



User Manual
for
FLEXiON™
SmartClient Network Appliance

3/2008, Version 3.1 and higher

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Table of Contents

What is a FLEXiON (Thin) SmartClient?.....	3
Installation.....	4
System Start and Configuration.....	5
FLEXiON Desktop.....	5
Setting up the Client modules.....	6
Firefox Browser:.....	7
xRDP (compatible to commercial RDP client):.....	7
Legacy Emulator (commercial client):.....	8
Citrix Presentation Server Client (ICA, commercial client):.....	8
NoMachine NX (commercial client):.....	8
Secure Telnet Client (admin tool, only provided via task bar menu).....	8
VNC Client (admin tool, only provided via task bar menu).....	8
FLEXiON Setup.....	8
Network Setup.....	9
Screen Resolution (Monitor) Setup.....	9
Important Notes on video setup and configuration:.....	9
Sound Setup.....	10
Printer Setup.....	10
Global Font Size Setup.....	11
Date and Time Setup.....	11
Time Zone Setup.....	12
Mouse and Keyboard Setup.....	12
FLEXiON Client Access.....	12
Mounting FLEXiON attached storage devices.....	12
Reading pdf Documents.....	13
Network Utilities.....	13
Internet.....	13
Multimedia.....	13
Shutting down FLEXiON.....	14
Reboot Option:.....	14
Power-off computer Option:.....	14
Restart X server:.....	14
Specifications.....	15
Hardware.....	15
Software.....	15
Client Support.....	15
Helper Applications.....	15
Server Support.....	15
Warranty.....	15
Support.....	15
Firmware Update Images.....	16
Software License for SmartClient Products.....	17

What is a FLEXiON (Thin) SmartClient?

FLEXiON is a flexible multi-function SmartClient Network Appliance that may be used as a Network Client for Thin Client tasks in Terminal Server Environment like Linux/UNIX, Windows Terminal Server, Citrix, NoMachine NX and FreeNX, VNC, and legacy hosts systems. It also can include local applications like a Browser, E-mail client, and Helper Applications like media player, pdf reader, browser plug-ins and Java.

In short, almost any relevant thin client and legacy terminal technology is available for this FLEXiON SmartClient.

FLEXiON is a product of SmartFLeX Technology. It's firmware is based on the popular and powerful Linux kernel and additional proprietary, non-free client software modules.

FLEXiON was developed with input from many of our customers. They supplied us with their thoughts and ideas on how a modern network Thin Client appliance should function. As a result we have designed the most enhanced and flexible Linux based Thin Client Desktop Workplace for today's sophisticated multi user systems.

Thin Client Terminal sessions, allow the FLEXiON user to work on a Terminal Server, giving the user the same feeling as working on a local workstation:

Optional Character-Based Terminal sessions, allow the FLEXiON user to work on Linux or Unix in its native character-based legacy mode, taking advantage of thousands of legacy applications written for their respective Linux or Unix environment. The embedded emulators provide a wide variety of some of the most common terminal emulators.

xRDP Terminal sessions or ICA sessions, allow the FLEXiON user to work on Windows Terminal Server or Citrix Server, giving the user a PC style desktop solution for Windows. The FLEXiON ICA client supports Citrix Program Neighborhood (PNA Mode) and Secure Access via ssl/https.

NX sessions, allow the FLEXiON user to utilize secure, encrypted, high speed and low bandwidth connections to any NX server supported environment. It even allows remote printing, device mapping, and sound events on the local client. We support the commercial NoMachine NX server, but also the freely available open source FreeNX variant.

Optional VNC sessions, allow the FLEXiON user to connect to VNC Server solutions.

FLEXiON includes a local Firefox Browser with support of all major plug-ins, JAVA and a Media Player.

All modes are supported by the very sophisticated CUPS printing system. The local CUPS system provides print services for the local printer, but can also act as a print server for other clients. This allows FLEXiON to be deployed in POS, Kiosk and Office Applications, anywhere applications are running on a Linux, Unix, or Windows Terminal Server host system and a

cost-effective desktop system can be connected to it via a 10/100 MBit/s Ethernet or a 802.11b/g WLAN connection.

Local USB storage devices (Samba shares), such as Flash Drives, CD-ROM (no write), external HDD, and ZIP drives can be made available to the server application or the network.

All FLEXiONs are configured within a maximum configuration range of our available client options.

We also offer customization services to possibly accommodate your special feature requests.

Installation

The box should be undamaged and should contain the following parts:

- 1 FLEXiON Unit
- A Quick Setup Manual
- 1 External Power Supply (most models), Power Cable

Available Options are:

- USB WLAN
- Keyboard
- Optical mouse
- LCD Monitor
- USB to serial converter

Inspect all parts visually for damage. If any part is visually damaged, please call the shipping carrier immediately and file an insurance claim. Make sure to report the damage also to your supplier.

If all parts seem to be undamaged proceed with the following steps:

Connect a VESA compatible monitor or LCD monitor to the video port in the back of the unit.

Connect a PS/2 mouse and keyboard (PS/2 or USB if enabled in BIOS) to their respective connectors in the back of the unit.

Connect a CAT 5 Ethernet cable to the Ethernet port in the back of the unit and connect the other end of the Ethernet cable to an available port on a Ethernet switch or hub.

If included connect the USB to serial converter and/or USB WLAN stick to the local USB port(s).

Units with internal PS: Connect the AC Cable to the AC input connector on the back of the unit.

Units with external PS: Connect the AC Cable to the AC input connector on the powers supply and connect the DC side of the power supply to DC input of the unit.

System Start and Configuration

Press the ON button on the monitor and on the front of the unit.

To boot the unit press the <On/Off> button on the front panel of the unit. The unit will boot and present the user interface. The boot process of a correctly set up and working unit will take about 40 - 90 sec, depending on the FLEXiON model.

To enter the unit's SETUP, boot the unit and wait for the desktop to appear.

FLEXiON Desktop

The user interface consists of the actual desktop accompanied by an “auto hide” task bar and a variety of desktop icons.

The task bar becomes visible if the mouse pointer is moved against the lower screen boundaries. It has (from left to right) the following buttons and icons:

- Menu - contains all relevant system setting, configuration, special applications and tools selections.
- Reboot - click this icon to reboot the unit.
- Stop (Power Down) - click this icon to power down this unit.
- Lock - To lock the desktop (needs a password to unlock - default is “smartflex”).
- 4 Virtual Desktops (can be extended) - to launch and switch sessions easily and fast, without any arcane key codes, simply by mouse clicks, rolling the mouse wheel while the mouse pointer is positioned on the task bar, or by pressing <Alt><1>, <Alt><2>, <Alt><3> ... etc.
- Task- / Session list area - all started sessions are shown here and can be switched to by simply clicking on the appropriate entires.
- Network Activity - shows the network activity.
- Volume - allows to control the volume settings for sound activities
- Memory - shows how much memory is available on the flash module
- System load - shows the system load.
- Time - shows the current time and the current date and a calendar if clicked on (press the <ESC> key to close the calendar).

The Desktop shows a variety of single click icons that launch pre-configured client applications and some tools:

- **Firefox** - launches the Firefox Browser.

- **xRDP** - launches the SmartFLex Remote Desktop Client.
- **Terminal** - launches the integrated optional terminal emulator suite.
- **ICA** - launches the Citrix Presentation Server Client
- **NX** - launches the NoMachine NX or FreeNX server client

VNC and Secure Telnet clients are available through the task bar <menu> and <Client Connections> option

- **lock** - left click locks the desktop and right click launches the setup for the lock feature. There you can clear the default unlock password (smartflex) to create a new personal password. Make sure to read the help messages carefully to understand how this lock feature works.
- **drives** - by clicking this icon a mount program will be launched that allows to make USB or other drives and storage media connected to the FLEXiON available to the system (mount). Any storage media connected to a FLEXiON unit should be properly mounted after it is connected and unmounted before it is disconnected. Never try mounting the boot flash module (/dev/hda or /dev/sda), as this would violate the license agreement for this FLEXiON unit and it can result in the flash module holding the FLEXiON software to become non functional (NOT covered by warranty).
- **save** - clicking this icon will save the current state of the desktop session to the flash memory. Use this feature carefully as too many writes to any flash module can diminish its capacity over time. Under normal circumstances this feature is not needed as the system saves all relevant settings during power down anyway. For this reason, a system flash module should never be removed until a unit is completely powered down. The system will automatically from time to time save the state of the desktop. A small message box will appear and automatically disappear during this flash module update.
- **trash** - Deleted files, created by local applications will be temporarily saved there and can be deleted once they are really defined obsolete.

Setting up the Client modules

All clients can be launched on the same virtual desktop or on any of the other available desktops in a floating window - up to the maximum resolution of the screen. Launching each client on its own virtual desktop provides an elegant way of organizing the sessions and switching between them via the task bar's virtual desktop icons - simply by mouse clicks, rolling the mouse wheel while the mouse pointer is positioned on the task bar, or

by pressing <Alt><1>, <Alt><2>, <Alt><3> ... etc. Starting any session in full screen mode (where this feature is available) will lock the desktop access as long as the session is active. This means, that only one full screen session can be active at any given time. If multiple “quasi” full screen sessions are needed, launch each session in its own virtual desktop and set the screen resolution to the physical resolution set for the desktop. The session will occupy the entire available desktop area including the task bar area. To make the task bar visible simply move the mouse cursor against the lower screen boundary. Once the task bar reappears all functions of said task bar are available, including switching to other sessions. Some clients, once launched will not occupy or over occupy the screen. Simply click the minimize/maximize button (button between the “-” and “x” buttons) in the upper right corner of the window frame header and the session will be set accordingly to use all the available desktop area. Some clients (i.e. xRDP) support frame less launching to avoid the usual session window frame. If a client supports this feature it is part of the setup and configuration tools for this particular client.

NOTE:

To close any session do **NOT** simply click the “x” button in the upper right corner of the window frame header, but use the logout procedure of each terminal server instead, to avoid hung or stuck sessions on the terminal server(s).

All Clients connecting to some sort of supported terminal server or legacy host are configured within their own setup and configuration procedures. To use the client manufacturers setup and configuration tools was a deliberate choice to allow maximum compatibility and flexibility with the feature set of the client and within the guidelines of its respective manufacturer or developer.

- **Firefox Browser:**

The browser is pre-configured, but can be re-configured by using the browser preferences entry in the Browser's EDIT menu. Please download and read the respective browser manual, available from the browser manufacturer's web site.

- **xRDP (compatible to commercial RDP client):**

xRDP (RDP 5.x compatible) to connect to a Windows Terminal Server (NT4/2000/2003). A plain xRDP session will present an entire Windows Desktop to the user - just like a regular PC Windows Desktop. The xRDP session can also pre-launch Windows applications on the Terminal server. Sound and local (storage) device support is fully supported.

Please consult your Windows Terminal Server manual for information on how to configure the RDP connection.

- **Legacy Emulator** (*commercial client*):

A terminal emulator suite with numerous terminal emulators connecting to Unix and Mainframe systems to access legacy applications (character based applications). A key mapping tool is provided.

After launching the client a configuration screen is provided that should be familiar and self explanatory to an experienced system administrator.

- **Citrix Presentation Server Client** (*ICA, commercial client*):

The trusted and widely used ICA client, needed to connect to a Citrix server. PNA mode and ssl/https are supported.

Please visit the manufacturers web site (www.citrix.com) for documentation on the ICA client, or consult your Citrix Server manual.

- **NoMachine NX** (*commercial client*):

A NoMachine NX client to access the widely popular No Machine server or its open source version FreeNX server, allowing remote display sessions to all No Machine supported operating systems (Unix, Linux, Windows ...). This client supports USB port access, remote printing, and remote sound streaming as provided and configured on the server.

Please visit the manufacturers web site (www.nomachine.com) for documentation on the NX client, or consult your NoMachine NX Server manual.

- **Secure Telnet Client** (*admin tool, only provided via task bar menu*)

A Secure Telnet client to access a legacy host is provided.

After launching the client a configuration screen is provided that should be familiar and self explanatory to an experienced system administrator.

- **VNC Client** (*admin tool, only provided via task bar menu*)

A VNC client to access a VNC server is provided.

There is only one setup option available after launching the VNC client: Please provide a valid IP address for the VNC server and press <enter>

FLEXiON Setup

In the task bar section click <Menu> → <setup> → <setup option>

In this section all HW relevant settings, desktop settings and printer settings can be configured.

Network Setup

To setup networking click <Menu> → <Setup> → <Network Wizard>

- Click on the <eth0> button to go to the next setup screen. There are three (3) relevant buttons:
- <Test eth0>: Click this button to test if the FLEXiON unit is connected to a network.
- <Auto DHCP>: Click this button to let the Network Wizard check for any available DHCP server. The DHCP server will then assign a IP-Address to the FLEXiON unit.
- <Static IP>: Click this button to assign a static (fixed) IP Address to the FLEXiON unit.

The wizard will then switch to the next screen where you have the option to save this configuration for future use.

Screen Resolution (Monitor) Setup

To setup networking click <Menu> → <Setup> → <Xorg Video Wizard>

- Click on the XorgWizard icon in the upper frame to the right
- FLEXiON will switch into a text based menu where you can navigate with the <Tab> key and <cursor> keys. Select <Xorg> and press <enter>. FLEXiON will check the available video solution and offer certain configuration options.
- With the cursor keys select the option that matches your monitor capabilities and press <enter>
- On the next screen select a monitor matching resolution setting and press <enter>
- After a few seconds the FLEXiON Desktop should re-appear with the selected settings applied.

Important Notes on video setup and configuration:

This unit is preset with the correct X-Server for this particular HW. Therefore do not switch the X-Server, as this can result to unpredictable behavior or screen distortions. To find out what X-Server is being used for your particular hardware platform click <Menu> → <Setup> → <Xvesa Video Wizard>. If a message box pops up, saying that the Xvesa Server is not in use, your platform is using the Xorg X-Server. Therefore launch the Xorg Video Wizard for further configuration. If the Xvesa Video Wizard appears, your platform is using the Xvesa X-Server and you can select a configuration for your monitor right there.

If the selected Xvesa configuration does not appear, restart the X-Server:

click <Menu> → <Shutdown> → <Restart X-Server>

If, during Xorg configuration, you are dropped to a text based command line, you can restart the xorgwizard by typing <xorgwizard> and hitting the <enter> key to select a different setting.

If during shutdown FLEXiON could not write or was prevented from writing its current setup state to the flash module, you may experience that FLEXiON will not boot to the graphical desktop. Instead it will present the text based command line. In this case and if the unit was working correctly before, type <xwin> and hit <enter>. This should immediately start the graphical desktop as usual. If the problem persists (back to command line) run the xorgwizard by typing <xorgwizard> and hitting the <enter> key to reset the video system.

Sound Setup

Under normal conditions, this setup is already pre-configured during the manufacturing of the unit. To setup or re-setup sound click <Menu> → <Setup> → <Sound Wizard>

- The Alsa Sound Wizard will appear in a floating desktop window.
- Select <ok> by hitting the <enter> key.
- FLEXiON will search for the sound card and present a option menu with the preferred option pre-selected. Press <enter> to accept the selection or select any of the other options with the cursor keys and hit <enter> then to continue the setup.
- On the next screen press <enter> to allow the setup to continue.
- On the following screen press <enter> to allow the setup to continue.
- The wizard offers to play a sound for testing purposes, select yes and hit <enter>. If speakers are connected to the FLEXiON unit, you should hear a short sound event.
- After the sound is played, the wizard will close and the sound system is configured.
- You can now adjust the volume through clicking the task bar <speaker> icon or by selecting:

click <Menu> → <Multimedia> → <Sound Mixer>

Printer Setup

To setup printing click <Menu> → <Setup> → <CUPS printer Wizard>

- Click <yes> to set up a new printer, or click <no> to just manage already configured printers or print jobs.
- Click <ok> on the next screen, after reading the information presented.
- A browser window will open, presenting the CUPS administration tool
- Click <Manage Printers>
- The “available printer” page opens. Select the <Add Printer> button to configure a local printer.
- Familiarize yourself with all other functions of the CUPS interface. This will help you manage local printing effectively. You can load the CUPS printing interface at any time within a browser session by typing:
<http://localhost:631> <enter>

Gobal Font Size Setup

To setup the FLEXiON font size

click <Menu> → <Setup> → <Set global font size>

- Select the desired font size
- Click <ok>

Date and Time Setup

To setup the FLEXiON date and time

click <Menu> → <Setup> → <Set date and time>

- Select the current date and click <ok>.
- Set the time and click <ok>.
- Your screen may blank. Please wait until the desktop reappears (if it does not may hit a key on your keyboard - one time!).
- Click <ok> to finish.
- Click <ok> again to acknowledge the appearing message window.
- Your date and time should now be set correctly.

Time Zone Setup

To setup the FLEXiON time zone

click <Menu> → <Setup> → <Set timezone>

and select the timezone setting that applies to your location. Click <ok> to finish the timezone setup.

Mouse and Keyboard Setup

Normally you FLEXiON is pre-set for US keyboard layout and a three button, scroll wheel mouse.

To setup or reconfigure the FLEXiON mouse and keyboard

click <Menu> → <Setup> → <Mouse/keyboard Wizard>

A dialog and selection window appears on the desktop. Configure your keyboard and mouse options according to your needed country layout and keyboard/mouse options. Depending on your country you may have to set your country options in all setup options or just some. Make sure to test all special key options. You may have to modify the key modifier settings to be able using the “special Alt or Alt Gr key combinations. Since there are a myriad of different keyboard designs you may have to try out different settings until finding a working solution for your setup.

FLEXiON Client Access

All Clients connecting to some sort of supported terminal server or legacy host are configured within their own setup and configuration procedures. To use the client manufacturers setup and configuration tools was a deliberate choice to allow maximum compatibility and flexibility with the feature set of the client and within the guidelines of its respective manufacturer or developer.

Each available client can be started by clicking its relevant desktop icon or via the task bar menu:

click <Menu> → <Client Connection> → <client option>

Mounting FLEXiON attached storage devices

Storage devices, like external cd, dvd, or hdd drives or USB sticks can be mounted via the <drives> desktop icons or via the task bar menu:

click <Menu> → <Drives> → <mount/unmount drives>

Reading pdf Documents

For viewing pdf manuals (including this one) and other pdf documents FLEXiON integrates a local non-browser based PDF viewer. This pdf viewer is available via the task bar menu:

click <Menu> → <Documents> → <PDF viewer>

FLEXiON integrates its own manual for maximum convenience. It can be launched via the task bar menu:

click <Menu> → <Documents> → <FLEXiON Manual>

Network Utilities

Deploying and operating Thin Client devices can be a daunting task if network services are not working properly. To help investigating network issues FLEXiON contains certain software tools to identify and correct such problems. These tools should only be used by an experienced administrator and are available via the task bar menu:

click <Menu> → <Network> → <tool option>

This section also includes a tool to setup and configure a local firewall.

Internet

Here, the user can launch the integrated Firefox Browser:

click <Menu> → <Internet> → <Firefox Browser>

The Browser can also be launched by clicking the respective <Firefox> icon on the FLEXiON desktop. All settings and preferences for the Firefox Browser are performed by the browser provided setup and configuration tools.

Multimedia

Here, the user can launch integrated multi media tools:

click <Menu> → <Multimedia> → <option>

All FLEXiONs come at least with a Sound Mixer to control the units sound events. The volume can also be controlled by clicking the <speaker> icon in

the task bar directly. The volume can be adjusted by clicking and holding the slider and then moving it up and down. Once the desired volume level is achieved release the slider. Alternatively, click the <speaker> icon and then move the scroll wheel on your mouse. This also adjusts the volume setting.

Shutting down FLEXiON

While it does not cause any irreparable damage to the unit, always shutdown the unit properly by using the supplied shutdown, reboot and restart X server functions. All functions are provided via the task bar menu or directly via a task bar embedded icon. The task bar menu provides three options, with two of them also available via said task bar icons:

click <Menu> → <Shutdown> → <shutdown option>

Reboot Option:

Click this entry to reboot FLEXiON. All current system settings will be automatically saved to the flash module. Rebooting FLEXiON can be necessary under certain circumstances when certain maintenance or configuration tasks are being performed.

Power-off computer Option:

Click this entry to power off FLEXiON. All current system settings will be automatically saved to the flash module. It is advisable to always power FLEXiON off by using the proper Power-off function.

Restart X server:

Click this entry to restart the Desktop, which can become necessary if applications or third party vendor clients garble the desktop image or layout.

Specifications

Hardware

- See our WEB site at www.smartflextech.com for up-to-date available hardware options

Software

- Embedded Operating System: FLEXiON™ embedded Linux
- X-Window system: Xorg, or Xvesa (depending on HW platform)
- Printing: CUPS with full printer driver set

Client Support

- Internet Browser (incl. Plug-Ins)
- xRDP for WTS
- Optional Terminal Emulator Suite
- Citrix Presentation Server Client (ICA)
- NoMachine NX
- Secure Telnet

Helper Applications

- Java
- Media Player
- PDF Viewer
- Network Tools
- Integrated Firewall
- Configuration Tools
- Integrated FLEXiON Manual

Server Support

- Linux / Unix
- SmartFLeX APPLiX Suite
- NoMachine NX Server
- FreeNX Server
- Windows Terminal Server 3.51, 4.0, 2000, 2003
- Legacy Hosts
- Citrix WinFrame, MetaFrame, XP, PNA
- Internet Application Server
- Other server support may be provided on request (customization fees apply)

Warranty

1 year or more if permitted by HW manufacturer and depending on country.

Support

For support call SmartFLeX Technology, Inc. +1 (610) 849-0186, or send e-mail to support@smartflextech.com. Unlimited FLEXiON Installation support for original owner. Integration support (consulting) is fee based.

Firmware Update Images

“Bug-fix” images are always cost free for the life-time of the product. Check our WEB site support section for version information and availability of updates.

Additional Feature Releases are charged at a customization fee. Please call +1 (610) 849-0186 for details.



Software License for SmartClient Products

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The Flash Memory Disk containing the OS for this product contains copies of the GPL and LGPL.

Copies of GPL and LGPL can also be downloaded from our WEB sites download section for your convenience.

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The content of this Flash Memory Disk can only be accessed and 'read' to operate the terminal under normal operating conditions. It cannot be accessed or 'read' for any other means than operating the unit for its intended purpose.

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