchers to receive 2 day of service	Not Available			
		Windows PE	Not Available			You are entitled to 1 media kit per enrollment.			
USE	Windows Vista Enterprise – <i>New!</i>	For every Windows client license covered under Software Assurance, you are entitled to 1 Windows Vista upgrade license.							
	Windows Vista Enterprise, Virtual PC Express – <i>New!</i>	For every Windows client license covered under Software Assurance, you are entitled to 1 Windows Vista Enterprise, Virtual PC Express license.							
	Extended Training Vouchers 2006 – <i>Enhanced for Office!</i>	Not Available		For every 50 Licenses with Software Assurance you purchase, you are entitled to 2 days of training (up to a maximum of 10 days).	250 SA licenses : 20 days/enrollment 2500 SA licenses : 30 days/enrollment 6000 SA licenses : 50 days/enrollment 15,000 SA licenses : 110 days/enrollment 30,000 SA licenses : 160 days/enrollment			50,000 SA licenses : 250 days/enrollment 100,000 SA licenses : 400 days/enrollment 200,000 SA licenses : 600 days/enrollment 400,000 SA licenses : 800 days/enrollment 600,000 SA licenses : 1400 days/enrollment	
	Extended Training Vouchers 2006 – <i>Enhanced for Windows!</i>	Not Available		For every 50 Licenses with Software Assurance you purchase, you are entitled to 1 days of training (up to a maximum of 5 days).	250 SA licenses : 10 days/enrollment 2500 SA licenses : 15 days/enrollment 6000 SA licenses : 25 days/enrollment 15,000 SA licenses : 55 days/enrollment 30,000 SA licenses : 80 days/enrollment			50,000 SA licenses : 125 days/enrollment 100,000 SA licenses : 200 days/enrollment 200,000 SA licenses : 300 days/enrollment 400,000 SA licenses : 400 days/enrollment 600,000 SA licenses : 700 days/enrollment	
	Microsoft eLearning	For every Office System application license covered under Software Assurance, you are entitled to 1 license for Information Worker Software Assurance eLearning. For every Windows Client license covered under Software Assurance, you are entitled to 1 license for Client Software Assurance eLearning. For every Server License covered with Software Assurance, you are entitled to 1 license for Server Software Assurance eLearning. 1 media kit per enrollment, per pool.							
	Home Use Program	For every Office Applications License covered with Software Assurance, you are entitled to 1 Home Use Right.							
	Employee Purchase Program	Not Available			Company-wide				
	Enterprise Source Licensing Program	Not Available			Company-wide, 1500 desktop minimum. Campus and School programs use Microsoft Research Source Licensing Program.				
MAINTAIN	24x7 Problem Resolution Support 2006 – <i>Enhanced!</i>	DESKTOP: For every \$200K of Software Assurance spend for Microsoft Office Applications and Windows Desktop, you are entitled to 1 phone incident. SERVER: For every \$20K Software Assurance spend for servers and CALs, you are entitled to 1 phone incident, plus 1 complimentary phone incident per customer ¹ , plus unlimited Web support for covered servers with Software Assurance. ² Premier customers will be able to transfer their Software Assurance incident into their Premier contracts. ³							
	Corporate Error Reporting	Not Available			You are entitled to 1 media kit per enrollment.				
	Cold Back Up for Disaster Recovery	For every Server License covered with Software Assurance, you are entitled to run 1 instance of the software on a "cold" server for disaster recovery purposes.							
	TechNet Plus	Not Available	For every server license covered with Software Assurance, you are entitled to 1 user ID. Open Value option: A minimum of 5 servers covered with Software Assurance must be acquired. ID's are received by customer starting with the fifth server.						
	TechNet Plus: Subscriptions	Not Available	You are entitled to 1 kit and user ID per enrollment for use company-wide when at least 1 server License is covered under Software Assurance. Open Value option: A minimum of 5 servers with Software Assurance must be acquired to receive TechNet Subscription Media.						
	TRANSITION	Windows Fundamentals for Legacy PCs – <i>New!</i>	Not Available			For every Windows Client license covered under Software Assurance, you are entitled to install 1 copy of "Eiger" as the Windows Client license.			
Extended Hotfix Support 2006 – <i>Enhanced!</i> <i>(A Premier or Essential Support agreement is a pre-requisite for eligibility)</i>		SERVER: 90-day enrollment not required. Annual contract fee for Exchange, MOM, SMS, SQL, and Windows Server is included as part of the Software Assurance program.							
		DESKTOP: Not Available			DESKTOP: 90-day enrollment not required. Annual contract fee for Windows Client and Office Pro is included as part of the Software Assurance program.				

¹ Not applicable to Open License customers.

² Web support is for low severity (Severity C) cases only. Any call back via phone will be deducted from the customer's Software Assurance or Premier incident balance.

³ 24x7 support is for Severity A cases only. Default language after business hours will be English. Translation services will be used where available. SA incidents will be eligible to be exchanged for Premier incidents on a 1:1 basis. Transfer incidents for Premier Problem Resolution hours will be allowed. The conversion ratio will depend on local Premier list prices and will vary by country.

Note: Benefit entitlements for commercial and government offerings are identical.