

Evaluating Applications for Remote Work

Most business applications fall into one of the following categories. Ask the user the questions below. If a user does not use the applications listed, move on to the next set of applications for our recommended solution. Please note, a user may have applications in all three categories, if so, the first recommended solution is going to be the best option.

For example, if a user has **Local Network Applications** AND **Cloud or Remotely Accessible Applications**, the best solution for that user would be what is listed under **Local Network Applications**.

Local Network Applications

Do you use applications that require on-premise access?

If no, go to the ***Remote Connectivity Supported Applications*** section

These applications have a requirement to be local to a server located in your office or data center. Many times, these applications are described as “Fat” applications as they transfer large amounts of data between the computer and the server. Using these kinds of applications on slow connections can cause errors in the application or data corruption issues. They include applications such as:

- QuickBooks (excluding Cloud Version)
- Sage 50/100
- Visual MFG
- ACT!
- Large file access
- CAD Software
- Most SQL based applications

Recommended Solutions:

As these applications need the computer on the same network as the server, using a tool to remotely view and control a computer at the office is the best option. Most of the time a desktop computer will be a remote device at the office, but a laptop can also be used. Providing access can be done in a couple of different ways:

- 1) Utilize a remote desktop viewing solution to remotely control a workstation at the office. Cervisys has identified and has tested a remote access solution that allows for secure access of a computer located in your office from a personal or work computer.

Risk:

- 3rd party cloud service at risk of an outage.

Requirements:

- Remote access solution license from Cervisys (\$10/workstation/year)
- A separate device at home to access the office computer
- Stable internet at home and the office

2) Connect to the office with a VPN and utilize Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP) to remotely control a computer. Utilizing Remote Desktop is a fast and efficient method of accessing a desktop computer and its applications remotely. A best practice is to dedicate a one-to-one relationship between computers and remote workers.

Risk:

- Utilizing VPN connections from un-managed computers can put the network at risk. Accessing from managed computers or by limiting a VPNs connectivity to only the RDP protocol helps in reducing this risk.

Requirements:

- A VPN license for each concurrent user using the access.
- RDP access to a computer is included in the Windows Pro license.
- A separate device at home to access the office computer

Remote Connectivity Supported Applications

Are your applications hosted on-premise but can be used remotely?

If no, go to ***Cloud or Remotely Accessible Applications*** section

These applications are either provided by servers on-premise, in a data center or have connectivity requirements through a company network. A sample of the services and applications that fall into this category are:

- Syteline
- CDK
- eClinicalWorks
- Great Plains
- Typical office file services

Recommended Solution:

Utilizing a VPN connection to your office from a company-owned and managed computer will provide secure access to these applications. Corporate laptop computers may have this access already, but additional licenses may be necessary to handle the increased number of concurrent connections or desktop computer users. Options for desktop computer users are a little different because of the hardware but taking desktop computers home to work remotely is possible and supported.

Requirements:

- VPN License for each concurrent user
- Additional equipment may be necessary to connect desktop computers to home networks (contact Cervisys for help or equipment)
- Long patch cables if the computer is within 50-100' of an internet router (preferred)
- Wireless adapters can be added to a workstation to connect to wireless networks

Cloud or Remotely Accessible Applications

Are your applications in the cloud or remotely accessible?

Cloud or remotely accessible applications are mostly browser-based or have special applications that make them accessible without any special access tools. Examples of these applications are:

- O365
- Exchange Email
- G-suite
- Salesforce
- ADP Payroll

Recommended Solution:

As cloud-based applications by design can be accessed from anywhere, the requirements to get up and running are the most basic. Most company laptops are already set up for remote work. Staff without laptops can utilize personal computers (see risks) or take home their desktop computers from the office.

Bringing desktop computers home may have some unique connectivity requirements like needing wireless cards or long network cables. Additionally, by utilizing company-owned and managed equipment at home you get additional security and remote supportability.

Risks:

- Lack of security controls on personal computers
- Risks of company data being accessed and stored on personal computers

Requirements:

- A computer that has stable internet access
- The computer should be up to date with patches and security updates
- Additional equipment may be necessary to connect desktop computers to home networks (contact Cervisys for help or equipment)
- Long patch cables if the computer is within 50-100' of an internet router (preferred)
- Wireless adapters can be added to a workstation to connect to a wireless network