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r/homelab



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r/homelab • 4 yr. ago

ericm272



Windows Server in Home Lab

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Does anyone run Windows servers in their home lab? Looking for advice on licensing... I currently have a Server 2012R2 Essentials box running as my DC, but started looking into upgrading it to Server 2019. I've never really had experience working with Windows licensing, so not really sure what the drawbacks are - Essentials seems to limit what I can do and I don't like that because who knows, one day I may want more than one DC... you know, for redundancy. The problem is that, Server 2019 standard is almost \$1000 and it requires CAL for each user and computer that connects? What are you guys (or girls) doing in your home labs?

Currently, my DC is really only there for ADUC and GPO. I only have one additional Windows device in my lab (my desktop), but I do use ADUC for authentication across my entire lab, where possible. I'd imagine each server authenticating would constitute one client for licensing purposes.

38

59



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theslats • 4y ago

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21



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b4mmb4mm • 2y ago

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DefaTroll • 4y ago

Just ebay a 5-\$10 license for data center edition and never worry about it again. Don't need to worry about that or Cals if it's home use. They can audit and fine a business, but they aren't going to give a shit about your homelab and couldn't really do anything anyway if they did care.

⊖ ↑ 21 ↓ ○ Reply ...



[deleted] • 4y ago

This. After all the money I've made for MS over the years at work as a Microsoft partner, I couldn't give a shit about properly licensing my home lab. They won't even give me a deal on the action pack anymore.

↑ 12 ↓ ○ Reply ...



Virtual_BlackBelt • 4y ago

Evaluation license is good for 180 days. Automation to reinstall every 180 days.

⊖ ↑ 18 ↓ ○ Reply ...



yubike • 4y ago

You can run a CMD script that extends it for another 180 days and can do this many times. Look for the video on YT

↑ 8 ↓ ○ Reply ...

⊕ 1 more reply



fuxxociety • 4y ago

It's best practice to run two DCs. If you have another VM hypervisor, preferably place one DC on each host

The benefit of this is you can promote one and reimagine the other, then set the "new" DC up as a secondary, which will seamlessly propagate the current config to it. 90-some-odd days later, rinse and repeat with the other host.

That being said, I haven't had any issues using Windows Server after the license has expired.

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**marc45ca** • 4y ago[Top 1% Commenter](#)

The limitations on essentials relates to virtualisation, remote desktop services and the number of connections.

Well that and it's a pale imitation of previous versions (Microsoft did a gut job on it).

But for active direction functionality and home lab use it should do you nicely if don't want to go down the path of having to re-arm trial versions.

↑ 9 ↓ [Reply](#) ...

**[deleted]** • 4y ago

As everyone else said you can rearm the 180day eval up to 3yrs. By then something new will be out and you will want to start fresh. Or go Grey key or look into kms38.

↑ 4 ↓ [Reply](#) ...

**deepend_tilde** • 4y ago

For a homelab just buy a license from one of those grey market cdkey places like vip-scdkey .. I've used them for non server versions of windows without issue. So that'd what I would recommend. I wouldn't do that for a business but for a homelab it's a cheap way to get going

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Home lab with windows server

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r/PLC • 18 days ago

Servers for home lab.

15 upvotes · 11 comments



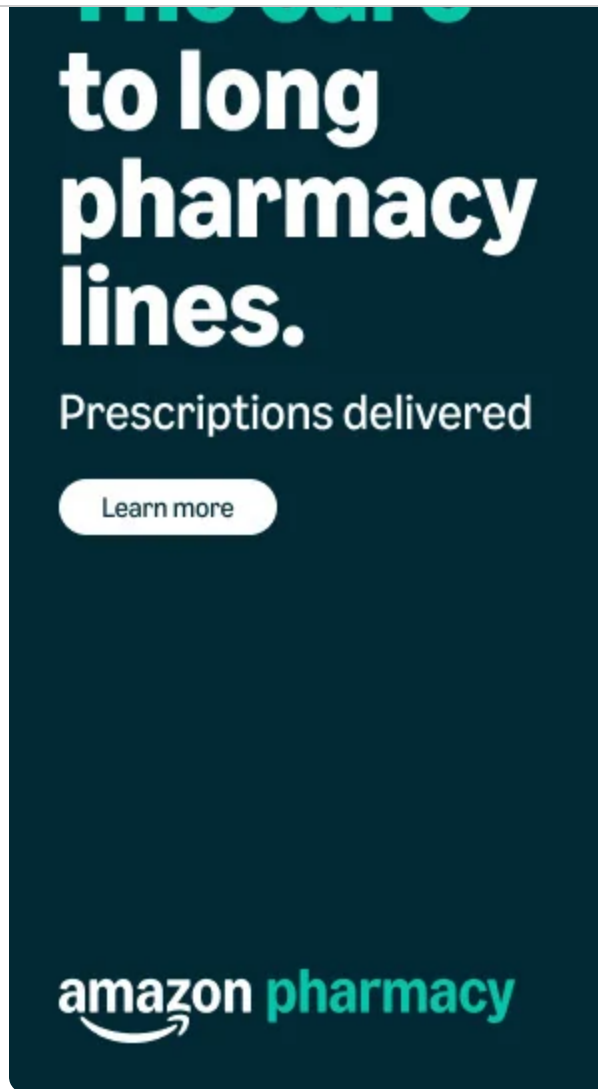
r/homelab • 25 days ago

Windows Server OEM license for home lab?

10 comments

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Anyone using windows for their home server?

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r/homelab • 7 yr. ago

Ways to get a Windows Server license for free in a a home lab setting?

5 upvotes · 24 comments



r/sysadmin • 10 yr. ago

Cheap way to get windows licenses for home lab

38 upvotes · 69 comments

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71 upvotes · 10 comments



r/homelab • 9 days ago

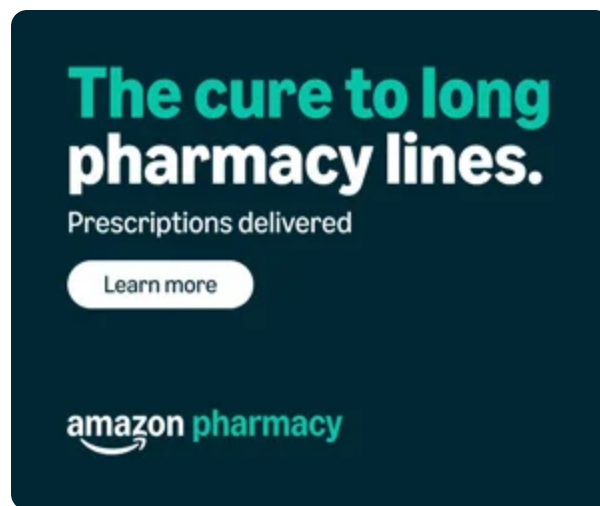
My home lab server



297 upvotes · 8 comments

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...



r/homelab • 3 yr. ago

What is the most economical way to set up a home lab for Windows Servers with Active Directory, Windows Services, and networking?

1 upvote · 4 comments



r/sysadmin • 6 mo. ago

Windows Server 2025 is now generally available

682 upvotes · 349 comments



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r/homelab • 5 mo. ago

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Cost effective way to purchase Windows Server Licenses

4 upvotes · 36 comments



r/homelab • 12 days ago

How many of you are running Windows Server(s)?

84 upvotes · 170 comments



r/sysadmin • 4 yr. ago

Help me understand Windows Server licensing

5 upvotes · 7 comments



r/homelab • 11 days ago

How does windows licensing on a vm work if I want to do a clean reinstall of said vm?

11 upvotes · 66 comments



r/sysadmin • 2 yr. ago

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1 upvote · 23 comments



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The right OS

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First Time with Configuration Profiles

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Which Windows Server OS for today?

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Need som help with how licensing for Windows Server works.

3 upvotes · 8 comments



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What are the uses/use cases of home lab?

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