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## Soft-Aid E-Newsletter for End-User Businesses

**Helping Assess the Business Issues of Software Compliance, License Evaluation and Best Usage**

**March 2004**

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- "Microsoft Software Assurance -- New Extended Benefits"
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**Dear David,**

**Welcome to the second issue of Soft-Aid's E- Newsletter designed to help end-user businesses address the business issues of software license compliance, evaluation, and best usage.**

This issue and the last one (February 2004) focuses on Microsoft licensing which is of obvious concern to many of our clients.

### "Microsoft Software Assurance -- New Extended Benefits"

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In our last E-Newsletter for end-user companies, we discussed **Microsoft's relatively new Open Value volume licensing program**. Its value includes **extended Software Assurance benefits** which were initially released in early 2003; they continue to add features. We are going to spend this E-Newsletter delineating them in further detail.

Some brief history: After Microsoft introduced Open Licensing 6.0, which finally went into full effect in mid-2002, customers were required to purchase Software Assurance (SA) in order to receive "free" "new version" rights during the length of their volume licensing agreement. **In other words, SA became the only way to insure that a customer receives the most recent**

**product releases from Microsoft during the term of their agreement.** This replaced the Version Upgrade (VUP), Product Upgrade (PUP), Competitive Upgrade (CUP), and Language Upgrade (LUP) license types that formerly existed.

**Software Assurance (SA) is separately priced from the actual License (L). Software Assurance is priced by Microsoft at 25% of the License cost for eligible Server products (e.g. Windows 2003 server, Exchange, SQL Server, etc.) and 29% for eligible Desktop products (e.g. Windows XP and MS Office). Using simple math, you will discover that in 3.45 years the cost of SA for Desktop applications exceeds the cost of the underlying license (1 divided by 0.29). Absent the SA benefits listed below, a company must upgrade its Desktop applications within a 3.45 year period to realize value from their SA investment. Keep in mind that under Open Business and Open Volume licensing programs, SA is only sold in 2 year terms. Open Value, Select, and Enterprise customers buy SA in 3 year terms.**

After receiving strong feedback from customers that SA pricing was not warranted when upgrade paths were not assured or slow to come to fruition, Microsoft expanded the offering to include additional benefits besides "free upgrades." Incidentally, with the new Open Value Volume Licensing program (see last E- Newsletter) they also expanded the term for "free upgrades" from two to three years.

**The new SA options offered by all Microsoft Volume Licensing programs include Home Use rights and eLearning.** With Home Use Rights, employees can get a licensed copy of select Microsoft Office desktop programs to install and use on a home computer. "eLearning" is also offered to all Volume Licensing contracts in which Software Assurance is purchased. eLearning includes "streaming audio and video software demonstrations, hands-on exercises and animations, and courses designed by professional instructors."

A full matrix of these SA offerings, including those only available to Open Value, Select and Enterprise volume licensing agreement customers is located on Microsoft's web site at [www.microsoft.com/licensing/programs/sa/offerings\\_chart.aspx](http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/programs/sa/offerings_chart.aspx)

When choosing whether to purchase Software Assurance, Soft-Aid uses a tool created by Forrester Research to analyze the return on investment (ROI).

Another insightful resource on SA is a Microsoft Powerpoint presentation at [www.zones.com/images/static/ROISellrun.ppt](http://www.zones.com/images/static/ROISellrun.ppt)

Microsoft provides supporting documentation on Software Assurance at [www.microsoft.com/licensing/programs/sa/officesolutions.aspx](http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/programs/sa/officesolutions.aspx)

### **For More Information**



For more information on interpreting Microsoft "Open Value" Volume Licensing or any of Microsoft's other volume licensing programs, please contact us at [info@aid.com](mailto:info@aid.com) or via our [on-line form submission tool](#). Our Soft-Aid licensing consultants would be happy to schedule a conference call with you to discuss licensing issues.

Please also take time to review our web site, [www.aid.com](http://www.aid.com)

*Please note: We are independent consultants and not formerly affiliated with any software vendor.*

## Past and Future Issues

Next Soft-Aid E-Newsletter on Business Issues of Software License Compliance, Evaluation & Best Usage:

More on Microsoft Service Provider Licensing Agreements (SPLA) for Application Service Providers (ASPs)

To read past issues, go to <http://www.aid.com/enewsletters/>

## We Welcome Your Input

Please send along your thoughts and comments on our e-newsletters.

We welcome your input.

Call us: 617-848-5800

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