VisualSP Farm Solution Frequently Asked Questions

This document contains many of the VisualSP farm solution FAQs. If you have additional questions or need clarification on any of the answers below, feel free to call send us an email (Vsp-support@visualsp.com) or call us (630-786-7026) directly. We are always here to help!

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General

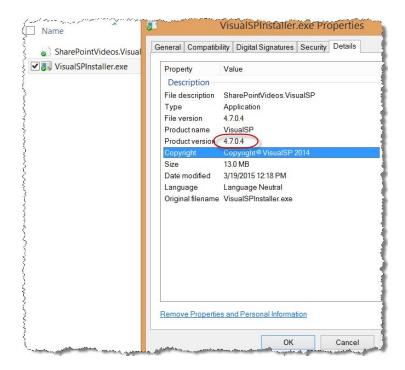### > Does the product alter authentication from claims-based to classic?

The product does not make any configuration changes to the environment, ever. Installing the solution is the equivalent of using the Add-SPSolution and Install-SPSolution cmdlets – it just uses the API instead and then activates the appropriate features as determined by the settings in the installer.

> Are Host Named Site Collections (HSNC) supported?

Yes, HSNC is supported by the product.

> How do I know which version of VisualSP Help System do I have?

Right click the VisualSP Help System executable (exe) file. Go to Properties → Details tab.

> How do you upgrade the Help System when upgrading SharePoint (ex: from SharePoint 2010 to SharePoint 2013)?

If the current version is no longer needed, It is advised to uninstall it entirely from the farm and delete the VisualSP Farm Hub site first. Then install it fresh into the new SharePoint on-prem installation.

> What does the VisualSP feature receiver do?

There are actually several feature receivers, basically one for each feature that is activated:

-   1) SharePointVideos.VisualSP.CentralAdmin: On activation, the feature receiver for this feature provisions the AnalyticsTimerJob which is responsible for parsing the data in the VisualSP staging database and moving it to the VisualSP data warehouse database. Additionally, if there's already either of the two databases in place then the code will also ensure that the version is up to date. Lastly, it ensures that the VisualSP diagnostics logging options are available within Central Administration. On deactivation, it removes the timer job. The VisualSP menu elements are declaratively deployed via the feature definition.

-   2) SharePointVideos.VisualSP.Stapler: On activation, if no license key has been set then it ensures that a valid trial key is present. The feature also declaratively staples the

consumer feature to the global site template so that it can be automatically be enabled when a new site collection is provisioned.

- 3) SharePointVideos.VisualSP.HelpProvider: On activation, the feature receiver for this feature provisions the hidden list which contains the help items and adds the authenticated users group to the visitors group if the site is the farm hub. The feature also declaratively adds the custom action elements for the management page ribbon as well as the site settings page menu items.

- 4) SharePointVideos.VisualSP.HelpConsumer: On activation, the feature receiver for this feature simply validates licensing conditions and makes no changes. If, for example, you only have an Express license and attempt to activate the feature on a site that does not have the provider feature already enabled then it will throw an appropriate exception. On deactivation, the code does some cleanup by removing the .webpart file that is deployed to the web part gallery. The feature also declaratively adds the VisualSPWebPart.webpart file, the site settings menu elements, and registers the delegate control which is responsible for dynamically displaying the ribbon tab and inline help.

> What type of control is used to add the Help tab and the inline help to the SharePoint pages?

When the SharePointVideos.VisualSP.HelpConsumer is activated, it registers a delegate control which determines the context of the request and gathers relevant help items from the various provider lists (the local provider if present, the web application provider if present, and finally, the farm hub provider if present). It then dynamically creates the necessary custom action XML for the Help tab and registers the tab accordingly. Likewise it does the same for the inline help and registers appropriate scripts.

Significant caching and context checks are in place to try and avoid doing work that is not applicable to the context. Use of monitored scopes is also employed for performance monitoring.

> Are Custom Actions being used for the Help tab?

Yes. The custom actions are created dynamically so they don't actually get stored in the database. We build the necessary XML and register the Help tab with the ribbon in context so nothing is committed back. The actual tab items will vary based on the user due to permission trimming so we have to re-evaluate for each user hitting a particular page – caching is in place

so that we do the trimming after getting the core items from the cache so we're not hitting all three potential hubs for VisualSP on every request.

> Is the Master Page modified in any way?

We in no way touch or edit any existing files whether they exist on the file system or the content database – this includes the master page.

By leveraging the delegate control, we can register our control to the page within the *AdditionalPageHead* placeholder control. If your master page removes that control, then our stuff breaks, but it's standard practice to not remove this as SharePoint itself leverages this same placeholder numerous items.

> Can the VisualSP web part feature be deactivated?

Not directly – if you deactivate the consumer feature then it will remove the web part but you'll also lose the functionality of the product along with it.

That said, there's nothing stopping you from simply removing the .webpart file from the gallery . Please keep in mind that re-activating the feature will add it back.

> Can you supply a Sole Source letter for VisualSP Help System?

Yes. We are the only supplier of the VisualSP Help system.
We can certainly provide a letter certifying that we are the sole source supplier.