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### Acronyms used in this Document

<table>
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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>VDI</td>
<td><strong>Virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI)</strong> is a technology that refers to the use of virtual machines to provide virtual desktops, like Windows or Linux. VDI hosts desktop environments and applications on a centralized server and deploys them to end-users on request.</td>
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<tr>
<td>VDI Usage</td>
<td><strong>Remote work</strong>: Since VDI makes virtual desktops easy to deploy and update from a centralized location, this technology is used at EPFL to provide a great variety of courses. <strong>Bring your own device (BYOD)</strong>: VDI is an ideal solution for environments that allow or require users to use their own devices. Since processing is done on a centralized server, VDI allows the use of a wider range of devices. It also offers better security, since data lives on the server and is not retained on the end client device.</td>
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<tr>
<td>VDI Pool</td>
<td>A <strong>VDI pool</strong> is a group of several virtual desktops (Windows or Linux) on which you’re entitled. Virtual Machines are in essence machines that exist on a server, instead of under your desk. The pools define the hardware these VMs will run on.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BYOD</td>
<td><strong>Bring your own device</strong>: Refers to being allowed to use one’s personally owned device, rather than being required to use an officially provided device.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blast</td>
<td><strong>Blast</strong> is the VDI streaming technology at EPFL. <strong>Blast</strong> uses standardized encoding schemes, including <strong>JPG/PNG</strong> and <strong>H.264</strong> for pixel encoding, and Opus for audio. These standard formats are supported natively in modern devices, browsers &amp; mobile devices.</td>
</tr>
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Introduction

In order to have the best experience with Virtual Desktops at EPFL, please observe the following Best Practices:

Scenario 1: Bring your own device (BYOD): Personal Computer / Tablet (Mac, Linux, Windows, Android, iOS...).

- You want to bring your own device? No problem. Just be aware that VDI optimal performance is often reached with hardware less than 5 years old.

Scenario 2: Computer bought from EPFL Poseidon’s Store:

- You just bought a new computer from Poseidon? Good. All Poseidon’s machines are already fully compatible and optimized for the best VDI experience.
  
  o  *N.B: In both scenarios, try to keep your operating system, antivirus, Web browser and drivers (network, graphic card...) as updated as possible before connecting to your VDI session.*

Horizon Client

In order to access EPFL VDI with your personal computer / tablet, download & install the latest VMware Horizon Client version for your system:

- Open a Web browser and go to [https://vdi.epfl.ch](https://vdi.epfl.ch)
- Click on Install VMware Horizon Client. You’ll be redirected to a Webpage.
  
  o  Choose the right version for your platform (Mac, Linux, Windows, etc...).

  o  *N.B: Please keep your Horizon Client up-to-date. Some notifications will warn you if any update is available on Horizon Client.*
Network connection speed considerations

- **N.B:** A network connection with 8 Mbits/sec. is a minimum for an average VDI experience (without 3D usage).
  - Faster network speed may be needed for intensive 3D applications.

- Before connecting to your VDI session, please close all other programs that might consume network bandwidth and compute resources.

- **Close EPFL VPN when using VDI.**
  - If VPN is On, performance will be degraded and limited to the VPN throughput for your session.

- You can connect your computer / tablet with following methods (If possible, select the most reliable method for the best experience).
  - RJ 45 network cable (Consistent performance).
  - WIFI hotspots (Consistent to variable performance).
  - 4G / 5G Mobile Phone (Consistent to very variable performance).
  - The connection quality depends on several parameters. Also, avoid sharing a mobile connection with other people when using your VDI session.

How to connect to your VDI?

**Horizon Client (v.2006 - Preferred Method)**

- For an optimal experience, do not change the default settings.
- The connection server address is [https://vdi.epfl.ch](https://vdi.epfl.ch)

- Just enter your username and password and your pools will be displayed.
- Right-clicking to a Pool / Parameters displays the Blast Options Menu.
- In the Blast Menu section, verify that the first case « H.264 decoding » only is checked.
- If any other case or option is selected, performance will be degraded.

**HTML5 (Alternate Connection Method)**

- You can connect to your VDI session with any modern HTML5 browser, without the need to install VMware Horizon Client.

  - **Caution! HTML5 connection has some limitations:**
    - Average performance vs Horizon Client
    - You cannot use USB redirection
    - You cannot use more than 1 screen

- Procedure:
  - Open your Web browser and browse to [https://vdi.epfl.ch](https://vdi.epfl.ch)
Click on VMware Horizon HTML Access.

- Do not change any settings or parameters in HTML5. Leave everything by default.
- Just Click on your Pool.
Session Logon / Logoff

N.B: Please be patient when your desktop loads, or when you logoff / logon to another session.

- When your desktop appears on-screen, some processes may take additional time to finish loading, thus impacting performance during a few seconds.

- When you logoff your session, please wait at least 30 seconds before logging again to any pool, otherwise your connection might be refused (see screenshot below).

Incident Management

- In case of any other problem with your VDI, please contact 1234 for further assistance.