

Reimaging licensed Microsoft software using Volume Licensing media

This brief applies to all Microsoft Volume Licensing programs.

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Summary

Reimaging is the copying of software onto multiple devices from one standard image. Reimaging rights are granted to all Microsoft Volume Licensing customers. Under these rights, customers can reimage original equipment manufacturer (OEM) or full-package product (FPP) licensed copies using media provided under their Volume Licensing agreement. However, certain conditions exist for using the Volume Licensing media for reimaging software that is previously installed either by the OEM or from FPP.

What's New in This Brief

This brief replaces a previous version published in January 2013. Significant changes in this brief include updates to reflect the current versions of Windows and Windows Server operating systems.

Details

Benefits

One key benefit of licensing Microsoft software under a Microsoft Volume Licensing program is that customers can use Volume Licensing media to deploy the same standard image of software across multiple licensed devices. It does not matter whether those devices are licensed under that particular Volume Licensing program or through an OEM or FPP. Using standard images can help with the following:

- ▶ More timely software deployment
- ▶ Reduced total cost of ownership (TCO) through easier deployment
- ▶ Standardization of software on multiple devices and streamlined product activation

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Reimaging Eligibility

Reimaging is permitted if the copies made from the Volume Licensing media are identical to the originally licensed product¹. Volume Licensing customers who have licensed Microsoft software products from an OEM, through a retail source, or under any agreement other than their Microsoft Volume Licensing agreement can use copies made from Microsoft Volume Licensing media. Customers can use these copies from Microsoft media only if they are the same product and version, contain the same components, and are in the same language.

The following are examples that do not meet the eligibility criteria for reimaging:

- ▶ **Different products:** For instance, Windows Server 2012 R2 Standard and Windows Server 2012 R2 Essentials are not the same product and cannot be reimaged. This also applies to the Windows 8.1 and Windows operating systems.
- ▶ **Different components:** The Microsoft Office system suites must have exactly the same component products. For instance, Microsoft Office Professional 2013 licensed through the OEM, system builder, or FPP channel and Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2013 licensed through Microsoft Volume Licensing are not the same product. They also do not share the same components. Therefore, you cannot reimage in this example.
- ▶ **Different languages:** English and Multilingual User Interface (MUI) Packs are not the same language. Also, different languages such as English and French do not meet the criteria. Therefore, you cannot reimage in these examples.
- ▶ **Different versions:** Windows Server 2012 R2 and Windows Server 2012 are not the same version, just as the Windows 8.1 Pro and Windows 7 Professional operating systems are not the same version. Therefore, you cannot reimage among these examples. Volume Licensing customers with devices licensed with either Windows 8 Pro or Windows 8.1 Pro may exercise their re-imaging rights granted under their Volume Licensing Agreement as if those devices were licensed with either Windows 8 Pro or Windows 8.1 Pro.

Microsoft Volume Licensing programs do not offer licenses for the full version of the Windows operating system for desktop PCs. However, the media for both the full version and the Volume Licensing upgrade version of the operating system are available under those programs. Reimaging using Volume Licensing full version media requires that customers have licensed the Windows desktop operating system either preinstalled through the OEM or as an FPP retail product. Volume Licensing customers can use their Volume Licensing media to reimage their Windows desktop operating system from an OEM only if it is the same product and version as that on the Certificate of Authenticity (COA) label that came with the PC.

Notes:

- ▶ Any Microsoft software contained in the product pool media received under your Volume Licensing agreement and licensed through sources outside Volume Licensing is covered by these reimaging rights subject to the eligibility requirements.
- ▶ You must purchase at least one license of the Microsoft software that you want to reimage under your Open License authorization number or Microsoft Open Value or Microsoft Open Value Subscription Agreement number. This purchase is required to obtain the media and necessary Volume Licensing Keys (VLK[s]).

OEM Specific Information

Organizations do not have the right to reimage by using OEM media.

An OEM image can only be preloaded on a PC by the OEM during manufacturing. An image can be individually recovered by the organization (or a service provider it chooses) by using the recovery media. The OEM recovery media should match the product version originally preinstalled on the system; no other image can be used to restore the system to its original state.

¹Windows Enterprise is not available outside the Volume Licensing programs and, therefore, is not eligible for reimaging.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Microsoft Volume Licensing media?

Microsoft Volume Licensing media means a web-based download of Microsoft Volume Licensing Products from the Microsoft [Volume Licensing Service Center](#) (VLSC) portal or Microsoft Volume Licensing CD/DVD Disk Kits.

2. What happens to support and warranty coverage for Microsoft software licensed through a finished goods channel that is reimaged with Volume Licensing media?

Microsoft Volume Licensing programs are separate from the support offerings available from Microsoft and its sales partners. You should investigate the contractual and support implications with your OEM before reimaging and make arrangements accordingly. You are not entitled to Microsoft support as a result of reimaging using Microsoft Volume Licensing media. In addition, you should discuss any impact to your existing warranty and support coverage with your current warranty and support provider.

3. Why is Microsoft Office licensed through Microsoft Volume Licensing different from the Microsoft Office licensed through OEM, retail (FPP), or other sales channels?

Microsoft Office products licensed through Microsoft Volume Licensing programs are enterprise products with a different user interface, bypass enablement, and IT management tools. For example, Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2010 is designed for enterprises and licensed through Volume Licensing to empower IT administrators with tools for deploying, managing, and customizing the product. It also provides users with additional functionalities that are not available in OEM and retail channels.

4. Can I use my Windows 8.1 Enterprise Volume Licensing media to reimage an OEM PC licensed for Windows 8.1 Pro that is not covered by Microsoft Software Assurance?

No. Only PCs covered with Software Assurance for the Windows operating system are eligible to have Windows 8.1 Enterprise installed on them. Windows 8.1 Enterprise is not available outside Volume Licensing programs and, therefore, is not eligible for reimaging.

5. Do I have the right to reimage if I do not have Software Assurance?

Yes. All Microsoft Volume Licensing customers, regardless of whether they have Software Assurance, can reimage as long as the eligibility requirements for reimaging are met.

6. How do I get the VLKs needed to reimage my product?

As a Volume Licensing customer, the VLKs you need should be automatically assigned through the [Volume Licensing Service Center](#). If not, you can request your key through Microsoft [Activation Call Centers](#). Note that if you are an Open License customer, you must purchase at least one unit of the licensed product that you want to reimage to obtain access to the product media and receive a key.

7. I want to reimage my OEM Windows 8.1 Pro PCs by using the Multiple Activation Key (MAK) rather than the Key Management Service (KMS). How do I obtain more activation keys, if needed?

First, check how many activations are associated with the Windows 8 MAK by going to the VLSC website, product key page, or by using the [Volume Activation Management Tool](#) (VAMT). If you need more activations, call the Activation Call Center and state the reason why, or email makadd@microsoft.com and include your agreement information, customer name and contact information, business justification for the additional activations requested (for example, reimaging), the product key, and the number of additional activations you would like to add to the key. For more details on Volume Activation, visit www.microsoft.com/licensing/resources/vol/default.aspx.

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8. Do I have the right to reimage with a prior version of my licensed product?

You can reimage using a prior version if the license terms for the software that you want to reimage permit you to use a prior version in place of the licensed version. The eligibility requirements as stated above regarding product and version, components, and language apply.

9. I have a 32-bit OEM PC running Windows 8.1 Pro. Can I reimage it to 64-bit Windows 8.1 Pro with 64-bit Volume Licensing media?

Yes. You can reimage between a 32-bit and 64-bit platform if they are the same product and version, contain the same components, and are in the same language.

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