Chapter 4:
Design Analysis for Virtual Desktop Solutions

In chapter three, you learned about the assessment phase of a virtual desktop initiative. You also saw numerous references to the design analysis process, which will be examined in detail in this chapter. Design analysis is important because it is the point at which you and your organization begin to make decisions about desktop virtualization. These decisions impact the entire company, from the end users and their productivity to the IT teams and the skills they need to do their jobs. These decisions also dramatically affect how much a virtual desktop project is going to cost.

Before beginning a design analysis, it is helpful to understand exactly what the process is and how it should be used in a virtual desktop project. Design analysis is not a formal, well-defined operation. Depending on the methodologies of your company or vendors there may be variations to the process, such as if your company's IT governance and budgeting requires that new projects be defined in a specific way. The rest of this chapter will provide you with a high-level framework, similar to the assessment sections, by touching upon the six most significant areas to consider when performing a design analysis. This straw man framework will need to be modified to meet the needs to your organization.

The components covered in design analysis are:

1. **Design Analysis Components**
2. **Centralized Physical Resources**
3. **Virtual Desktop Platform**
4. **Administration**
5. **Applications**
6. **Client Access**

As you explore virtual desktop technologies, vendors, and the plethora of educational marketing material available, you will find a number of approaches to get from assessment to deployment. These approaches

often involve design, proof-of-concept, and pilot stages as the middle ground between assessment and full production. Design analysis is a two-part substep of the overall design process and serves two primary functions.

The first function is the **assessment analysis**, where you will review, consider and document assessment information. Once this has been completed, you will enter the design phase, and you might encounter a loop until assessment analysis is refined by the design team.

The second function is the **design analysis**, which occurs *after* design and examines all of the design requirements, configurations and costs. There will be a second loop that exists during design analysis in which the quantitative results of the analysis change the design. An overview of the process looks like this:
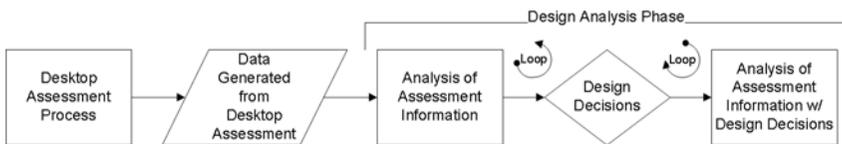

Figure 4.1 — Design Analysis Process

Assessment analysis has the most value when conducted right after the assessment phase. Ideally, information from the assessment analysis is put into a design, and then design information is graduated into the design analysis. If you want to be even more thorough, once you have gone through this process, the documents and models can then be used to help improve design during proof-of-concept.

A design analysis is a physical set of documents and spreadsheets representing the information you are working with. Since the primary audience of this book consists of technical and business decision makers with various skill levels, the processes outlined below will focus on the creation of the design analysis using just a small set of documents and a single spreadsheet.