

FlexPool: Flexible Licensing for Pooled Capacity

Simplify Consumption of Secure Application Delivery and Other Services Across Multiple Environments

Overview

As organizations distribute workloads between on-premises and one or more public clouds, efficient allocation of capacity becomes more complex and costly. A10 Networks FlexPool licensing can distribute A10 security and application delivery services wherever and whenever they are needed. A scalable capacity pool aligns with a cloud consumption model to dynamically allocate services and eliminate over provisioning.



Current Capacity Management and Licensing Challenges

Organizations are transitioning their apps and workloads to private, public and hybrid clouds. Network and service capacity are difficult to determine in hybrid environments and even more complex when distributed across multiple clouds and on-premises data centers. Inaccurate capacity planning is costly. Many businesses overprovision IT to ensure resource availability; others underestimate their future needs and risk service outages. Both approaches require significant capital outlays and have long procurement cycles, limiting IT agility and restricting business operations.

Businesses Grapple with the Following Issues

Modern businesses require a licensing model that matches their need for real-time deployment flexibility, including support for hybrid cloud, virtual, bare metal and on-premises. Organizations are looking for greater value, lower costs, and portability to allow them to plan their capacity for the future, often across a complex cloud and on-premises environments.

Challenge

Efficient capacity allocation and software license complexity can be a major challenge for customers navigating services across on-premises and cloud environments.

Solution

FlexPool is a subscription model for A10 Thunder application delivery controller (ADC), convergent firewall (CFW) and carrier-grade networking (CGN) software solutions. It allows administrators to granularly distribute a large capacity pool, making licensing portable, while providing visibility, management and control.

Benefits

- Flexibly allocate capacity across multiple clouds and data centers
- Eliminate capacity over-provisioning
- Centralize operations into one capacity pool, rather than many instance licenses
- Gain full visibility via a dashboard that provides usage monitoring and analytics

Challenges with current infrastructure solutions include:

- Inflexible licensing models don't match the flexibility of the cloud for actions such as moving the instance/VM from on-premises to the cloud, adding new licenses, etc.
- Changing instance capacity can mean a lengthy procurement cycle, manually installing a new license and forcing a software reboot.
- Inflexible software license models that limit the ability to dynamically allocate and control capacity across multiple cloud and on-premises environments, determine current capacity available, and monitor or track the licenses.
- Lack of a central management tool to automatically license and instantiate software instances as needed.

As customers make the journey from on-premises to the cloud and manage both environments, they want flexibility with how they consume secure application services. Critical to this choice is the agility to scale their capacity as their needs grow. A10 understands that organizations need a software solution that makes hybrid clouds simpler, with the security and control of on-premises or private cloud and the self-service and automation of a public cloud.

The FlexPool Consumption Model

The FlexPool® software subscription model gives customers the choice and flexibility they have been looking for. It's a capacity pool license available across A10's software solutions, spanning virtual, bare metal and hybrid cloud infrastructures.

Features and Benefits

Organizations can dynamically and flexibly allocate capacity and share the pool as needed – anywhere, anytime. Instances can be mixed and matched in sizes and can be created instantly and scaled for on-demand consumption. Businesses can align security and application services consumption with resource availability to prevent service disruption.

FlexPool is packaged as a capacity pooled license, available in multiple bandwidths, for Thunder® ADC, Thunder CGN or Thunder CFW. Organizations choose to procure pools in a combination of these bandwidth increments or in a customized quantity as needed. Customers obtain investment protection with license portability across on-premises and multi-cloud environments.

By globally apportioning the pool, they can balance out transient or unpredictable traffic flows to eliminate overprovisioning while preventing resource shortages.

With its agile subscription model, A10 FlexPool helps customers and IT organizations:

- Protect investment by eliminating over provisioning
- Improve time-to-market by maintaining a safe buffer capacity that is ready for use when you need it
- Enable on-demand consumption of application services from a shared, scalable capacity-based pool
- Keep capacity ahead of demand with regular monitoring – with the ability to easily increase it as needed
- More closely align capacity investment with capacity demand
- Minimize upfront CAPEX
- Buy fixed capacity based on business needs, with the option to grow capacity as requirements change
- Simplify management of multiple licenses across environments

Supported Environments

FlexPool and vThunder® virtual appliances support a wide range of third-party environments – from private to public cloud – including VMware ESXi, Microsoft Hyper-V and KVM hypervisors. FlexPool also supports private clouds using OpenStack, VMware vRO and public cloud offerings AWS, Azure, Google Cloud and Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI).

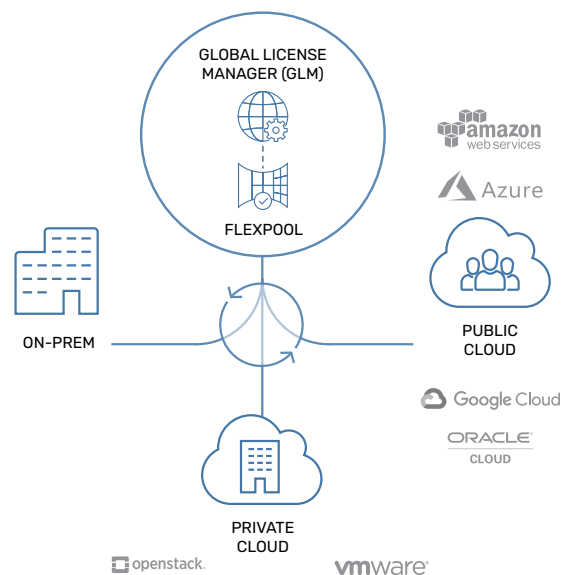


Figure 1: FlexPool enables secure application services to be allocated across multiple environments.

Deployment Models

For enterprises and service providers, FlexPool can be used in several variations:

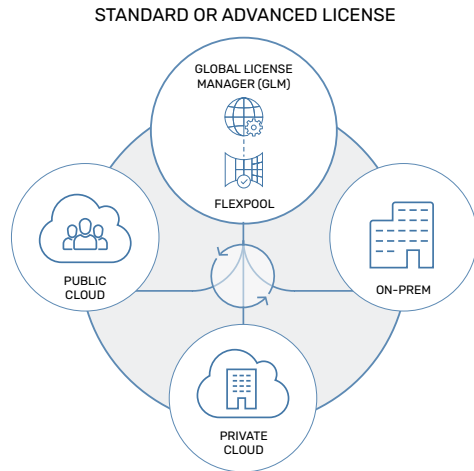


Figure 2: Single-pool option



Single Pools

An enterprise-wide single pool to consume networking and security services. Capacity allocation is enforced at the user and application level. This scenario is ideal for organizations composed of multiple sites with traditional software deployments using homogeneous services across their operations. This supports a mixed size of instances from a single pool.

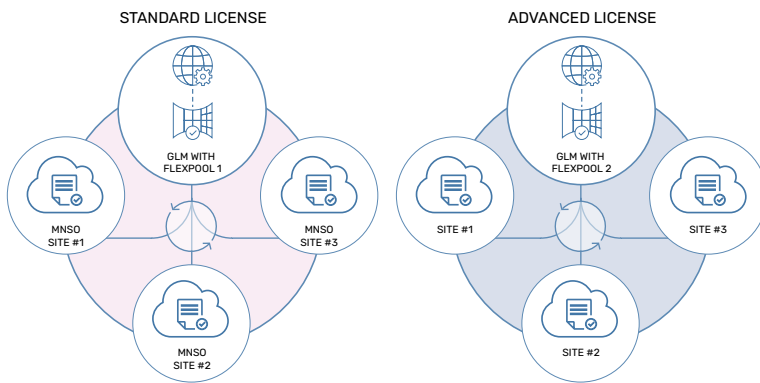


Figure 3: Multi-pool option



Multi-pool

Multi-pool can accommodate a dedicated pool for each site or group of sites. Capacity allocation can be enforced at the pool level. This model is ideal for organizations with multiple sites or groups of related sites, traditional software deployments and mixed services with a dedicated license type per pool where a guaranteed quality of service of the instances and capacity for their end-users is required.



Instance Pool

This model is an enterprise-wide single pool for businesses to consume networking and security services with a number of fixed-size instances. Instance pools are ideal for organizations looking to deploy a floating pool of fixed instance size. For example, organizations can configure minimum, maximum and default bandwidths of each instance (e.g., maximum 50 instances with 1 Gbps) in A10's Global License Manager (GLM) system. It's also suitable for organizations that want to use any instance requesting resources to be allocated via only fixed bandwidths.

License Management and Analytics

A central management portal, A10's GLM, provides visibility and usage monitoring for FlexPool, which supports A10 Networks' software-based Thunder appliances for application delivery, IPV4 preservation/IPv6 migration and converged network firewall.

A10 vThunder and bare metal licenses that are used in conjunction with capacity pooling are accessed, distributed, and monitored through A10's GLM. Devices running the A10 Advanced Core Operating System (ACOS®) must be able to connect to the internet and reach the GLM. If a direct connection from the device to the GLM is not feasible – either for security or other reasons – a forward explicit proxy server may be configured in order for the connection to the GLM to be established. Customers who have automated systems that can connect to the GLM to obtain the licenses can achieve significant operational efficiencies.

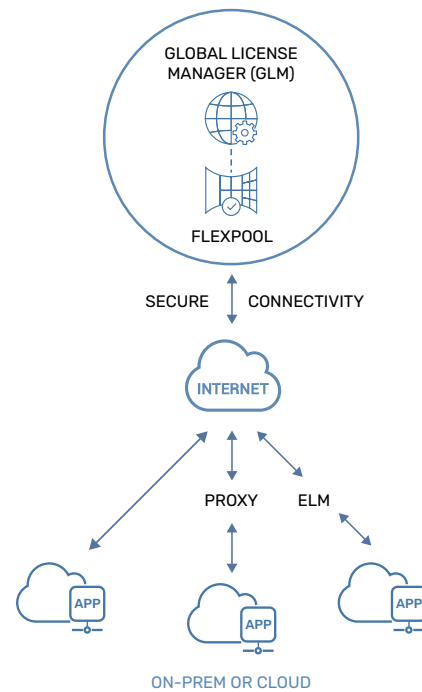


Figure 4: Capacity Pool License with Global Licensing Manager

Greater Business Value

A10's strategy is to provide customers with flexible options for managing capacity and software licenses to address their most important use cases in secure application services. FlexPool provides businesses greater value, license portability, and ongoing innovation, and allows organizations to smoothly manage software-based and hybrid environments, more efficiently plan capacity and licensing expenses while preparing their infrastructure environments for the future.

Next Steps

To take FlexPool for a test drive, try a 30-day trial for free at [A10networks.com/products/flexpool-trial/](https://a10networks.com/products/flexpool-trial/).

About A10 Networks

A10 Networks provides security and infrastructure solutions for on-premises, hybrid cloud, and edge-cloud environments. Our 7000+ customers span global large enterprises and communications, cloud and web service providers who must provide business-critical applications and networks that are secure, available, and efficient. Founded in 2004, A10 Networks is based in San Jose, Calif. and serves customers globally.

For more information, visit [A10networks.com](https://a10networks.com) and follow us [@A10Networks](https://twitter.com/A10Networks).

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Part Number: A10-SB-19187-EN-02 Mar 2024