

Thin Desktop® Installation Guide

ThinLaunch Software®

Synopsis

Thin Desktop® is an easy to use application designed to configure a Windows based system to run a single application of choice. That application might be an ICA or RDP client, a specific mission critical software application, a terminal emulation application which connects to a mainframe, or a browser. That application becomes the shell. So, Thin Desktop®, as the name suggests, turns a Personal Computer into a Thin Client.

After reading this document, you will know how to:

- Install Thin Desktop®
- Use and configure the application
- Troubleshoot Common Issues
- Uninstall Thin Desktop®

Before reading this document, you should be familiar with installing an application bundled as a standard Windows Installer package under Microsoft Windows XP.

Software Requirements

Thin Desktop® is supported on Windows 98, 2000 Service Pack 3, XP Service Pack 2, or XP Embedded. The only prerequisite is Windows Installer to complete the MSI-based installation.

Pre-Installation Tasks

Before installing Thin Desktop®, you should be aware of the changes being made to your system. It may not be immediately obvious how to regain access to your machine once Thin Desktop® is installed and running. A specific procedure is required to unlock Thin Desktop® after it is installed.

Any time significant changes to your system are being made, it is good practice to backup your system's current state before making those changes.

Because the purpose of Thin Desktop® is to configure your system to run a single application, that application must be installed and configured properly before Thin Desktop® is installed. To accomplish this, please see the documentation of the application you wish to use. At the end of the Thin Desktop® installation, you will browse to the executable of this application. It would be helpful to remember the folder location of this executable along with any command line parameters required to achieve the desired behavior.

Starting the Installation

To begin installation, locate the MSI file distributed as Thin Desktop®. It may be named Thin Desktop Setup.msi, depending on how you received the installation package from ThinLaunch Software®.

Executing Thin Desktop.msi will begin the installation of Thin Desktop® on the system being used. A simple wizard will guide you through the install process. At the end of the installation, Thin Desktop® will be started where you may configure the command that will be launched and monitored at Windows startup. This is the application that will run instead of Windows Explorer.

Post-installation

After Thin Desktop® has been successfully installed, the system is configured to run a single program upon startup without prompting for a Windows login. Once you are satisfied Thin Desktop® is configured, restarting the system will complete the installation.

As Windows starts, instead of the standard Windows login dialog, the command configured for Thin Desktop® to launch will be executed. This will become the only user interface displayed and no access to Windows Explorer will be possible.

Using Thin Desktop®

During normal operation, Thin Desktop® requires no maintenance or user interaction. The command configured at the end of the Thin Desktop® installation will be responsible for the only visible user interface. If it crashes or is terminated in any way, Thin Desktop® will automatically re-execute the command.

To regain access to the windows desktop, press CTRL-ALT-DEL and select logoff from the dialog. Upon logoff, hold down SHIFT to allow Windows to display the logon dialog. At this point, any local or domain user who has the appropriate permission can logon to the system and see a normal Windows desktop.

To reconfigure the command executed on Windows startup, you must return to the Windows desktop. Choose Thin Desktop from the start menu to display the dialog which will allow you to browse to the executable or edit the command. Logging off or restarting the system will return Thin Desktop® to normal operation.

Uninstalling

Thin Desktop® can be uninstalled from the Add/Remove Programs control panel in Windows. This can only be performed once you have regained access to the Windows desktop by following the procedure outlined in the previous section.

Once Thin Desktop® is uninstalled, the system will have been returned to the state it was in before Thin Desktop® was installed. Windows will start normally and display the standard logon dialog without the need to hold down SHIFT.

Troubleshooting

Thin Desktop® Cannot be Installed Successfully

If Thin Desktop® or any portion of it cannot be installed successfully, it will be necessary to correct the conditions specified in any error message produced by the installer. If no useful errors are displayed and the problem cannot be resolved, ThinLaunch Software® can assist in gathering debug information to find a solution.

Thin Desktop® Cannot Run the Configured Command

The command configured at the end of the Thin Desktop® installation will be responsible for the only visible user interface. If it crashes or is terminated in any way, Thin Desktop® will automatically re-execute the command. If the command is in error or cannot successfully execute, the only accessible user interface can be seen by following the instructions under “Regaining Control of the System”.

Regaining Control of the System

During any time Thin Desktop® or the single purpose application is running, pressing CTRL-ALT-DEL will display a dialog where you may select the logoff button. Upon logoff, the user must hold down SHIFT to allow Windows to display the logon dialog. At this point, any local or domain user who normally has the appropriate permission can logon to the system and see a normal Windows desktop.