

EA Renewal Guide



The goal of this 6 Step Guide is to provide you (The Microsoft Customer) with honest, unbiased advice for your EA renewal. There is a lot of misleading information being fed to customers about what is best for them. Hopefully this guide will allow you cut to the heart of what is relevant, and execute on what is most important to your organization.

1) Inventory what is Deployed

Before you can make decisions on what is best for your company, you need to have an understanding of the environment. There are a number of products that can help you get an accurate inventory of what is deployed. Altiris, System Center and LanDesk are some of the most well known.

2) Reassess current products licensing rules

The licensing rules usually change after every major release of a product. Therefore, since your last agreement was signed, there is a pretty good chance there has been a change. The PUR (Product Use Rights) will be a great resource for understanding the intricacies to licensing each product.

3) 3, 6, 12, 36 month SW rollout initiatives

Customers often neglect the importance of this step. Looking at your SW rollout schedule for the short and long term can provide you significant leverage when negotiating with Microsoft. It is important to look at Microsoft's Release to Mfg (RTM) schedule as well. If you know Office is going to be released 2 months after your renewal date, it might be worth doing the math to see if a 1 yr renewal makes sense. This can help you avoid paying for 2-5 yrs of SA potentially.

4) 6 Year TCO Analysis

All pricing is set by Microsoft. The LAR does not have the ability to set price nor provide any discount. However, they can provide you a price sheet for your products, which you can then put into a spreadsheet to analyze your cost over the next 6 years. It is important to use your SW rollout schedule to determine if you should keep paying for Software Assurance over the next 3 years. Using a 6-year chart, you will be able to look at your total cost for all options and determine which option will make the most sense for your organization.

5) Microsoft/LAR Engagement Plan

Microsoft and the LAR work hand in hand to grow your agreement and make sure it is processed on time. The MS and LAR rep are both paid based on the size of your agreement, so what is their motivation to reduce your cost? For this reason, it is best to make sure you have an independent resource to advise your company on all your options. Don't think you can fully trust your LAR. If the LAR knows you intend to deploy the latest version of Office once it releases, they are going to tell Microsoft, which hurts your leverage for discounts at renewal. Think, why would MS discount something they know you need.

6) Set Goals for Renewal and Execute your Strategy

Determine what you want to achieve out of the renewal and then ask for it. Don't be afraid to tell Microsoft what you want. Microsoft will usually discount more when they can't offer something you want. Obviously every situation is different but if you don't ask for something, you will never know if you can get it.

In any negotiation, there needs to be giving and taking. Keep this in mind as you begin to negotiate with Microsoft on your renewal. Microsoft is too big and more than likely you own too many of their products to take the ultimatum approach. Those customers that are strategic, and carefully plan their renewals will achieve maximum savings and realize more of their IT goals.

If you would like more information about any of these steps, or would like for a Vendorlogix Licensing specialist to provide you a free assessment please contact us for more information.