Hosting

Hosting FAQ

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Date: 24-Mar-2014 16:11

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Here are some answers to questions we have been asked over the years.

1 What are you offering?

We offer:

- A rapid and inexpensive deployment of your chosen Atlassian application.
- Set up as a freshly installed, fully configured, ready to use installation of your application. This means you have
    - Freedom from having to learn and maintain the skills of Atlassian applications installation and maintenance.
    - Freedom to use any Add On.
    - Full administrator privileges through the web.
- Professional services and support at our data centre or at yours.

1.1 What Add Ons can I install?

- Any Add On deemed for download versions of Atlassian software. This includes Themes and other Plugins. There is an amazing array of them on the Atlassian Marketplace.
- Some of our favourites include:
    - Hosted Confluence with Ad hoc Workflows.
    - Hosted Confluence with Ad hoc Canvas.
    - Hosted JIRA with Structure for JIRA.
    - Hosted JIRA with Tempo Timesheets.
    - Though of course you are free to install any.

1.2 Where is my data kept?

- Unless you specify otherwise, at our data centre at 151 Front Street, Toronto, Canada.
- If you specify another location it may take us more time to set up the server and some other points made in this FAQ may not apply. Contact Support to discuss.

1.3 Why Toronto, Canada?

- It is close and fast for our Canadian customers (and we are based in Toronto).
- We get fabulous data transfer rates for our US customers, and better protection than mandated by the US Patriot Act.
- We have great privacy protection laws compliant with European Data Protection Acts.
- However, if you want us to host elsewhere we will. Just let us know.

1.4 Why Blended Perspectives?

- We have been wiki hosting since 2001, across a variety of platforms.
- We provide products, consulting and technical services to organizations in many industries.
- We are focused and committed on Atlassian technologies.
- We are Atlassian's primary Toronto's Expert.
- We can help you with all your Atlassian and/or Wiki centric needs.

2 Support & Service Level

2.1 What Service Level do you offer?

- You choose the download versions of Atlassian applications to enjoy unconstrained freedom to configure and use any Add On you choose.

- We have a great deal of experience hosting Atlassian software - and be assured we do our utmost to keep everything ticking along smoothly.

- However, with great freedom comes great responsibility - we let you configure your servers however you wish to use them. That said, configuring is not for the faint of heart - full privileges comes with the power to mess things up: things can go wrong. In that case you will need to reach out for Support.

- If you wish, our Support can perform configurations on your behalf.

- Customers needing a specific Service Level Agreement are welcome to contact us to discuss needs.

2.2 What Support can I expect?

- Most of our customers benefit from three-levels of support:
    - Atlassian 24 hour Technical Support (See our question about licenses).
    - Blended Perspectives Toronto Support (9am-5pm ET, Mon-Fri).
    - For Canadian hosted: Heavy Computing (24-Hour Support 7 days a week).

- For as long as you hold a valid license, Atlassian will help your staff address their own issues (and it really is legendary!).

- For configuration matters, Blended Perspectives support is available at USD $125/hr.

- For operations matters, Heavy Computing support is available.

2.3 Do I need my own Administrator?

- You might prefer to if you have experienced staff. Else, our Support are there to set things up for you.

3 Professional Services and Support

3.1 What Professional Services do you offer?

- We can help you architect and configure most aspects of the Atlassian Suite.

- From intranets and knowledge bases in Confluence and Confluence Questions through helpdesk using JIRA Service Desk to just JIRA for project management, take a look at http://www.blendedperspectives.com for details.

3.2 Can you help me with using the software?

- Yes, we can help you configure Atlassian applications - both from an installation standpoint, for design, for training, and for day-to-day usage. See our website.

3.3 What is the difference between Professional Services and Support?

- Support tends to be more routine and short-term technical work, e.g. install an SSL certificate, manage a port on a firewall.

- Professional Services may require us to assemble a team specific to the design task you are requesting.

- Support is charged at a lower rate.

3.4 What about Upgrades?

- The schedule of upgrade is up to you. Many customers find that a twice-yearly upgrade suffices.

- We'll email you when major and minor upgrades become available and you instruct us whether to skip or apply it. If you don't respond we will skip the upgrade.
  - In particular, there are a lot of bugfix releases - most customers skip those unless they note they have been impacted by the particular issue.
- We will make clear to you in the event of a security advisory.
- Upgrades are generally billable, as part of Support. However when prepaying for 12 months we bundle 8 hours worth of Support. For a small site this tends to be enough for two upgrades. We recommend that you maintain a credit balance for Support. See Payments.

3.5 What about Add On Updates?

- As with all web-based administrative options, you are free to do these yourself. Or our Support staff can take this on.

4 Licenses

4.1 Can I use my Expired Atlassian License?

Well, technically, yes, but it is not a good idea. First and foremost, without a valid license, Atlassian will not support you. You would be restricted to an old version, which would need to be patched by our Professional Services engineers to make them safe as there are known issues (such as security flaws) with older versions. Our quickest (and therefore least expensive) approach to resolve issues is first to upgrade. If patching, bare in mind applying cumulative patches can lead to trouble and headaches.

4.2 Can we / should we buy a new license from you?

Yes, of course.

If you have an existing license:

- Please update it to include license.support@blendedperspectives.com as a Billing Contact.

- Else please just email license.support@blendedperspectives.com and we will get that sorted promptly.

And why should you? Well, doing so simplifies our support and will entitle you to a credit towards extra support from Blended Perspectives. That is our way of thanking you for making our lives easier.

5 Integrity, Security and Performance

5.1 How do you ensure Performance? What kind of network access does the server have? What Operating System do you use?

- Our datacentre's internet connectivity is on a 200 host peering exchange, based on 1Gbps links to 4 different upstream providers

- We use a stable and long-term supported 64-bit Virtualized Linux, in a private cloud.

- Our standard set up works very well for the vast majority of our customers. But where we see it is necessary or a customer requests, we optimize to ensure smooth operation.

5.2 How do you protect my data?

- We host - usually - in Canada (see Why host in Canada).

- We backup the filesystem and database every night.

- We retain nightly backups for a week, weekly backups for a month, and monthly backups for a year.

- We replicate our backups off-site.

- We proactively monitor logs and application heath for issues.

- We can use your SSL certificate to enable https for your domain (Contact Support).

5.3 How is my installation partitioned? What database do you use? Can I install other software on the server?

- By default your applications are hosted with a local PostgreSQL database on the same virtual machine.

- This co-location gives the software rapid access to exchange data while keeping the architecture simple.

- Our Support can configure other topologies if need be.

- We are able to put most other software on your machine under certain conditions. Simply contact Support and we will discuss.

5.4 What versions of the Applications do you install?

- Unless you specify, we will install the latest version that we have tested. We are usually within a month of the latest.

- We can install older versions if need be. Just make a note of that when you place your order or contact Support.

5.5 Do I get access to the web-based Administrator account in the application?

- Of course! Or, if you need us to guide you or take on that role, just let Support know.

5.6 How do I set up a different domain (web site address)?

- Technically, just point your CNAME record at the server address we allocate, and change the Base URL in the application.

- Contact us if you have any problems or need further security options.

5.7 Do you support Windows Servers?

- Yes we do. Contact Support if you prefer a Windows Server (e.g. for SharePoint).

5.8 Can I get access to my logs?

- Yes you can. Contact us via Support. We can arrange for access.

5.9 Who has access to my logs?

- Us, you and whoever you designate. For example, you could designate the vendor of an Add On you use.

6 Payments & Trials

6.1 What currencies do you accept?

- We usually bill in US Dollars. We accept others but will calculate your balance in USD.

6.2 Any free trial?

- Yes, we offer 7 days free, thereafter the first two months for the price of one.

6.3 Can I pay by invoice? By Purchase Order?

- Yes, for the US and Canada.
- Otherwise, no - you will need to pre-pay.

6.4 What methods of payment do you support?

- VISA, Mastercard, American Express (Amex), PayPal.
- Direct Bank Transfer.
- Cheque or Bankers Draft.

6.5 What about Taxes?

- Canadian Clients will be billed HST on top of the price

6.6 Can I pre-pay for Support?

- Yes, you can pre-pay for blocks of 8 hours. Indeed, for continuity of care we recommend most clients maintain a credit bank of at least 16 hours.
- We provide a web interface through which you can see your pre-pay balance decline.

7 I am a Vendor of an Atlassian Add On that only works on Download

7.1 Let's talk

Come talk to us! We can help you partner with your customers to gain insight on how your Add On is being applied.