

Installation versus Implementation



We have all gotten the pitch from the vendor: “you will be up and running in under 1 hour”. It varies in length, but the concept is the same most times. The idea that you go from CD or a download, to production in a minimal amount of time.

What you will quickly learn is that there is a significant difference between installation and implementation. It may seem like semantics but it is a key part of your success level with product deployments.

Let’s take VMware View as an example. I downloaded the instructions from VMware, provisioned a virtual server to act as my View Connection Server and went about the business of following the steps quickly to achieve the goal which was to have the environment up and running. Create databases, install product, install View Composer on vCenter server and add the certificate to Active Directory.

Total time spent on the task: 60 minutes including provisioning the server from a template.

Should I take from this now that I have “implemented” a VMware View environment? Some may argue that the fact that there are no desktops provisioned suggests that it is not really implemented. Let’s add that step next then.

Total time spent on the task: 60 minutes preparing an existing virtual desktop image that I had for standalone provisioning.

So now we are at 2 hours of elapsed time and I have a linked clone configuration with 5 desktops provisioned and a pool with growth capability up to 50 desktops (the cap of my license for this instance).

According to what many may describe, I have implemented a VMware View environment to handle up to 50 desktops simultaneously. It seems so disturbingly easy. Much like the adage goes, if it seem too good to be true, it probably is. And in this case, it definitely is.

I’ve “installed” the product and it is fully functional. The question that needs to be asked is whether it has been architected for everything we need to consider it to be a versatile production environment.



Have we considered:

- Database sizing
- Placement of Virtual Desktops
- Data growth and personality desktop storage
- Host configuration, DRS and other infrastructure factors
- Impact on infrastructure in the case that we go to full capacity
- Redundancy
- Remote Access
- Virus and vulnerability management

- Backup strategy

Wow! We have a lot of things left on the checklist, and that is just the ones I can whip off of the top of my head while I compose this.

The moral of the story, is that when someone tells you that they have implemented a system, or an environment in an hour or two, you have to step back and look at the bigger picture. We may have installed it, but we have a long way to go.