

Technical Bulletin

Servers with Windows 2008 Server

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Microsoft has informed PC and server manufacturers such as Acer that they may no longer ship their products with pre-loaded Windows Server 2003. They may only ship with Windows 2008 Server. This new version is not currently compatible with ISS45, however, so Windows 2003 Server must be loaded on these machines.

It is still legal to downgrade the machine to Windows 2003 using the Windows 2008 license that is now supplied with the servers. This requires the Windows 2003 media (which many dealers already have but can also be acquired via the methods below) and getting a Windows 2003 substitute license and registration number from Microsoft, which Microsoft will provide free of charge. Only in this way will you be able to register and activate the software and license and avoid multiple problems.

The following excerpts have been provided by Microsoft. You may also go to the referenced Web sites below.

OBTAINING PRODUCT KEYS AND MEDIA FOR PREVIOUS VERSIONS

Retail customers will need media and a product key to run a previous version and have several options to obtain them.

1. From a previous license. Customers may use media and/or a product key from a previously purchased license in order to install, activate and run an earlier version of the product. The product key and media must match. The earlier version may be from any channel (VL, OEM, FPP). If the product key being used has already been activated, the customer may not be able to activate over the internet. In these cases, the customer will be prompted to call the Activation Support Line and explain their circumstances to the Customer Service Representative. Once it is determined that the end user has a valid Windows Server license the Customer Service Representative will help them activate their software. For more information on Product Activation Call Centers go to <http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/resources/vol/numbers.mspx>
2. Downgrade Media Kit. Customers who do not have media or product keys from a previous license may order a downgrade media kit of Windows Server 2003 R2 from the Windows Server Fulfillment website. The downgrade media kit will contain a copy of Windows Server 2003 R2 and a product key that the end user may run under a valid Windows Server 2008 license. The downgrade media kit is not a new license for Windows Server. To order from the Windows Server Fulfillment website, a customer will need the product key from their Windows Server 2008 license. The following versions are available:
 - Windows Server 2003 R2 Standard Edition (32-bit)
 - Windows Server 2003 R2 Standard x64 Edition
 - Windows Server 2003 R2 Enterprise Edition (32-bit)
 - Windows Server 2003 R2 Enterprise x64 Edition

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Note: Customers will need to supply their own media and product keys for versions earlier than Windows Server 2003 R2.

ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS (OEM) CUSTOMERS

Customers who obtained their license and software with new server hardware from a server manufacturer or installer (OEM) have the same rights to run earlier versions as Volume License and Retail customers: Customers may run an instance of an earlier version of Windows Server in place of Windows Server 2008. However, customers may need to use different methods to obtain media and product keys for earlier versions. In addition, the server manufacturer or installer are not obligated to supply and may not support earlier versions of the software.

OBTAINING PRODUCT KEYS AND MEDIA FOR PREVIOUS VERSIONS

OEM customers will need media and a product key to run a previous version. There are several options to obtain them.

1. From a previous license. Customers may use media and/or a product key from a previous license in order to install, activate and run an earlier version of the product. The product key and media must match. If the product key being used has already been activated, the customer may not be able to activate over the internet. In these cases, the customer will be prompted to call the Activation Support Line and explain their circumstances to the Customer Service Representative. Once it is determined that the end user has a valid Windows Server license the Customer Service Representative will help them activate their software. For more information on Product Activation Call Centers go to <http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/resources/vol/numbers.mspx>.

Some OEMs have pre-activated their software. In these cases, a customer would not need to activate over the internet or via the phone.

2. From your OEM. Beginning in late December 2008 through December 31, 2009, some OEMs may support fulfilling Windows Server 2003 R2 downgrades (includes Windows Server 2003 Web Edition, Windows Server 2003 Enterprise Edition for Itanium-based Systems, and Windows Server 2003 Datacenter Edition for Itanium-based Systems) to their customers. There are several options available. Contact your OEM to determine if it supports downgrade fulfillment. Please note that downgrade media is not a new license for Windows Server. It only enables a customer to install, activate and run an earlier version of Windows Server under a Windows Server 2008 license.
 - a. With a new server. OEMs may offer their customers an option to have Windows Server 2003 R2 preinstalled in place of Windows Server 2008 or to have a copy of Windows Server 2003 R2 recovery media included with the server.
 - b. After the purchase of a new server. OEMs may offer their existing Windows Server 2008 customers one copy of downgrade Windows Server 2003 R2 media if their customer requests it.

Some OEMs have pre-activated their software. In these cases, a customer would not need a product key or to activate over the internet or via the phone.

3. Downgrade Media Kit. Customers who do not have media or a product key from a previous license and are unable to obtain one from their OEM, may order a downgrade media kit of Windows Server 2003 R2 from the Windows Server Fulfillment website. The downgrade media kit will contain a copy of Windows Server 2003 R2 and a corresponding product key that the end user may run under a valid Windows Server 2008 license. The downgrade



media kit is not a new license for Windows Server. The media kit is a retail version of the software and may not be supported by your server manufacturer. Contact your OEM for its support policy when installing this downgrade version of the software on server hardware. To order from the Windows Server Fulfillment website, a customer will need the product key from their Windows Server 2008 license which can be found on their Certificate of Authenticity (COA). For more information on COAs, please go to www.howtotell.com. The following versions are available:

- Windows Server 2003 R2 Standard Edition (32-bit)
- Windows Server 2003 R2 Standard x64 Edition
- Windows Server 2003 R2 Enterprise Edition (32-bit)
- Windows Server 2003 R2 Enterprise x64 Edition

Note: Customers will need to supply their own media and product keys for versions earlier than Windows Server 2003 R2, Windows Server 2003 Enterprise Edition for Itanium-based Systems, Windows Server 2003 Datacenter Edition for Itanium-based Systems, and Windows Server 2003 Web Edition.

