

## SPLA Road Map Outcomes

By Christopher Barnett

In a [past entry](#), I mentioned the SPLA Qualification Road Map as a helpful document for companies to use when trying to determine the appropriate license model for Microsoft products deployed in connection with hosted services. Again, the road map takes the form of a flowchart, with each step consisting of a question that is relevant to the “commercial hosting” analysis.

For most businesses, the outcome of the road map is going to be one of three licensing alternatives:

- 1. Internal Use.** If Microsoft software is being accessed by third parties only on an anonymous or unauthenticated basis, then client licensing (through client access licenses (CALs), External Connectors (ECs) and/or per-processor/per-core licenses) and “commercial hosting” rights are not needed. Microsoft components may be licensed simply using server licenses. The classic example of this scenario is a website that users access without providing any account credentials, like CNN.com.
- 2. Internal Use with External Connectors.** In this outcome, authenticated or otherwise non-anonymous third parties are accessing Microsoft products, but they are not doing so in the context of a “commercial hosting” relationship. Therefore, it is necessary to obtain the necessary client-licensing rights (usually through ECs and/or per-processor/per-core licenses, though CALs may be an option under certain circumstances). However, it is not necessary to obtain “commercial hosting” rights through SPLA or through the [Self-Hosted Applications](#) (SHA) benefit with Software Assurance. An example of this scenario is a portal hosted by a large company to manage a large number of vendor relationships.
- 3. “Commercial Hosting.”** Here, authenticated or otherwise non-anonymous third parties are accessing Microsoft products and are doing so in connection with their receipt of “commercial hosting” services from the service provider. It is necessary to obtain both client-licensing rights and “commercial hosting” rights through SPLA or SHA.

It is important to keep in mind the fact that the road-map analysis needs to be applied to each server type in a company’s environment in order determine the appropriate outcome for the company. For many businesses, some deployments will be identified as falling within category 3, while others will be strictly internal-use. Those businesses then must decide whether to use one licensing model across the enterprise or to license hosted deployments under SPLA with the balance under retail licenses or one of Microsoft’s volume-licensing programs.



### About the author Christopher Barnett:

Christopher represents clients in a variety of business, intellectual property and IT-related contexts, with matters involving trademark registration and enforcement, software and licensing disputes and litigation, and mergers, divestments and service transactions. Christopher’s practice includes substantial attention to concerns faced by media & technology companies and to disputes involving new media, especially the fast-evolving content on the Internet.

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