

## Inside Citrix chapter two – The one with the why, who, and scope

During the past five years I have written a lot of articles on XenApp, XenDesktop and the IMA (Independent Management Architecture) as well as on the FMA (FlexCast Management Architecture) with the introduction of the 7.x platform. Some were high-level, some deep dives, and a few in between.

Most of my articles are based on and written around publicly available information, my own experiences, those of other community members and with a little help from Citrix every now and again, though I never shared any NDA information, nor will I do so now.

It goes without saying that I am far from the only one: there are tons of excellent resources out there free for you to read and learn from. In fact, I'll make sure to include a list of community resources near the end of this book – updated to reflect 2018.

The only issue with this, although that's probably too big a word, is that most information is scattered over the Internet and you will probably have to visit multiple sites and resources to find what you are looking for. Even when multiple articles covering the same and/or related subject(s) can be found on the same website you will be in for a search. Well, no longer!

And while this isn't too big a deal (I mean, most content is written and published during out-of-work hours, meaning someone has sacrificed his or her spare time for this, so who are we to complain?) I just like it when things are organized, so that's what I am trying to achieve here as well. All things FMA and related content bundled into one resource for your convenience, hopefully.

## Who is it for?

In the past I have made at least one serious attempt to write a book on Citrix-related technology. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to finish it. One of the main reasons for this was the topic I chose, Citrix XenMobile. Seriously, whenever I finished a section or chapter something had already changed, or Citrix would have at least announced a new release within the coming weeks.

Of course, this all helped (and it still does) in getting XenMobile to where it is today, which is great. However, for me it was very frustrating and counterproductive. In the end I decided to call it a day and use some of the material I had written up until then for some detailed blog posts.

Now, with the FMA it is another story. Although the FMA itself is constantly being improved (especially now that XenApp has been added, see below as well) the basics remain, or most of them anyway. During the last 2 years I have spent quite some time getting to know certain parts of the FMA. Knowledge I would like to share with you today.

Do note that, and this is important, Citrix recently announced a quarterly release cycle regarding both XenDesktop and XenApp. As such I will not be able to provide you with all the latest features and functionalities. In fact, chances are that when this book becomes available there will already be a new edition on the market, 7.9 or perhaps 8.0 even, who knows. But that's the way it is. While unfortunate, I don't foresee any big changes regarding the underlying architecture (FMA). Just keep an eye on [basvankaam.com](http://basvankaam.com) where I will make sure to share any new and relevant information regarding both products and the FMA in particular.

If you are (relatively) new to XenApp/XenDesktop and the FlexCast Management Architecture this book will definitely be helpful. If you have been working with XenApp and/or XenDesktop for some time now but you would like to know a bit more about the ins and outs, this book will probably answer most of your questions as well.

Since I have been writing about the FlexCast Management Architecture for a while now, I have a pretty good understanding of which topics are of interest to my readers, which really helps.

I have also spoken to numerous community folk and readers of my blog who told me that my writing helps them in getting things a bit more organized with regard to troubleshooting, for example. So even if you know all this stuff already and you are a XenApp/XenDesktop/FMA veteran, this book might still come in handy as a reference, or a fun read at the very least. Take your pick.

## Scope

Throughout the next 25 chapters I will talk about what the FlexCast Management Architecture is, its foundation, the (main) components and concepts involved, as well as any (closely) related technologies and products that might or might not be optional. I will primarily focus on the main concepts and mechanisms that make up the FMA from an architectural point of view.

As mentioned in the previous ‘Why this book?’ section, all information shared in this book is based on publicly available information, my own experiences, those of others and a little help from Citrix here and there. However, since I’m not employed by Citrix and don’t have any access to company product information, this is all I have. But trust me, I will make sure to include something for everybody. From the basics and beyond to deeper dives where applicable.

Other (closely related) topics will include Citrix printing, the user logon process, resource enumeration & launch (what happens inside the FMA), troubleshooting and more. Topics that you as a Citrix Administrator/Architect have to deal with on a daily basis. Other sub- and/or related components and technologies will vary with regard to the details shared. There is just so much to cover it’s nearly impossible to get to the same level of detail on every subject.

I also don’t want to steer too far away from the main topic, the FMA. Of course, when new (relevant) information becomes available I won’t hesitate to share this with you on [basvankaam.com](http://basvankaam.com), keeping this project a ‘work in progress’.

All major, minor and/or optional FMA components will be discussed. However, this book is not meant as an install-and-configure manual, nor will it be a how-to guide. Instead I want to dig deeper into the concepts and technologies that make up and surround the Citrix FlexCast Management Architecture, the true foundation of XenDesktop and XenApp.

As we progress I will also touch on some of the minor or ‘less significant’ features (although that depends on your point of view of course) along the way. Finally, I will conclude each (technical) section and/or chapter with a list of key takeaways that might be helpful when designing, implementing, troubleshooting or maintaining Citrix XenDesktop / XenApp-based infrastructures.

..... **FMA fact:** Also keep an eye out for the FMA fact columns (looking like this one) throughout the book. I have included over 100 of them.

Existing content from [basvankaam.com](http://basvankaam.com) will be included as well. However, all content will be closely reviewed and rewritten where needed. I just felt it would be a waste not to do anything *extra* with all that I have produced up till now.

While I would advise you to read through the first two to three chapters first, after that it doesn’t really matter. Each chapter stands on its own and can be treated as such. However, as a result you may find a small overlap between chapters with regard to the information shared, this will be minimal though. You will find references to other sections and/or chapters where applicable.