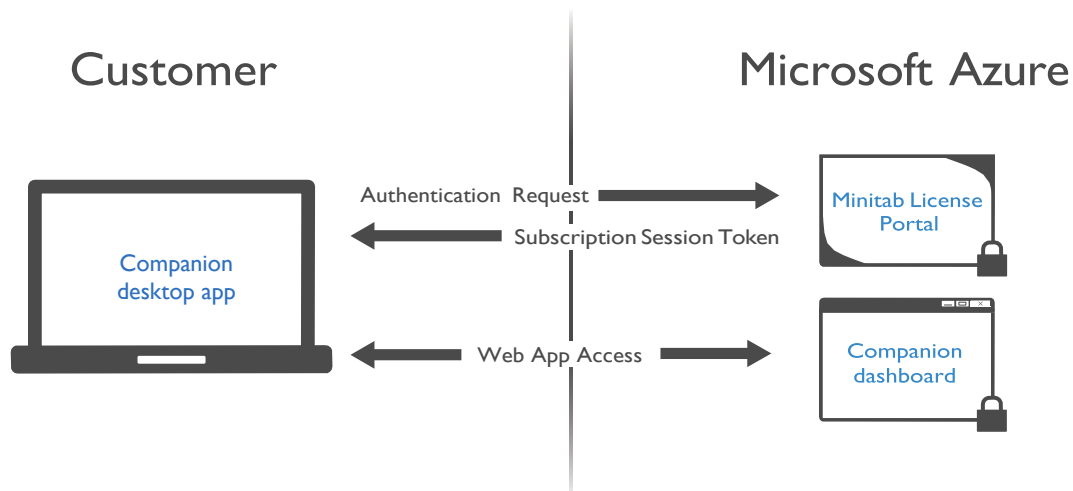# Companion
by Minitab®

Overview

Companion by Minitab® is a platform for managing your continuous improvement program. Project owners and practitioners use the Companion desktop app to execute projects. Their project information automatically rolls up to Companion's web-based dashboard, where executives and stakeholders can see graphical summaries and reports for a high-level view of the organization's quality initiative.

The cloud-optimized Companion platform consists of three components, each serving a unique purpose:

companion.minitab.com

The web application at the heart of Companion fulfills two roles.

- Configurable dashboard display that extracts and compiles data from Companion desktop project files to provide graphical summaries and reports for a detailed view of your entire quality initiative.

- Centralized storage for all Companion projects and templates.

Companion desktop application

This configurable desktop application provides the tools project owners and practitioners use to execute projects.

Minitab License Portal

This company-wide Secure Token Service (STS) incorporates licensing controls, subscription management, quotas, etc., and is built on Windows Identity Foundation (WIF) using WS-Federation Standards.

Data Encryption

Like the leading online banking services, Companion uses a 2048-bit VeriSign SSL Certificate to protect customer data and communications.

Security Audits

Companion is audited by a third-party security vendor to ensure that your data is safe and secure. To ensure the continued safety of customer data, penetration tests and security audits are conducted on a periodic basis.

Backup and Recovery

An automated backup strategy supports all Companion users. A full snapshot of your data is backed up on a daily basis. The system retains backups for the last seven days, as well as a weekly backup for each of the past four weeks. This strategy provides daily recovery options for a seven-day window and weekly recovery options for the previous month.

User Authentication

Web app only (subscription-based accounts)—Users access their Companion application with a unique username and password. This method of authentication verifies the user's identity and level of permission in the Companion application. The method of authentication may be managed by Minitab where to further secure account access, passwords are stored in an encrypted format. Authentication may also be managed by an external organization (deferred authentication) to allow for a single sign on (SSO) option to Companion and other applications. In the latter case, the external organization must be configured to support the SAML 2.0 protocol.

In both instances, user accounts are established in the Minitab License Portal by your organization's authorized representative(s). When opting for authentication managed by Minitab, passwords are created by each individual user and password strength requirements are enforced. Deferred authentication allows for the external organization to manage and enforce password standards, as these passwords are not stored by Minitab.

Microsoft's Azure Data Centers

Companion has been developed, tested, and audited in Microsoft's Azure environment and is covered by all applicable security features outlined in the *Microsoft Azure Network Security* whitepaper, and the *Securing the Microsoft Cloud* PDF. The Microsoft Azure data centers guarantee a 99.95% up-time and meet a wide range of internationally recognized security and compliance standards.

Shared Responsibilities

Using Windows Azure allows Minitab to focus on the Companion application while Microsoft maintains physical security, operating system security, disaster recovery, and similar functions. Minitab also routinely updates Companion so that you always have access to the latest features. As a result, Companion requires little to no interaction with your IT department, and lets you focus on achieving your organization's goals. Once the system is set up, user provisioning and access control features allow you to decide who accesses Companion and contributes to your initiatives.

	Microsoft Azure	Minitab	Customer
Physical and Network Security	☑		
99.95% Uptime Guarantee	☑	☑	
Server Patching, Antivirus and Anti-Malware	☑		
Geographically Redundant Data Storage	☑		
Disaster Recovery	☑	☑	
Free Technical Support		☑	
Application Updates		☑	
Initial Setup and Configuration		☑	☑
Ongoing Dashboard Management			☑
User Account Provisioning and Access Management			☑
Project Creation and Data Entry			☑

Conclusion

Because Minitab is committed to ensuring the security of your data, Companion has been developed using Microsoft's Windows Azure cloud platform. Companion by Minitab is designed to the most rigorous standards and is constantly evaluated to enhance both security and performance.

For more information visit CompanionByMinitab.com.