Working from Home with Virtel's Browser-Based 3270 Terminal Emulation
Questions & Answers

Software Diversified Services and SysperTec

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For complete product information, see the VWA product page.

Installation & Configuration Questions

What does it take to install, configure, and deploy Virtel Web Access?

1. Download product from our FTP site.

2. Receive product key via email.

3. One 20-minute planning session with our SE.

4. Two-hour installation.

5. Two or three WebEx sessions with our SE to configure Virtel to your requirements.

6. Some homework with your network and security products.

7. Users rollout: simply point web browsers to installation defined URL/PORT.

Who installs, administers, and supports Virtel?

Mainframe SEs install, administer, and support Virtel.

Security and network SEs install, administer, and support the security and network components.

Contrarily to your current solution, **desktop and distributed system SEs are not involved** because there is nothing to install, administer, or support on middle-tier servers or desktops.

Can specified LU's be used?

Yes. You can assign specific LU's to users based on IP addresses, workstation names, or user ids by coding specific Virtel rules.

Can I access my session manager with Virtel?

Yes. You can tailor the installation so that users access the session manager (such as TPX) when they log on. But we found that in many cases the session manager was no longer needed because Virtel can replace it by allowing you to simply open new sessions using multiple tabs in the web browser – allowing you to eliminate the session manager and save more money.   Virtel can also be configured to serve customized session lists based on Virtel-initiated SAF calls.

Can I connect to more than one host?

Yes. Virtel can connect to more than one host in a SYSPLEX environment.

Does Virtel run on z/VM?

No. Virtel doesn't run under z/VM. It only runs under z/OS or z/VSE. But it can access and serve applications running in VM partitions from the z/OS or z/VSE partition in which it runs as long as such access is authorized and possible.

How does Virtel perform and how much CPU does it consume?

Virtel consumes just about the same MIPS as the TN3270 server it replaces, so that you shouldn't see any increase in CPU consumption when switching from your current TN3270 emulator to Virtel.

Virtel has been benchmarked up to 16,000 users per product instance for sub-second transaction response time at a global car manufacturer. But this is highly dependent on your own transaction activity. We typically plan for 1500 users per Virtel product instance, and we run as many Virtel instances as needed to handle the transaction workload. Those Virtel product instances are sitting behind a load balancer, and they are typically organized as a VIRPlex where the different instances share the same configuration files.

Security Questions

Will Virtel work with our host security product, and will a special set-up be required?

Yes. Virtel works with any z/OS or VSE security product (RACF, ACF2, Top Secret, BIM-ALERT, and so on). No special set-up of those products will be required.

Are there any RACF authorizations required beyond a shop's standard started task and DSN authorizations (i.e., any FACILITY resources defined with Virtel)?

User authentication and authorization remains unchanged. But an OMVS segment must be defined in the security database for Virtel itself.

Does Virtel work with SSO and MFA (multi-factor authentication)?

Yes. Virtel can be configured to integrate with SSO and MFA products. Most of our prospects and customers have deployed SSO and MFA or other similar reinforced authentication and authorization solutions in the past 14 months.

Does Virtel support single sign-on?

Yes. It does.

Does Virtel work with a VPN?

Yes. Virtel works with existing VPNs. But because it relies on end-to-end SSL-encrypted HTTPS connections, Virtel doesn't need a VPN for encryption.

So, if you use your VPN to access non-mainframe applications and services on the corporate Intranet, you will need to keep your VPN together with Virtel.

But for users that only use the VPN to access your mainframe applications, you can either:

1. Go without your VPN because Virtel's connections will already be SSL-encrypted, or
2. Retain your VPN if you prefer.

Functionality Questions

Does Virtel support user-developed macros?

Yes. Two buttons in the toolbar allows recording new macros and replaying them.

User-developed macros can be stored either on the client device, or centrally on the host, where they can be inventoried, audited for potential security exposure, shared between users rather than duplicated, and retrieved from any device that the user may be accessing from: their office workstation, home computer, tablet, even smartphone.

The same is true of user settings.

The Virtel administrator decides – typically upfront i.e. during the product configuration phase - to store the user macros and user settings on user devices, or on the mainframe.

Do you support all different 3270 models? What about a custom 3270 size (160x60 or 132x60)?

Yes. Virtel supports MOD2, MOD3, MOD4, MOD5, and custom screen configurations.

Can I customize the screen colors by user?

Yes.

Does Virtel save connection definitions across sessions?

Yes. That is part of the basic VIRTEL architecture.

Do you support remapping the keyboard, including the numeric keypad on a user basis?

Yes. Virtel does not support full keyboard remapping, but it supports remapping all the keys that users typically want to map, and the numeric keypad as well. Key mapping is done through the User Settings tab in the toolbar. New unsupported key mapping are considered for support on a case by case basis.

Does Virtel support IND$FILE? What about a secure FTP interface?

Yes, and yes. IND$FILE and FTP are both supported and accessed via buttons in the toolbar.

Does Virtel support telnet printer configuration?

Yes. It does.

Pricing Question

What is your licensing model?

For a limited time and for a limited number of customers, we are offering free and unlimited use of Virtel, with no obligation to license Virtel, thru September 30.

But if you want to keep Virtel beyond September 30:

- We offer both subscription and purchase licensing models.
- We use a tier pricing model based on total user count.
- We also offer Enterprise licensing.