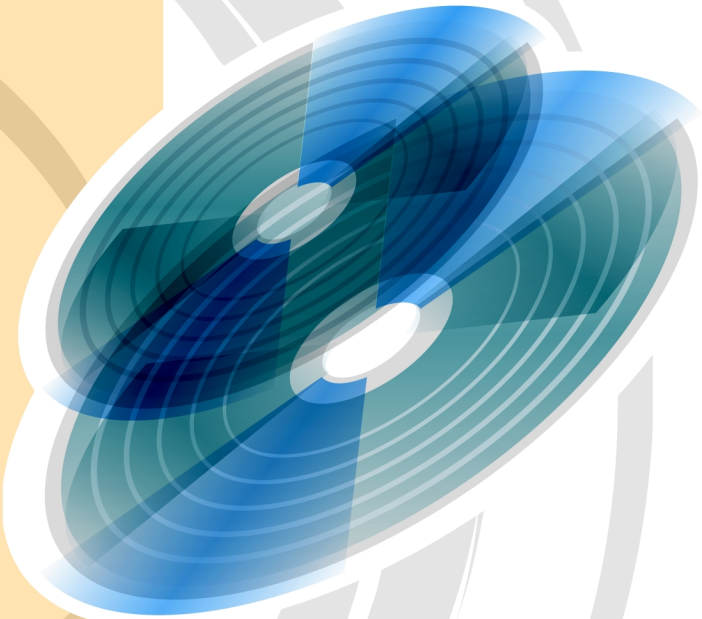
H+H Zentrum für Rechnerkommunikation GmbH

Network Edition



Manual supplement
Handbuchergänzung

Virtual CD® v4

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Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Virtual CD Network Concept 2

Advantages of Virtual CD in the Network 2

Clients Get "Real" CD Drives 2

No Limit on Drive Letters 2

Return on Investment 2

Functional Aspects 3

Drive Management 3

Installation 4

Installation Options 4

Install Virtual CD 5

Central Client Setup 6

License Monitor 7

Introduction

Virtual CD for Networks continues the tradition of high quality first established years ago by the Virtual CD program—the world's best-selling CD emulator. With Virtual CD for Networks, you can make virtual CDs from data CDs, audio CDs and even DVDs, for access over the network. Whether you want a simple CD network or a high-performance multimedia network, you can set it up quickly and economically with Virtual CD.

Thanks to improved administrative functions, such as centralized management of virtual CDs and administrator-defined client setup programs, it is easier than ever to implement Virtual CD in your environment and to operate your "virtual CD network".

This manual is designed to supplement the manual that describes the single-user version of Virtual CD. For details on Virtual CD performance features and general operation, please refer to the single-user manual.

Virtual CD Network Concept

Advantages of Virtual CD in the Network

Alongside the general benefits of the Virtual CD emulation software, there are additional advantages when Virtual CD is used in a network:

Clients Get "Real" CD Drives

When your users access a CD/DVD through a physical CD-ROM drive on a file server, their application programs "see" a network drive rather than a CD. This can lead to difficulties in many cases; for example, some applications that run from a CD—or CD applications, in other words—have a copy-protection mechanism that checks whether their data is on a CD. If the CD in question runs on a file server and is accessed over the network, then this check returns a negative answer. The data is found, of course, but the application detects it on a network drive, rather than on the CD. Furthermore, when the physical CD is accessed over the network, none of the CD/DVD-specific forms of access (such as audio access) are available.

Virtual CD v4 for Networks changes all that. Each network station on which Virtual CD is installed has a number of virtual CD/DVD drives. Applications do not distinguish between these and physical drives, nor between virtual and physical CDs. Thus it is no problem to a CD application from a virtual CD in a virtual drive!

No Limit on Drive Letters

With Virtual CD, you can provide access to as many CDs in the network as you like. Because each client can map virtual drives to virtual CDs dynamically, there is no limit on the number of virtual CDs available to a given station. Parallel access to multiple CDs is limited only by the number of available drive letters.

Here too, the Virtual CD network version offers a distinct advantage over central CD-ROM drive sharing. Depending on how its CD drives are configured, a file server is restricted either by the number of drive letters or the number of SCSI drives that can be installed. Virtual CD is not subject to either of these limitations. The number of virtual CDs you can serve is limited only by the disk space available for storing them.

Return on Investment

Because Virtual CD does not impose any limits on the number of CDs you can

provide to your users, the program pays for itself as soon as you use a just few virtual CDs by saving you the expense of installing new hardware to run them. Furthermore, the Virtual CD program significantly improves the speed and performance of CD applications, which leads to wider acceptance and utilization of these applications, thus improving overall efficiency.

Functional Aspects

Because networks are used by a number of people, there are bound to be different requirements for the various users. Perhaps you want to limit some of your users to “read” permission in virtual CDs, while allowing others to make virtual CDs from physical CDs. Virtual CD gives you a choice of installation options that makes it easy to integrate all of your requirements. For example, you can define which program functions are enabled in each installation. Moreover, the new “central client setup” feature lets you configure a centralized Virtual CD Setup program which can be stored on the network and started by your users and automatically installs Virtual CD with your pre-defined settings. Just keep in mind that the users starting this client setup program must have administrator rights on their machine.

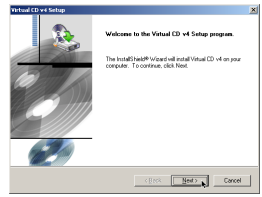
Drive Management

It is important to plan your drive management system from the beginning, since in most cases you are providing not only access to a given CD/DVD, but also to the application that runs from it. ‘Drive management’ in this context means reserving one or more free drive letters throughout the network—i.e., for all clients—to be used as virtual CD drives. This ensures that all users and all virtual CD applications use the same drive letters for virtual CDs. This is especially important for CD applications that run only from the drive they were originally installed on—an application that looks for its data on drive F:, for example, has to find it on drive F: every time it is run.

Some CD applications, however, look for their data on the first CD drive they find. Where this is the case, we recommend giving the virtual drive a letter that alphabetically precedes the letter of the physical drive.

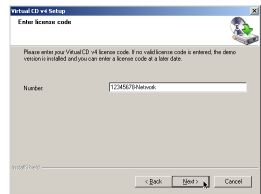
Since programs usually “remember” the letter of the drive from which they were installed, it is usually advisable to install a CD application from a virtual CD rather than a physical CD.

Installation

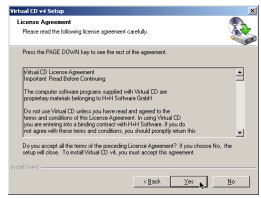


For the most part, the procedure for installing the network version is the same as that for the single user-version. In addition, however, you can define the range of functions available in a given installation. Furthermore, during installation you are offered the option of storing a central setup program on the network, which can facilitate distribution of the Virtual CD program considerably.

When installing Virtual CD under Windows NT, 2000 or XP, make sure you are logged on with administrator rights.
If a given user does not have "write" permission in the directory where the central configuration files are stored, then those parts of the program that require "write" permission (such as the Virtual CD Editor, among others) are not available to that user, or are not displayed in the Virtual CD program windows opened under that user's account. Please refer to the Help program for details.



Once you start the setup program, you are prompted to enter your license code. This number enables the installation of your Virtual CD program as a network version; in other words, which options are available for selection during setup depends on the type of license code number you enter.
Your license code also defines the number of client licenses you have purchased.



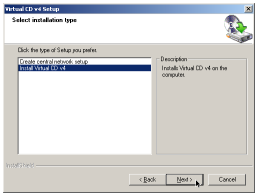
After you confirm the license code entered, you are prompted to select one of two installation types.

Installation Options

When you begin installation, you are prompted to choose between two options:

a) Installing Virtual CD v4, or
b) Creating a central client setup program, to be stored on the network

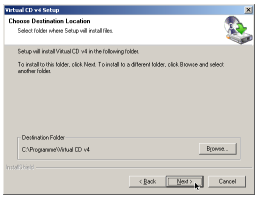
To install Virtual CD on the machine you are currently using, select “Install Virtual CD”. If you wish to configure a centralized setup program that users can run to install Virtual CD on their own stations, select “Create central network setup”.



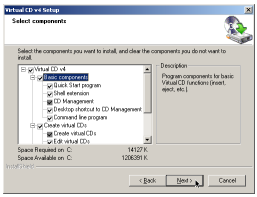
Install Virtual CD

Installs Virtual CD on the machine you are currently using.

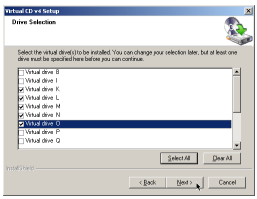
Target Directory
Defines the path in which the Virtual CD program is installed.



Select Components
Here you can define which components of the Virtual CD program are available on the machine you are currently using.



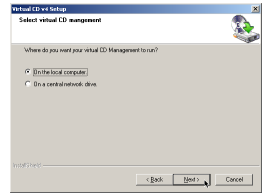
Drive Selection
Define which drive letters are used on this machine for virtual drives. If you do not define any drive letters explicitly, then one virtual CD drive is installed, using the first available drive letter.



If the client setup program is run on a workstation on which a drive letter you designate here is already permanently assigned, then the virtual CD drive you define here with that letter is not installed.

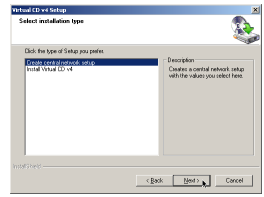
Central or Local Management

Clients that use central management can access new or modified virtual CDs as soon as they are created or edited. If you select local management, on the other hand, the client can access only those virtual CDs that are specifically integrated in its own system (by either the user or the administrator).



Central Client Setup

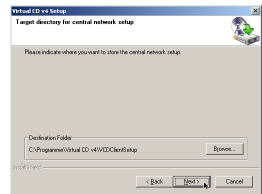
This function lets you configure a client setup program and store it on the network. If you do so, it is important to keep the general parameters for using Virtual CD in mind when selecting your configuration options. Please see “Virtual CD Network Concept” above for details.



You can only generate a client setup program if you are working with a basic installation of Virtual CD. In other words, if you are using a VCD program that was installed using a central client setup, then the function for creating other central client setups is not available. If you are working on a client station with a full program version, however, simply start the Virtual CD setup and select “Modify”; then you can select the option for creating a client setup program.

Target Directory

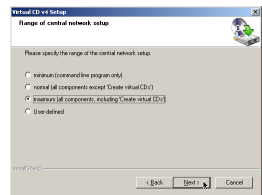
Defines the path in which the central setup program is stored. Clients using this setup program install Virtual CD from this path.



Defining the Central Setup

You can either accept the setup defaults or select the “User-defined” option to configure your own installation settings.

In general, all of the main program components for operating Virtual CD are installed in each case. The user-definable areas mainly affect the functions for creating and modifying virtual CDs.



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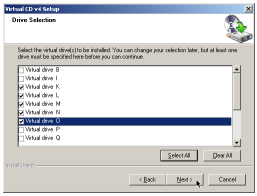

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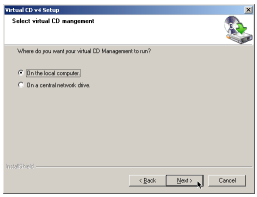
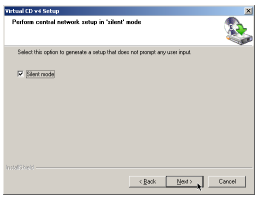


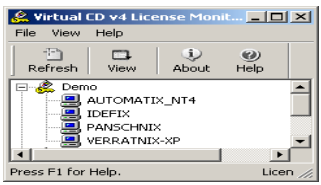
Silent Mode

If you select the “Silent Mode”, Virtual CD is installed fully automatically. Otherwise, the user running the setup has the option of defining which program components are installed.



License Monitor

The License Monitor gives you an overall view of your Virtual CD licenses and shows which network stations are using which licenses.



H+H Zentrum für Rechnerkommunikation GmbH
Maschmuehlenweg 8-10 37073 Goettingen, GER
eSales@virtualcd.de www.virtualcd-online.com