Thin Clients and Virtual Desktops

Thin Clients

We have deployed the Sun Ray thin clients in various locations in the CMA, CMB and BMC buildings. These have no moving parts, no local operating system to manage, and no local storage. They provide high security, consume very little power, and because they're not actually computers, there's little risk of theft and zero risk of data theft. More importantly, they are very inexpensive and can be replaced almost instantly, as opposed to traditional personal computers. They are even quieter and produce less dust than PCs.

These devices are "always on" but will probably be asleep (it consumes very little power when asleep). To use the unit, simply hit any key on the attached keyboard. As there is a power button on the front, someone may have turned it off. In this case, simply hit the power button again. A green LED will light and it will boot up.

Logging In

Once a Sun Ray is booted, you will be presented a login screen:

Use your UT EID and EID password to log in. The Domain should always read "AUSTIN.UTEXAS.EDU" as this is connected to our campus directory system. Click "Log In" and one of two things should happen. If you are a "standard" user (e.g. a student, faculty or staff member in the College of Communication), you should be immediately presented with a Windows 7 desktop. Use of this desktop should be very little different from using a PC under the desk. Type Ctrl-Alt-Del to log in, use your EID, etc. Some users might be in groups that have access to special desktop environments. In this case, you'll see a "desktop chooser" where you are allowed to select the particular desktops to which you are allowed access.

Simply select the desktop and choose "Connect" to access that environment. From that point forward, it works as above.

Logging Off

When you are finished working in your desired environment, simply log out of the machine as you normally would (Windows Start Menu or Ctrl-Alt-Del to get to the "Log off" option). Be aware that unless you have access to a special "persistent" desktop, the desktop you were using will disappear, possibly as soon as you log out. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that any data you need to retain be stored somewhere else prior to logging off. We have absolutely no way to recover data lost in this fashion.

Virtual Desktops
We use the Oracle Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) product to provide access to personal computer desktops remotely via our Sun Ray thin clients. However, the Sun Rays are not the only way to access the VDI system. With VDI, you have access to desktop environments and specialized software from anywhere on the Internet (assuming good connectivity).

**Desktop Environments**

At the moment, the following desktop environments are available:

**Windows 7 Enterprise**
- Adobe Creative Suite 5.5
- Adobe Design Premium 5.5
- EZNews
- IBM SPSS Statistics 20
- Internet Explorer
- Firefox
- Microsoft Office 2010
- PSPP Statistics
- Salt 2008 Instructional
- UPrint
- Various utilities and content viewers

Please note that the specific versions are subject to change. We maintain these applications such that they provide the most recent security updates and bug fixes. The intent is to provide the same basic tools as you might find in our various computer labs.

**VDI Clients**

There are currently clients available for Windows Vista/7/8, Macintosh OS X, iOS 6.x and Android. Please see this page for access to the latest clients.