


Using a Private Server License

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Altium



A decorative horizontal band featuring a dark blue background with a light blue circuit board pattern, including lines, pads, and a small component symbol on the right.

Altium Designer's Private Server licensing offers you floating license capability through implementation of your own dedicated *Private License Server*. Your administrator sets up this central server (also referred to as a network license, or local license server) to access and use Private Server licenses. Once a license is in use on the server, that server can then serve the license to multiple local computers. Users on the local network do not need to sign in to their Altium accounts to acquire the seats from the Private License Server.

Refer to the [EULA](#) for the definition and scope of the network, as regards use of Private Server licensing.

You can also convert a Private Server license to a multi-seat [On-Demand license](#), allowing you to discover the benefits that On-Demand licensing provides. Contact your local [Altium Sales & Support Center, or Reseller](#), to organize this.

For legacy information on setting up a Floating License Server – used with Altium Designer prior to the Summer 09 release – see [License Service Setup Guide](#).

Installing the Private License Server Software

Related articles: [Configuring the Private License Server on Windows 7, Windows Vista, Windows Server 2003 and above](#), [Upgrading a Private License Server](#)

A Private License Server is installed on the target machine as a Windows Service. Insert the Altium Designer software installation DVD and the installer selection screen should appear. Select the *Install Private License Server* option from the list.

The Private License Server used to be called the Floating License Server.

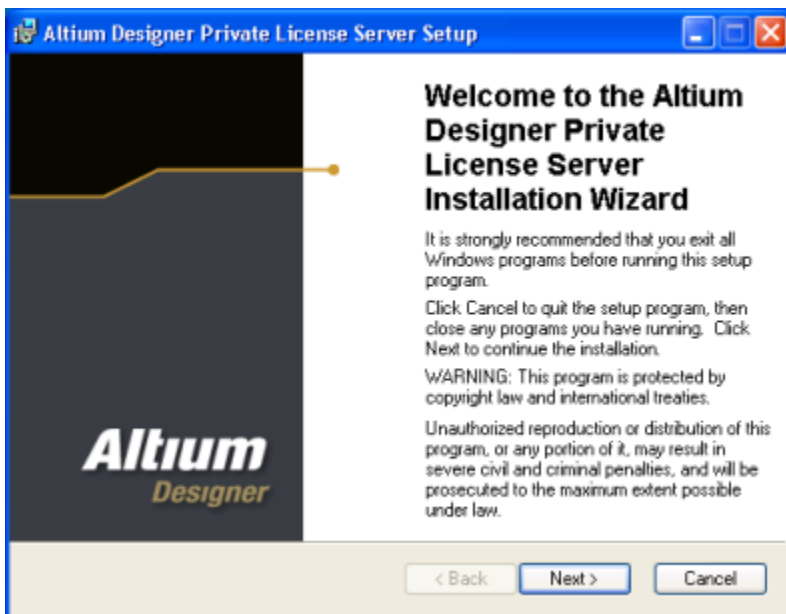
For Altium Designer 10 the Private License Server can be found at the section Software from the [Altium Live Portal](#)




Choose the command to install the associated software needed to implement a Private License Server.

If the installer selection screen does not appear automatically navigate to, and double-click on, the Setup.exe file in the \Private License Setup\Setup folder of the installation DVD.

The *Altium Designer Private License Server Setup* wizard will appear – follow the instructions on the pages of the wizard to install the software.

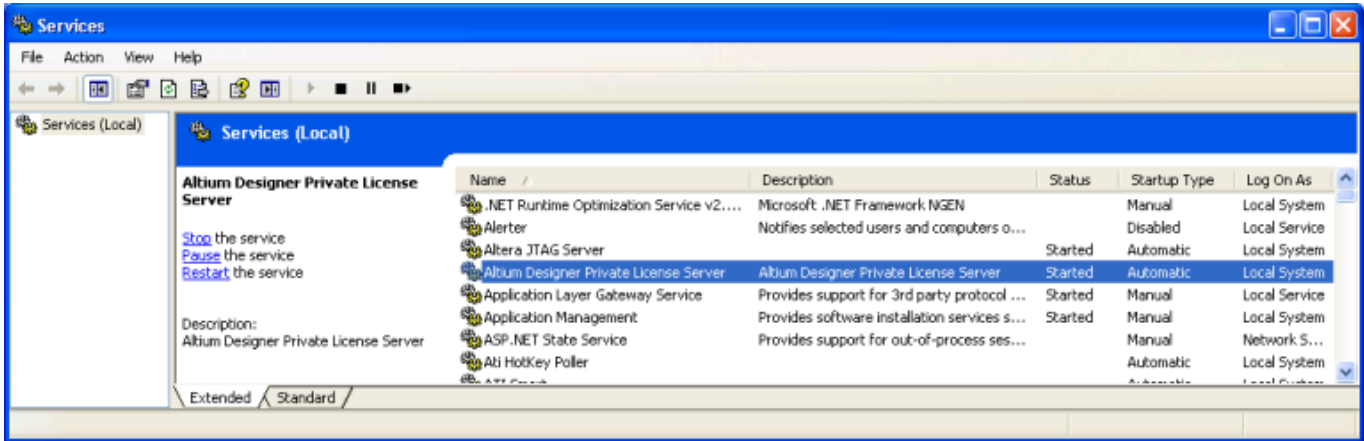


Installation of a Private License Server is a straightforward process using the associated setup wizard!


Upon completion of the installation, the server software (service) will be running and the  icon will appear in the Windows System Tray.

Stopping and Starting the Service

Controls for pausing, stopping and starting (or re-starting) the service are available from the Windows *Services* console. Access this console from the Windows *Control Panel* by double-clicking on the **Administrative Tools** entry, then double-clicking on the **Services** entry. Locate and click on the entry **Altium Designer Private License Server** to access the applicable controls.




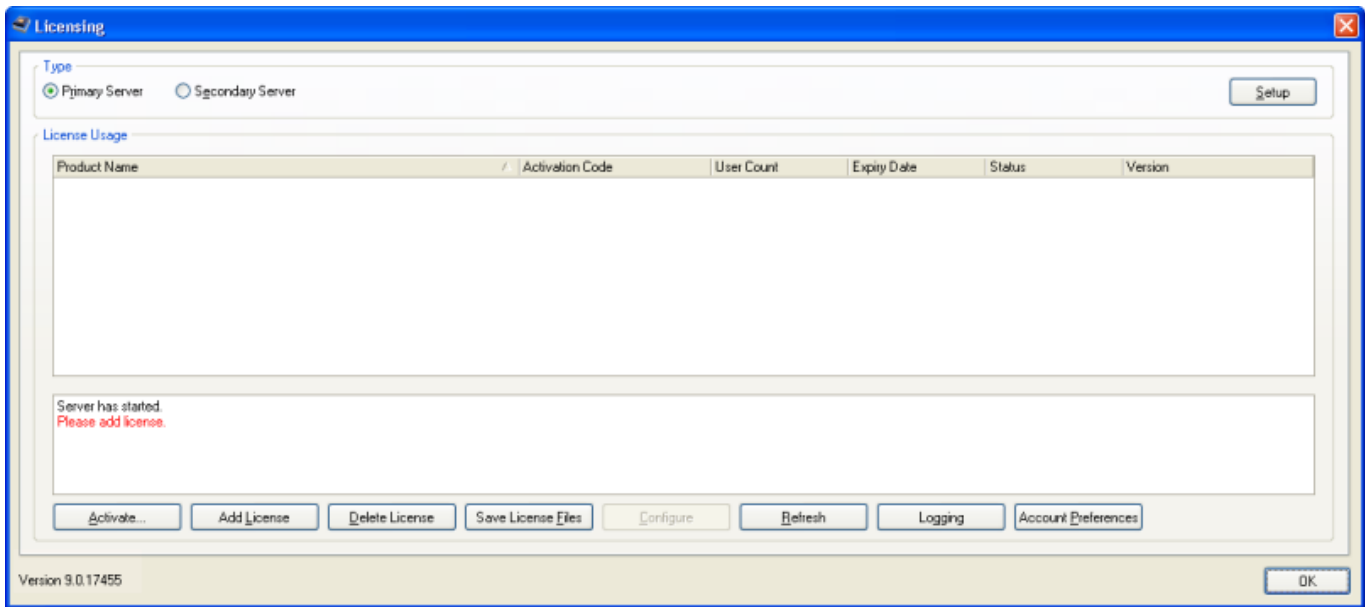
Access controls for the service through the Windows Services console.

The right-click menu associated with the  icon allows you to pause, or stop the service.

Initial Server Configuration

Related article: [Adding a Secondary \(Redundant\) Private License Server](#)

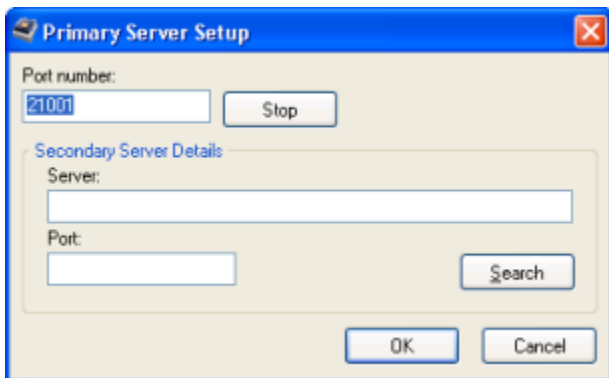
All setting up of the Private License Server is performed within the *Licensing* dialog. This dialog is accessed either by double-clicking on the  icon in the Windows System Tray, or by right-clicking on the icon and choosing **Settings** from the menu that appears.



The Licensing dialog - 'command central' for configuration of a Private License Server.

Prior to activation of your Private Server license, you need to initially configure the server, by choosing which type of server – Primary or Secondary – is being set up. This is because the process of activation actually encodes the license files associated to the license. So, for example, if you configure a Primary server and backup the license files, those files can only be used with a Primary server ('Primary-encoded' license files). Similarly, for a Secondary server, you would need to activate the license on the secondary host computer, to obtain 'Secondary-encoded' license files.

Choose the server type in the top region of the *Licensing* dialog. Click the **Setup** button to the far right to access the respective server setup dialog. Typically, the Primary server is set up and configured first, with setup performed in the *Primary Server Setup* dialog.



Example initial configuration of a Primary server - use the Primary

Server Setup dialog to enter the required port, or leave at the default.

Enter the required **Port number**, or leave at the default if you are unsure. The **Secondary Server Details** are populated at a later stage if, and when, a Secondary server is set up.

Once the server has been initially configured, you can proceed with activation of your license(s).

License Activation

The 'heart' of a Private License Server is the license(s) that it makes available for use by computers on the network which it serves. The license type that is 'hosted' by a Private License Server, is the Private Server license. The first step in configuring the server is therefore to activate your Private Server license(s) – to add them for use by the server. To do this, click on the **Activate** button, at the bottom left of the *Licensing* dialog.

Activation requires that you be signed-in to your Altium account through the secure Altium portal. The *Account Sign in* dialog will appear, in which you have to enter your Altium SupportCenter Account credentials.

- ❖ When you sign in to your account, you do so through an Altium portal. On the Altium side, a portal is simply a secure connection through to a specific *Altium Account Management Server*. Three such portals (servers) are available.

For Altium Designer 10 and newer licenses, these are:

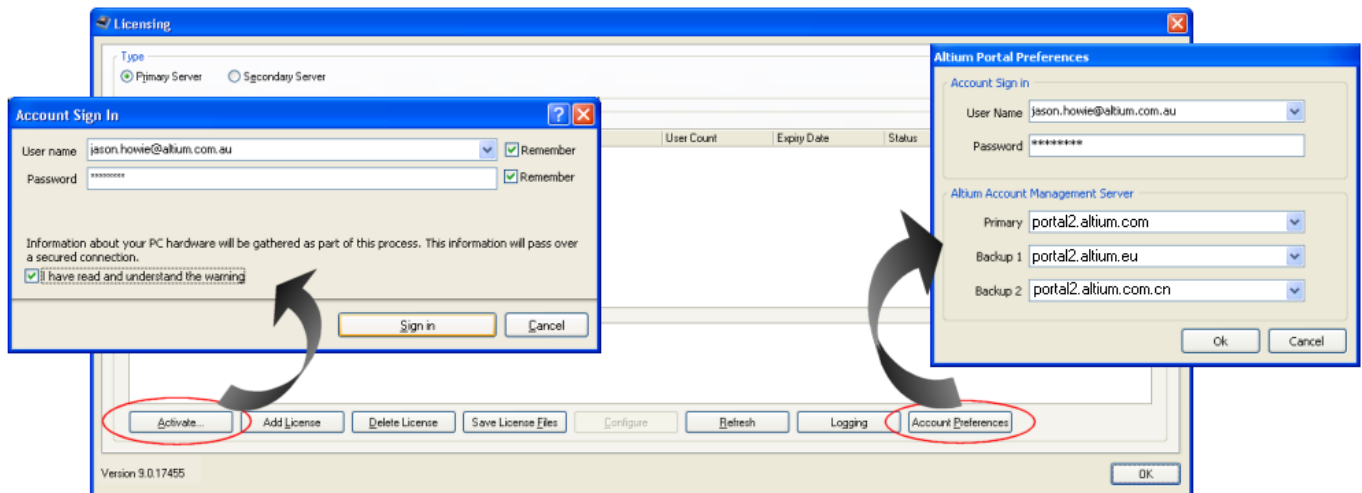
- *portal2.altium.com*
- *portal2.altium.eu*
- *portal2.altium.com.cn*

For earlier, S09 licenses, these are:

- *portal1.altium.com*
- *portal1.altium.eu*
- *portal1.altium.com.cn*

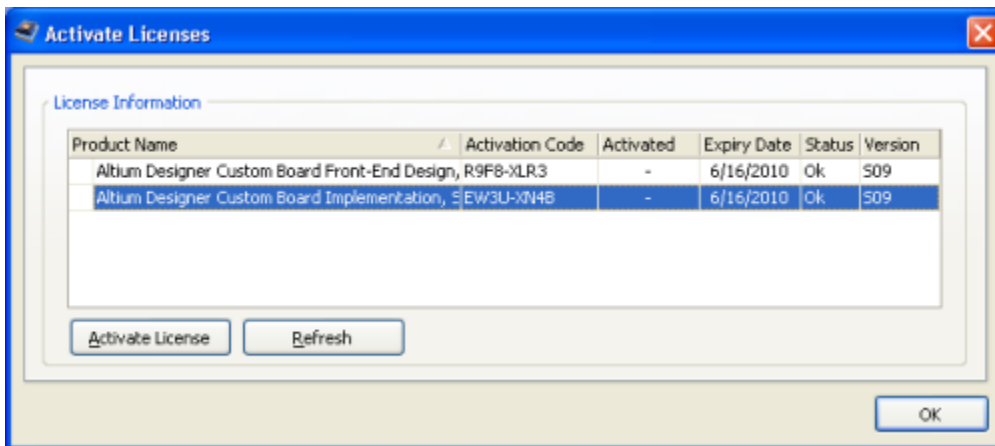
You can specify which portal to use for your *Primary* connection when accessing your account, and also two *Backup* portals – used, in order, should the Primary portal be unavailable for whatever reason. This is performed within the *Altium Portal Preferences* dialog. Quick access to this dialog is provided by clicking on the **Account Preferences** button. Simply enter a portal address directly in a field to assign which portal to use for **Primary**, **Backup 1** and **Backup 2** respectively.

If the connection to the *Altium Account Management Server* fails it might be also possible that your IT is blocking the connection. For information about the open Ports that Altium need please contact the Altium Support. Alternatively, if you are a Group Administrator for your Altium Account, you can use the [AltiumLive Dashboard](#). See the section [Manually Adding Licenses to a Private License Server](#).



Activation of your Private Server license(s) requires you be signed-in to your Altium account. Note: The portal addresses must be edited to change 1 to 2 as shown above before activating AD10 licenses: i.e. portal2.altium.com

You will be signed in to your account and the *Activate Licenses* dialog will appear. This dialog lists all Private Server licenses available for use with your Private License Server.



The Activate Licenses dialog lists all Private Server licenses available to you.

For each Private Server license, the following information is presented:

- **Product Name** – what is being licensed. The name typically reflects a feature set and release.
- **Activation Code** – the activation code for the license.
- **Activated** – reflects the activation state of the license. While not activated, the entry will display -. After activation, the entry will change to *Activated*. When in use on the private server, the entry will display *Used by me*.
- **Expiry Date** – the date at which the license will no longer be considered valid.
- **Status** – the current state of the license. This entry can be one of the following states:
 - *OK* – license is in-date and seat allocation has not been exceeded.

- *Expired* – license expiry date has been reached.
- *No Seats Left* – license is still OK, but all seats are currently being used.
- **Version** – the version of the license. For example, an Altium Designer Summer 09 release Private Server license will display S09 in this field.

To activate a license, simply click on its entry and click on the **Activate License** button. Once activated, the **Activated** field will change to *Used by me*.

Click on the plus (+) symbol to the left of a license entry in the grid to expand that license and show its activation history – in terms of user and date.

Product Name	Activation Code	Activated	Expiry Date	Status	Version
Altium Designer Custom Board Front-End Design, R9F8-XLR3		Used by me	6/16/2010	Ok	S09
Jason Howie		6/16/2009			
Altium Designer Custom Board Implementation, SEW3U-XN4B		Used by me	6/16/2010	Ok	S09
Jason Howie		6/16/2009			

Example activated licenses.

Once you have finished activating the required license(s), click **OK**. You will be signed out of your account and returned to the *Licensing* dialog. The activated license(s) will be automatically added, appearing in the **License Usage** region of the dialog.

Product Name	Activation Code	User Count	Expiry Date	Status	Version
Altium Designer Custom Board Front-End Design, Summer 09	R9F8-XLR3	0 / 5	16/06/2010	OK	AD6.S08.W09.S09
Altium Designer Custom Board Implementation, Summer 09	Ew3U-XN4B	0 / 5	16/06/2010	OK	AD6.S08.W09.S09

Private Server licenses, upon activation, are added automatically to the Private License Server.

The information displayed for each license is similar to that presented during activation, with two exceptions:

- There is no **Activated** entry – a license is, by inclusion in this list, activated. Rather there is a **User Count** field, showing how many 'clients' can use the license.
- The **Version** field displays the versions of Altium Designer client software that can be served by the license.

A Private Server license for the Summer 09 release of Altium Designer can serve the following versions of the software:

- The Summer 09 release of Altium Designer
- The Winter 09 release of Altium Designer
- The Summer 08 release of Altium Designer
- Altium Designer 6

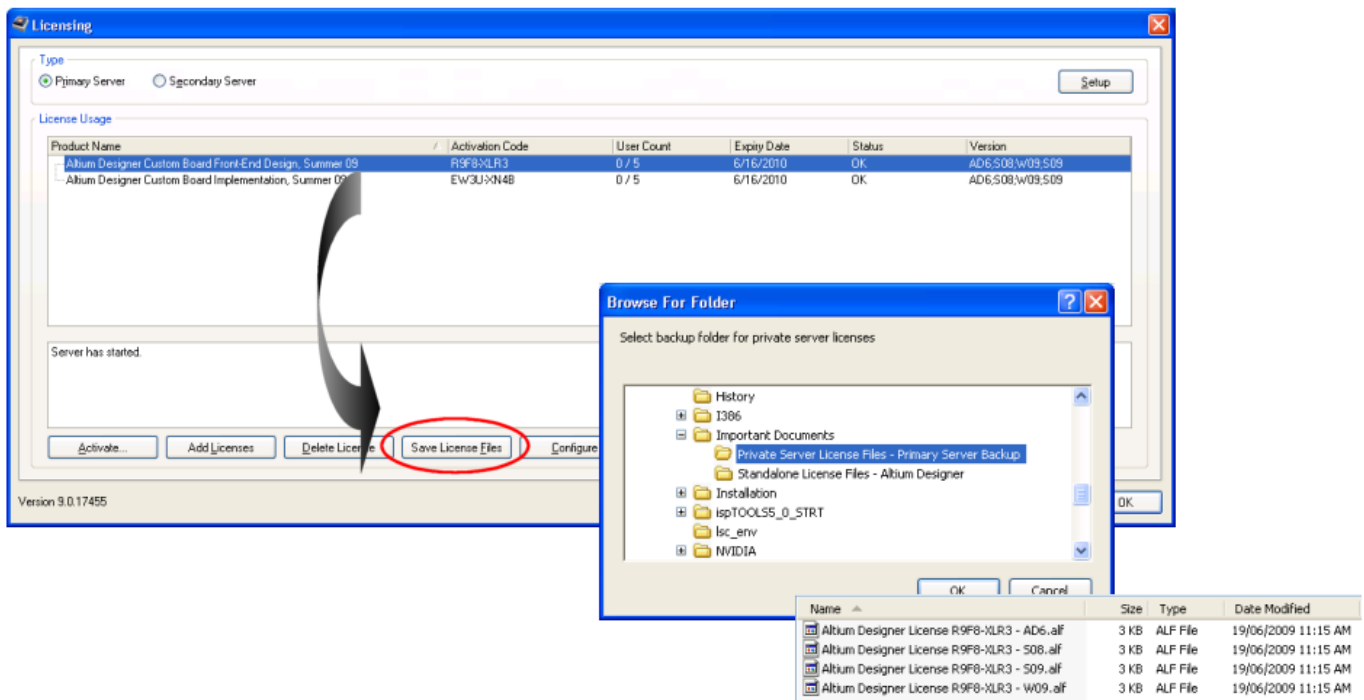
Activation of Private Server licenses can also be performed directly from your web browser using the [AltiumL ive Dashboard](#). Note that only Group Administrators for the Altium Account can access and use the Dashboard. For more detail, see [License Activation](#) .

Backing up Your License Files

Backing-up the license files (*.alf) associated with a Private Server license means you will not have to go online – sign-in to your account and reactivate – should you accidentally delete a license file from the server. You can simply add the license files back in to your server.

To create a back-up, simply select the license in the **License Usage** region of the *Licensing* dialog and then click on the **Save License Files** button. Use the subsequent dialog to determine where to save the files.

A total of four license files will be saved – one for each of the versions of Altium Designer client software supported by the license.



It is a good idea to create a back-up of the Private Server license files.

During activation, the license files are encoded to be either 'Primary' or 'Secondary', depending on the type of Private License Server you have configured. 'Primary-encoded' license files can not be used with a Secondary server and vice-versa.

To fully backup your Private Server license, you should activate the license on a computer set to be the Primary server and save the four 'Primary-encoded' license files. Then activate the license on a second computer, set to be the Secondary server, and save the four 'Secondary-encoded' license files.

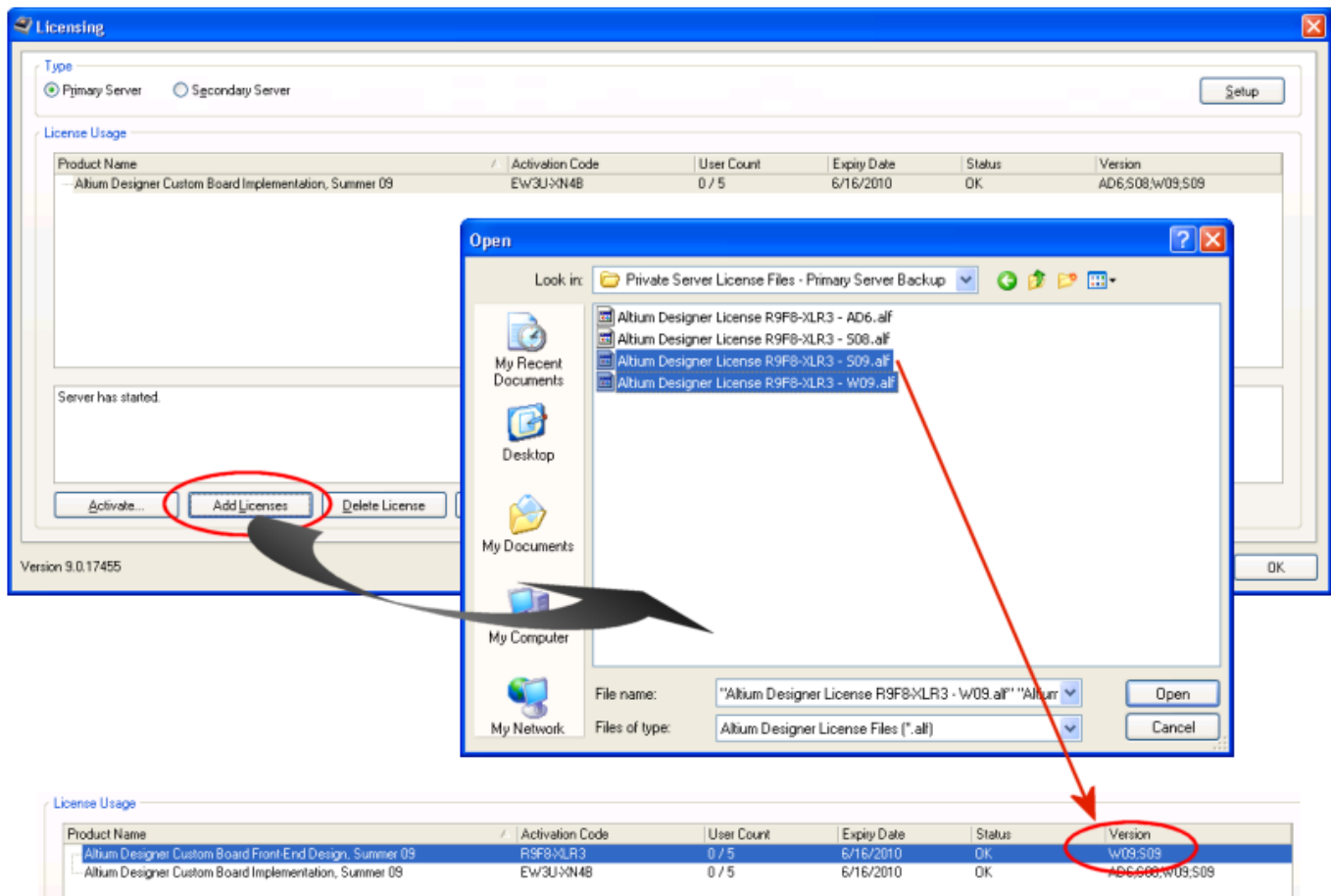
Manually Adding Licenses to a Private License Server

Activation of a Private Server license automatically adds the license files (*.alf) associated to that license to the server. However, you can also manually add a license to your server, that you have previously backed-up. You could do this for example when 'relocating' the server to a different machine that is not connected to the internet, or recovering from accidental deletion of your license.

If you have activated your Private Server license directly from your web browser using the [AltiumLive Dashboard](#), you will need to manually add the subsequent license file(s) to your server.

To add a backed-up license file (or files), simply click on the **Add Licenses** button, in the *Licensing* dialog and then browse to, and open, the required file(s) using the subsequent dialog.

An Altium Designer Summer 09 release Private Server license serves four versions of the software. If adding such a license back to your server, you can just add the .alf file(s) corresponding to the version(s) of software you wish to serve – you do not have to add all four license files. The **Version** field in the **License Usage** region will indicate which versions of the software the added license will serve.

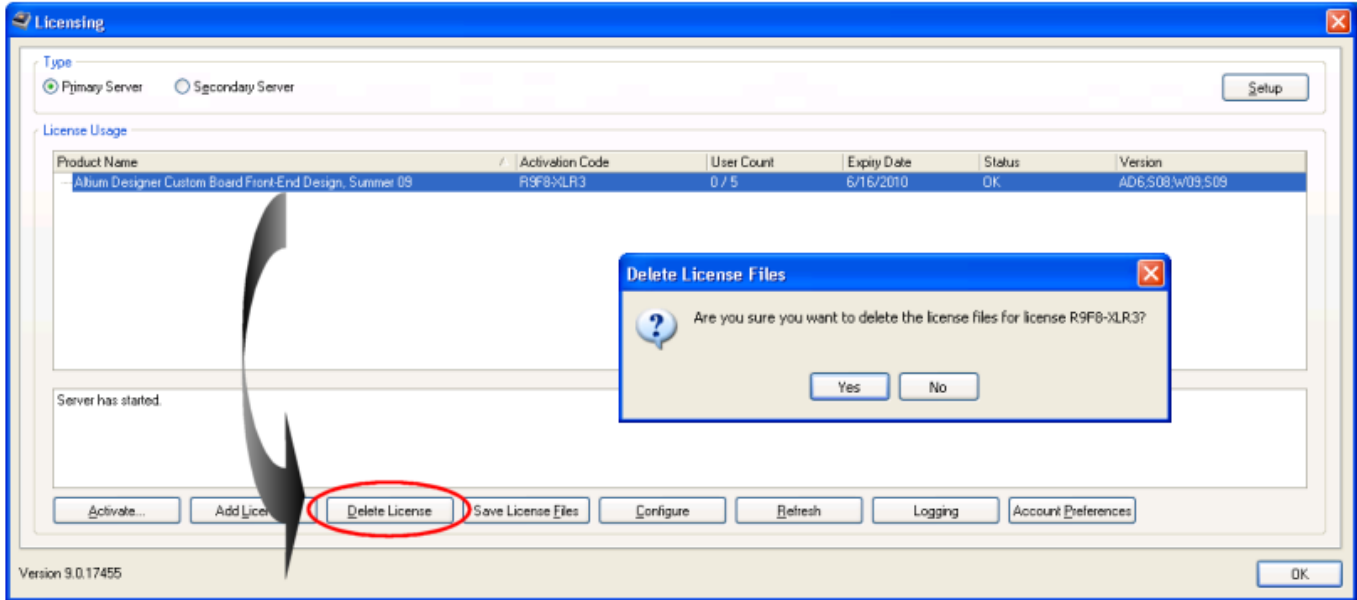


Example of adding backed-up license files for a Private Server license. In this case, only two license files are added, as the server

is not required to serve the other versions of Altium Designer.

Removing a Private Server License

To remove a Private Server license from your Private License Server – essentially deleting the license file – simply select the license in the **License Usage** region of the *Licensing* dialog, then click on the **Delete License** button. A confirmation dialog will appear – click **Yes** to proceed.



Example deletion of a license - removing it from the server.

All license files associated to the selected license will be deleted. If there are no licenses left in use by the server, the text "**Please add license**" will appear in the *Licensing* dialog.

If you want to use the license again, simply add it back in using the **Add Licenses** button and locating your back-up of the relevant .alf files. Alternatively, and if you haven't made a backup of the .alf files, simply reactivate the license, using the **Activate** button. The latter, as it requires you signing-in to your Altium account, will require connection to the internet.

Setting up a Server on a Computer with no Internet Connectivity

In accordance with the [EULA](#), a Private Server license can be used on two computers, configured to be Primary and Secondary (redundant) servers, respectively. The same license can not be used with two Primary-configured servers.

The ability to backup Private Server license files – and their inherent portability – is the very method by which you can setup a Private License Server on a computer that is not connected to the internet. The steps to achieve this are as follows:

1. Install the Private License Server on a computer that *IS* connected to the internet. Configure the server type

and activate the license.

2. Save the four license files.
3. Install the Private License Server on the target computer that *IS NOT* connected to the internet. Configure the server type to be the same as that on the 'activating' computer. Copy your saved license files to this computer and add them to the server (using the **Add Licenses** button in the *Licensing* dialog).
4. Delete the license on the original 'activating' computer. The Private License Server software can be uninstalled also, should you wish, but it is the deletion of the license that is required to abide by the EULA.

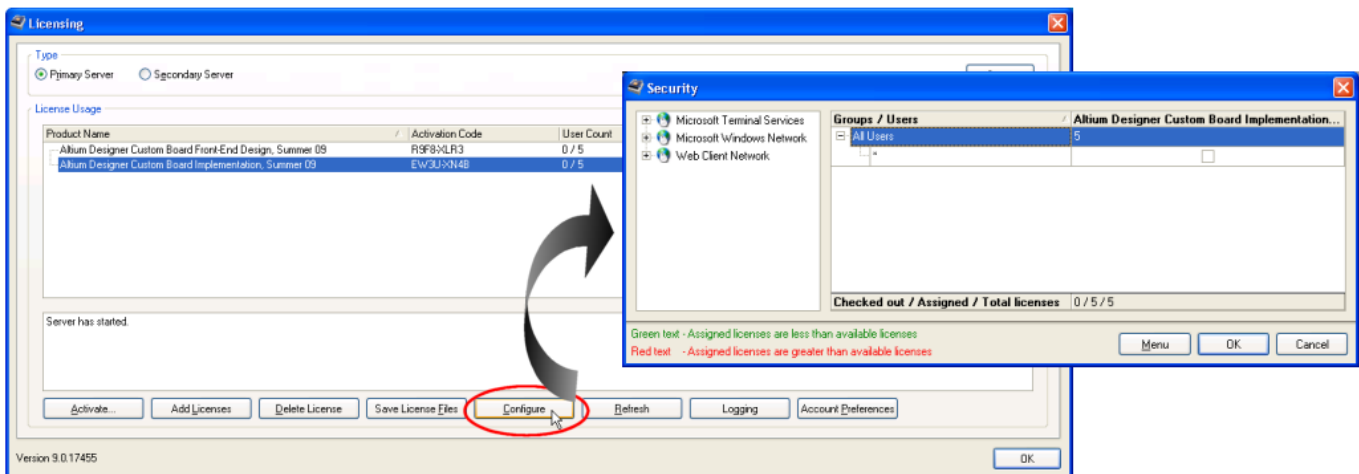
Remember that saved license files (*.alf) are encoded based on the type of server chosen prior to activation of the license. Activate according to the type of server you want to use. If you need to create both Primary and Secondary servers – both not connected to the internet – you will need to repeat the process above for both server types, to obtain the full set of required license files.

Configuring License Usage

Main article: [Private Server Licenses - Configuring Usage](#)

All configuration of a Private License Server, in terms of how the added licenses are actually used, is performed within the *Security* dialog. This includes adding users, creating groups and assigning users to groups.

Configuration is carried out on a license-by-license basis. Each license is configured in turn, by selecting its entry in the **License Usage** area of the *Licensing* dialog and clicking the **Configure** button – which will only become available once a valid Private Server license file has been added to the server.



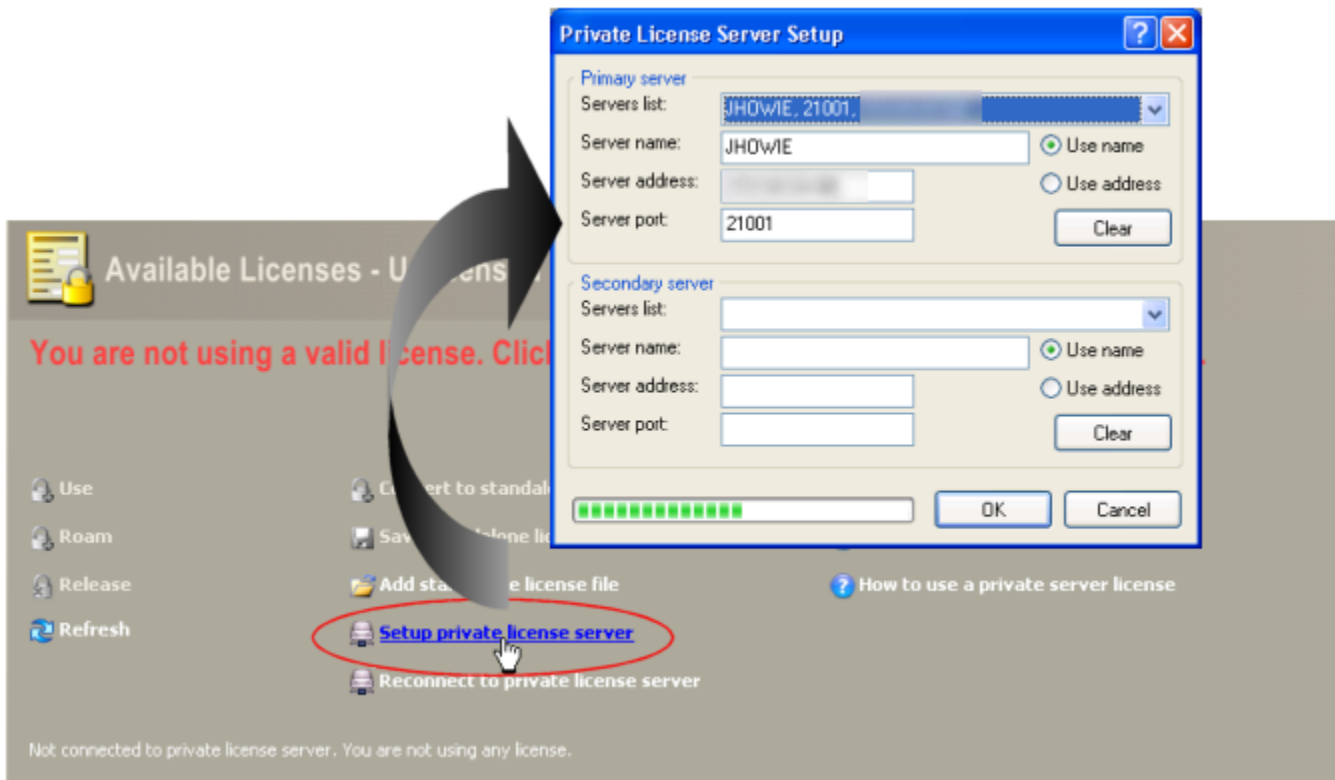
Configure license usage using the *Security* dialog.

By default there is a single group called `All Users`, with one user added. The user name is set to the wildcard character `*`, which means any user on the network is a valid member of this group. If you intend to control which users have access, or to assign your users to groups, remove this user.

Client Access

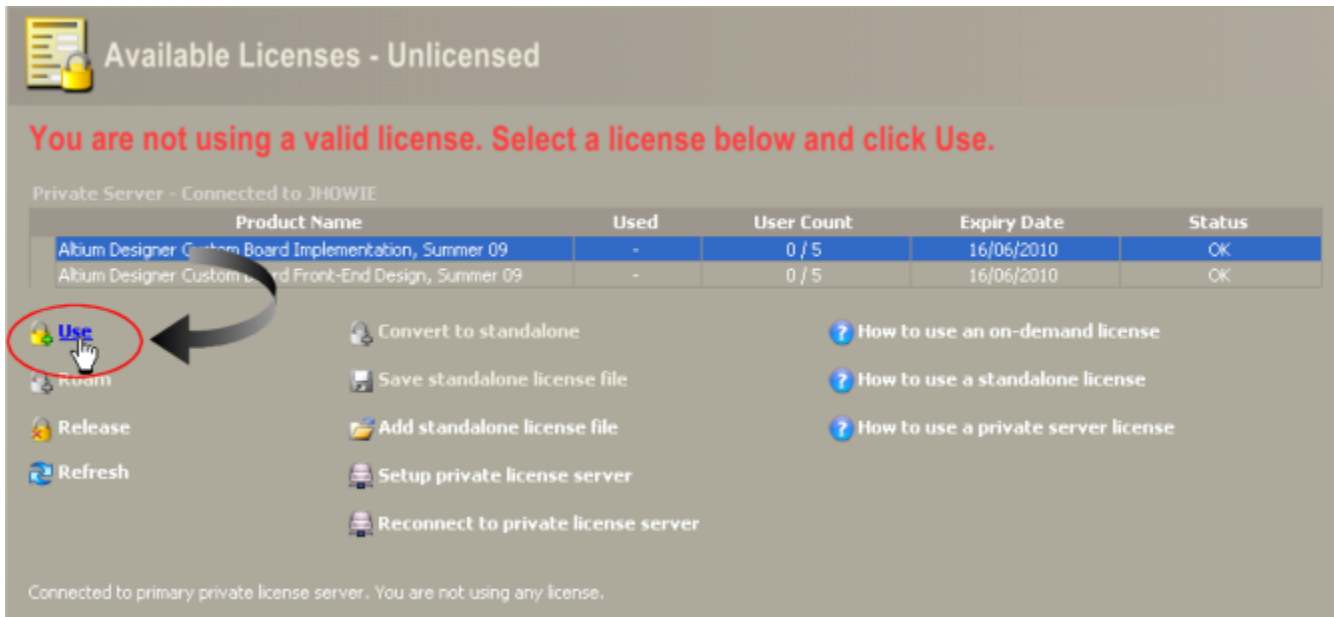
Once a Primary Private License Server has been configured, local computers running installations of Altium Designer can access and use the license(s) hosted by that server. The Altium Designer installation on such a computer is referred to as a 'client' of the server.

Access to a license on the server is made from the **My Account** page within Altium Designer. Simply click on the **Setup private license server** option – located in the **Available Licenses** region of the page. The *Private License Server Setup* dialog will appear. All available Primary and Secondary servers on the network to which the client computer is connected are detected and listed. Choose the server to which you wish to connect and click **OK**.



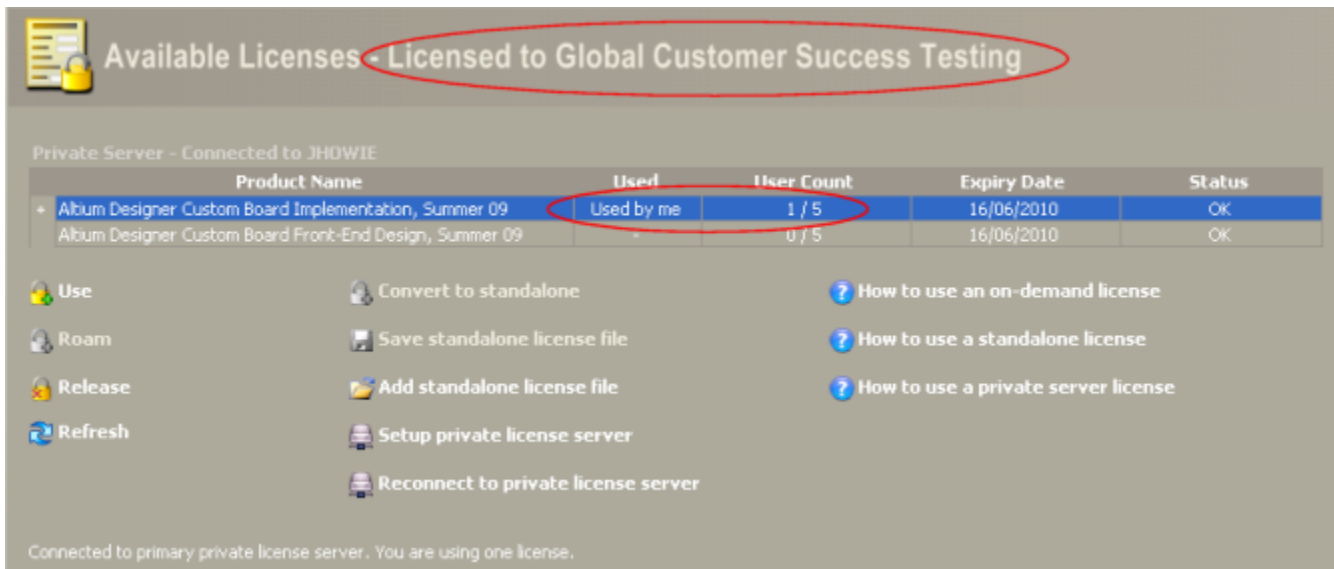
Choose to connect from a list of Private License Servers detected on the network.

The Private Server licenses configured on the server, and available for you to use, will be listed in a grid, within the **Available Licenses** region of the page. To use a license, simply click on that license in the grid, then click on the **Use** option, in the area below the grid.



Only Private Server licenses available to you will be listed. Obtaining the license is then literally a matter of two clicks of the mouse!

The **Used** field for the license will change to **Used by me** and the **User Count** field will update to reflect another 'seat' of that license taken. In addition, the 'banner' for the **Available Licenses** region will change from **Available Licenses - Unlicensed** to **Available Licenses - Licensed to AccountName** - reflecting the account to which the license is associated. The text in the lower-left of the region will also update to reflect your license usage.



The Available Licenses region will update to reflect your use of a seat of the selected Private Server license.

Click on the plus (+) symbol to the left of a license entry in the grid to expand that license, providing details of who is currently using that license.

To release your license, simply select the license in the grid and click on the **Release** option, in the area below the grid.

To disconnect from the server, click on the **Disconnect from private license server** option. Subsequently clicking on the **Reconnect to private license server** option will reconnect you to that same server again.

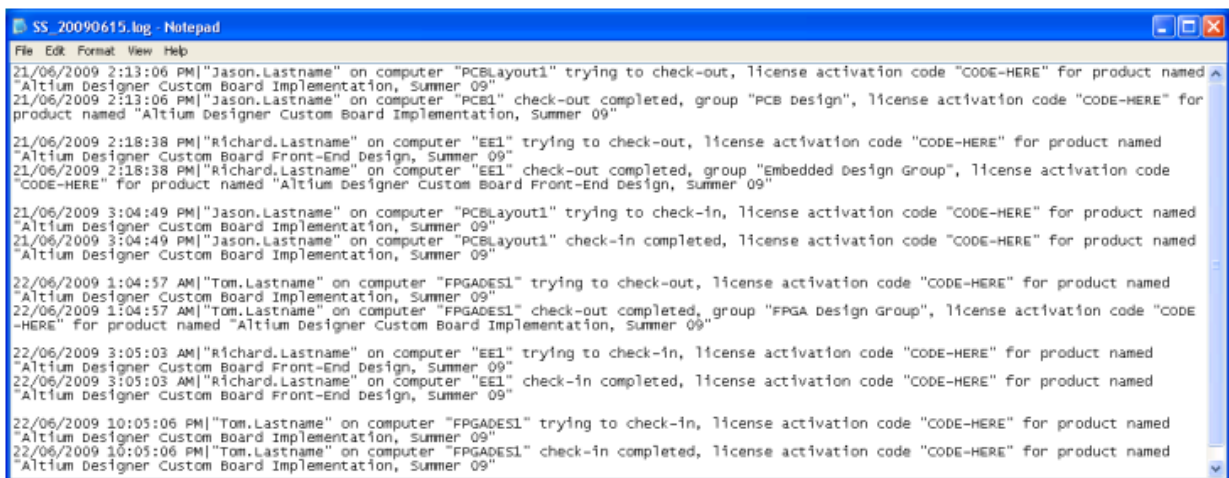
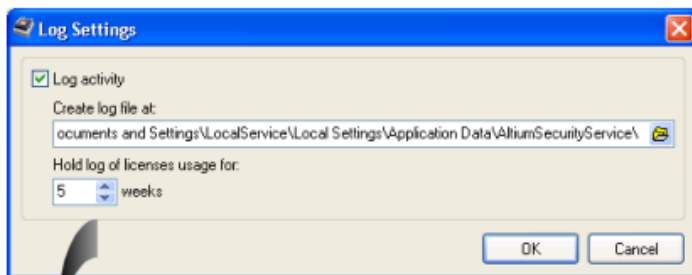
To connect to a different Private License Server, simply release all licenses you are using for the current server, then click on the **Setup private license server** option. Use the *Private License Server Setup* dialog to select from any other available Private License Servers that have been detected.

Examining License Usage

Main article: [Private Server Licenses - Examining Usage](#)

On the server side, current license usage can be checked in a number of ways:

- By expanding the entry for a particular license, in the **License Usage** region of the *Licensing* dialog.
- By selecting a particular license in the *Licensing* dialog and clicking the **Configure** button – in the subsequent *Security* dialog, those users currently using an instance of that license will have a tick displayed in their associated check box.
- By enabling the creation of a detailed license activity log. Log files are created on a weekly basis, and you can specify the period of time over which to keep the generated log files.



Real-time logging of license usage.