vnc connect

Technician's guide to
On-Demand Assist

January 2023

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1 Introduction

VNC Connect's On-Demand Assist allows you to remotely access an end user's computer in seconds on demand, see their screen, and take control of their keyboard and mouse. It's designed for when the person who needs help doesn't, or can't, have remote access software permanently *installed*.

This document is for the IT professionals ("technicians") responsible for providing just-in-time support to remote colleagues or customers ("end users").

2 Setting up On-Demand Assist

This document assumes that On-Demand Assist has been included in your VNC Connect subscription. If you are the team owner, you can check by signing into your RealVNC account online at *https://manage.realvnc.com* and examining the **Billing** page. You should see a positive number of technicians:

You must make at least one person in your remote access team a technician in order to use On-Demand Assist.

2.1 Making a person a technician

To enable or revoke technician status for yourself (as team owner), navigate to the **People** page and select the **Technician** checkbox adjacent to your name:

If you do not want to make yourself a technician, you can nominate another existing member of your team instead, or invite other people into your team and make them technicians (up to the maximum number allowed by your subscription).

2.2   Inviting other people into your team

To invite a person into your team:

1. In your RealVNC account online, navigate to the **People** page.
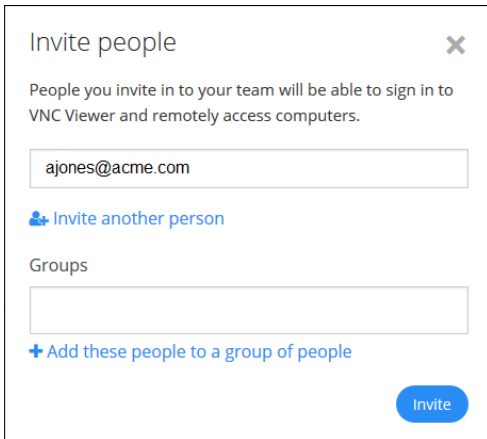
2. Click the **Invite people** button. Enter the email address of the person you want to invite and (optionally) nominate a people group for them to join, and then click **Invite**. To invite multiple people, click **Invite another person** and enter an email address for each person:

People you invite are automatically sent an email to join your team. If they don't already have a RealVNC account, they'll be prompted to set one up as part of this process. Team membership remains pending until they accept the invitation by clicking the link in the email.

3. Once the invitation is accepted, the person becomes a member of your team. You can then make them a technician, as described in the section above.

Note, if you have enabled VNC Connect's Azure AD SSO, Team members are *added in Azure AD* instead.

2.2.1   Understanding roles, and distributing responsibility

When a person becomes a member of your team, they are automatically assigned the User role:

Optionally, you can choose to change their role to team Manager or Admin. If you do, this person will in turn then be able to invite further people into your team, and make those people technicians.

A User cannot invite people into the team, and nor can they grant or revoke technician status.

Note, if you have enabled VNC Connect's Azure AD SSO, Team roles are *assigned in Azure AD* instead.

3 Starting a session

3.1 Signing in to VNC Viewer

When starting VNC Viewer for the first time, you may encounter a 'first-run dialog'. If you do, click the **Sign in to get started** button.
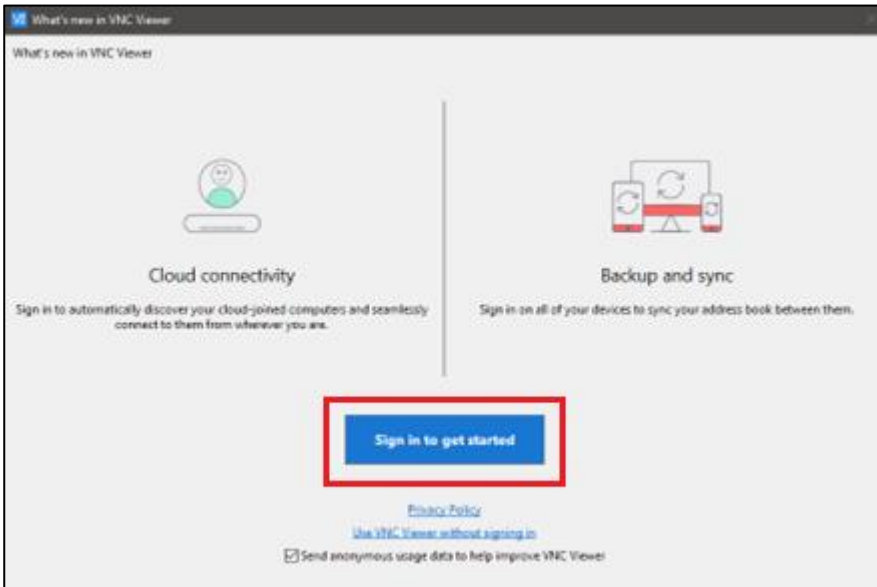
Otherwise, click **Sign in** and enter your RealVNC account credentials.

The **On-Demand Assist** button appears, meaning you can now start an On-Demand Assist session:
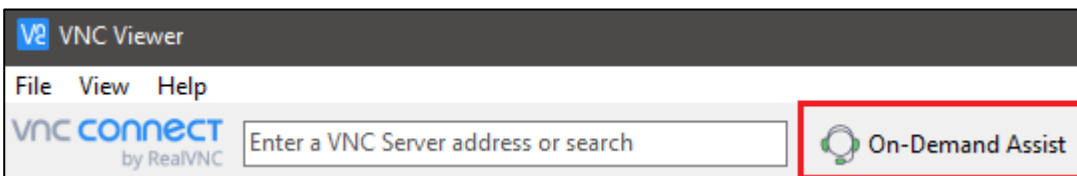
3.2 Generating and entering a session code

To connect to an end user's computer, you must both take certain steps:

1. Open VNC Viewer and click the **On-Demand Assist** button. Make a note of your download URL and 9-digit session code:
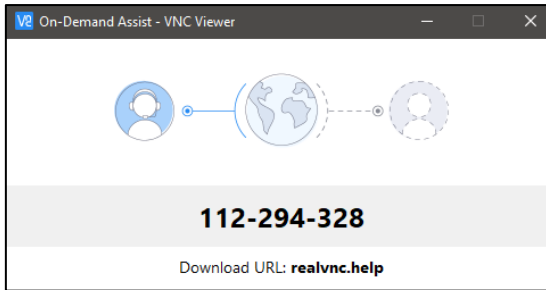
2. Ask the end user to visit the download URL and download the disposable app. The end user sees:
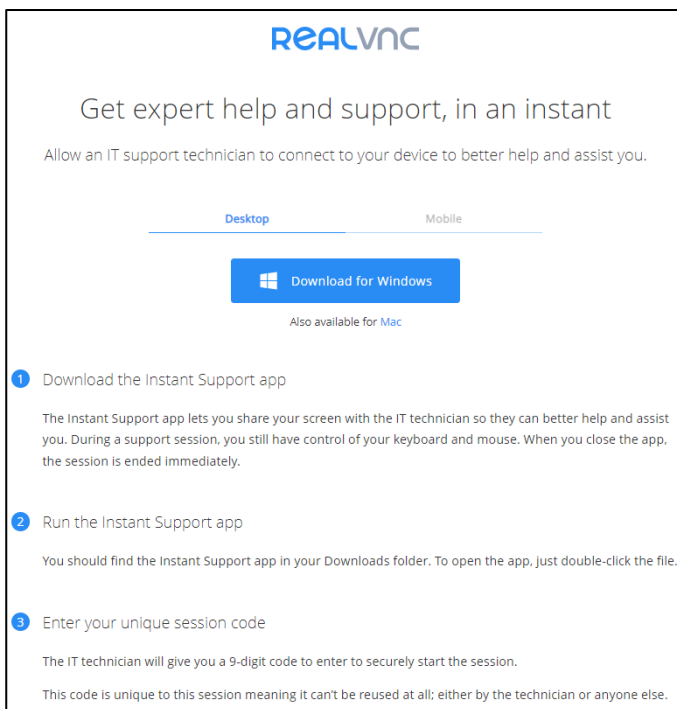
3. Have the end user download and run the app and enter the 9-digit session code. You can share this code over the phone, via IM/email, or however you usually communicate with colleagues and customers.

   Note: A session code can only be used once

   The end user sees:

4. After entering the session code, the end user is presented with a privacy warning. Once they accept, their screen will be shared and automatically appear on your computer.

    The end user sees:

4   Controlling an end user's computer

4.1   Interacting with the VNC Viewer session window

The end user's desktop appears in a session window on your screen. As soon as it does, you can control it:

If you have more than one session underway at once, each will appear in their own session window:
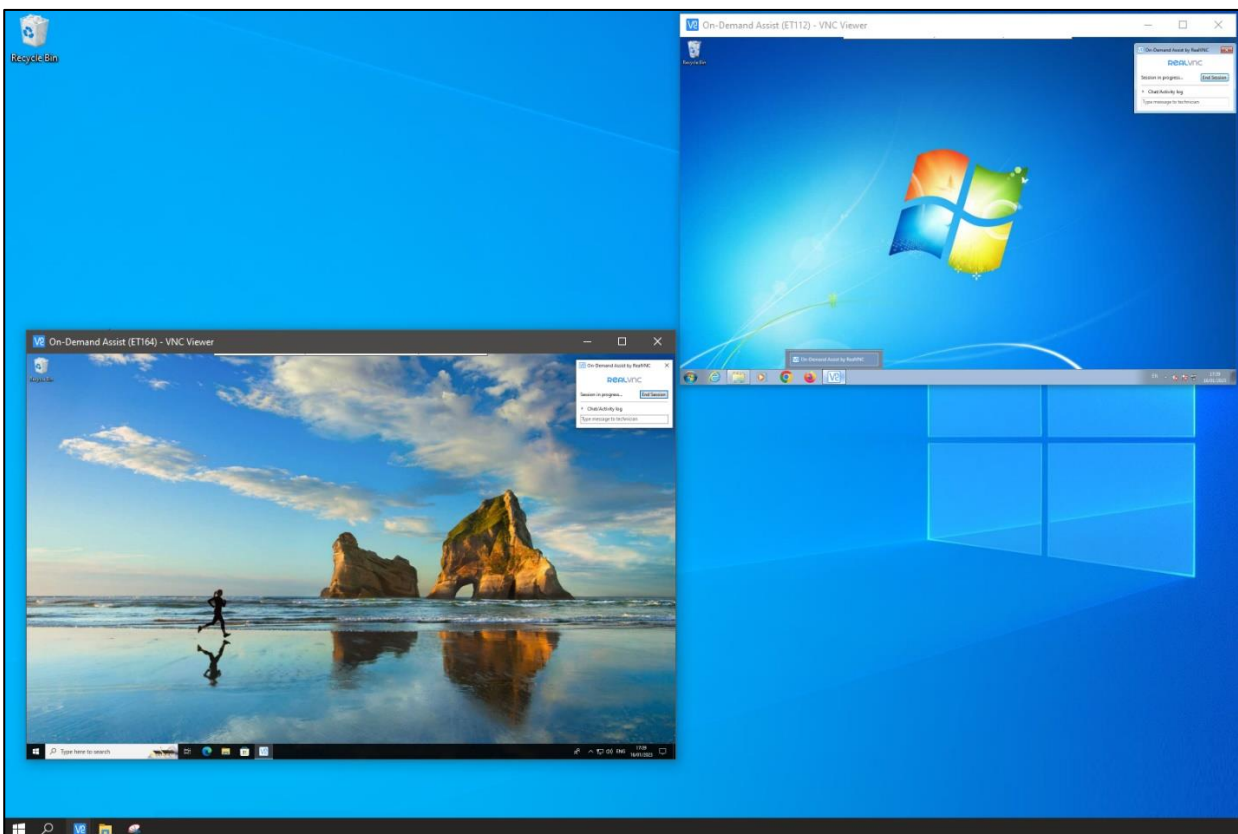

You can drag a session window around your desktop in the usual way, as well as minimize or maximize it.

4.2   Using your mouse and keyboard

To control the end user's computer, simply move your cursor onto the session window.

As soon as your cursor moves over their desktop, you are in control; your cursor movements become their cursor movements, and your mouse clicks and keyboard inputs become theirs.
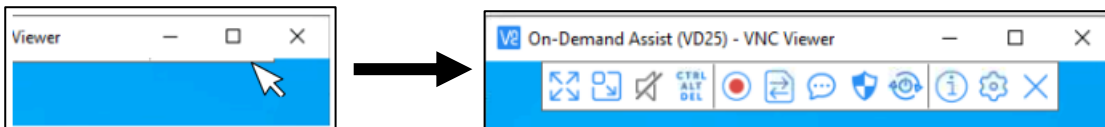
During the session, the end user is still able to view and interact with their desktop. An always-visible **End Session** button is displayed on their screen:

Note: If you are connected to a Windows computer, you must *elevate* before performing advanced operations such as locking the screen, switching user account, or rebooting the remote computer. See *Requesting elevated privileges on an end user's computer* for more information.

4.3   Using the VNC Viewer toolbar

At the top of the session window, you'll notice a thin grey line. Move your cursor onto this line to reveal the VNC Viewer toolbar:

The VNC Viewer toolbar allows you to perform the following tasks.

Name	Icon	Description	Notes
Full screen		Toggles between full screen and windowed mode.	
Scale to 100% / Scale automatically		Selects whether your view of the end user's desktop automatically scales to the size of your session window.	This button allows you to choose between two of the most common scaling options. For more, click the **Preferences** toolbar button and select the **Options** tab.
Mute audio		Toggles muting of audio from the remote computer	Audio is not currently available in On-Demand Assist sessions.
Send Ctrl+Alt+Del		Sends a Ctrl+Alt+Del to the end user's computer.	Sending a Ctrl+Alt+Del through your keyboard will only affect your *own* computer, even if you are controlling the end user's desktop.
Start/stop recording the session		Records the session to a video file stored locally on the VNC Viewer computer	Session recording is not currently available in On-Demand Assist sessions.

Transfer files		Allows you to transfer files between the end user's computer and your own.	See *Transferring files to and from an end user's computer*.
Chat		Allows you to send a text-based chat message to the end user.	See *Sending a text-based chat message to an end user*.
Elevate permissions		Allows you to gain elevated privileges on the end user's Windows computer.	Only visible when connected to a Windows computer. See *Requesting elevated privileges on an end user's computer*.
Reboot remote computer		Reboots the end user's Windows computer, and automatically resumes the session when the computer restarts.	Only visible when connected to a Windows computer. See *Rebooting an end user's Windows computer*.
Session information		Displays information about the session, such as the end user's IP address.	
Properties		Allows you to change session settings (e.g. change picture quality or choose from multiple scaling options).	
End session		Disconnects you from the end user's computer.	Once disconnected, the only way to reconnect is to follow the steps in *Generating and entering a session code* in full.

4.4 Requesting elevated privileges on an end user's computer

On Windows, your session must be granted elevated privileges before you can reboot the end user's computer, or interact with UAC prompts, the login/lock screen, and privileged applications such as administrative command prompts.
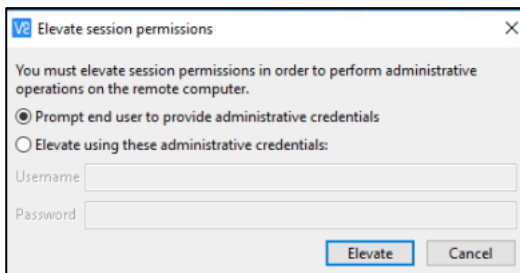
Note: This step is not possible (or necessary) when connected to a Mac.

To gain elevated privileges:

1. Press the **Elevate permissions** button on the VNC Viewer toolbar:

2. Choose an option from the following dialog:

If you *do not* have a set of administrative credentials for the end user's computer:

1. Select **Prompt end user to provide administrative credentials**.

2. Instruct the end user to enter their own administrative credentials, and then confirm the UAC prompt.

    Note: You are not able to view/interact with the end user's computer while the UAC prompt is active, so the end user *must* be present.

If you *do* have a set of administrative credentials for the end user's computer:

1. Select **Elevate using these administrative credentials**.

2. Enter your administrative credentials.

3. If necessary, wait for the end user to confirm the UAC prompt.

    Note: You are not able to view/interact with the end user's computer while the UAC prompt is active, so the end user *must* be present.

By default, the end user's UAC prompt will look like this (though it may be configured to appear differently, or not at all):
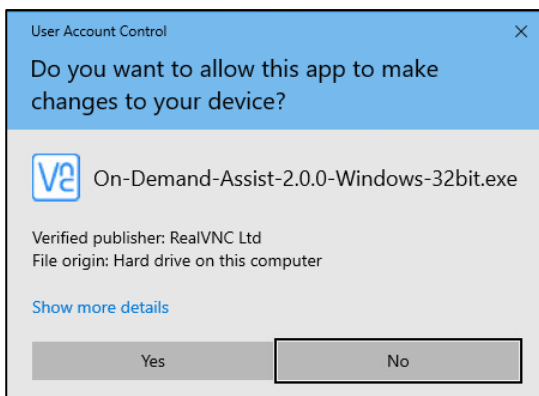
## 4.5   Transferring files to and from an end user's computer

VNC Connect allows you to upload files from your computer to the end user's and download the end user's files to your own computer.

1. Click the **Transfer files** button on the VNC Viewer toolbar:

2. The **Remote file browser** dialog opens on your computer. The end user is unable to see this dialog, but they are warned via their chat/activity log that you are transferring files.

   You can navigate the end user's computer using the folder tree on the left, then right click or use the toolbar to download a file to, or upload a file from, your computer:
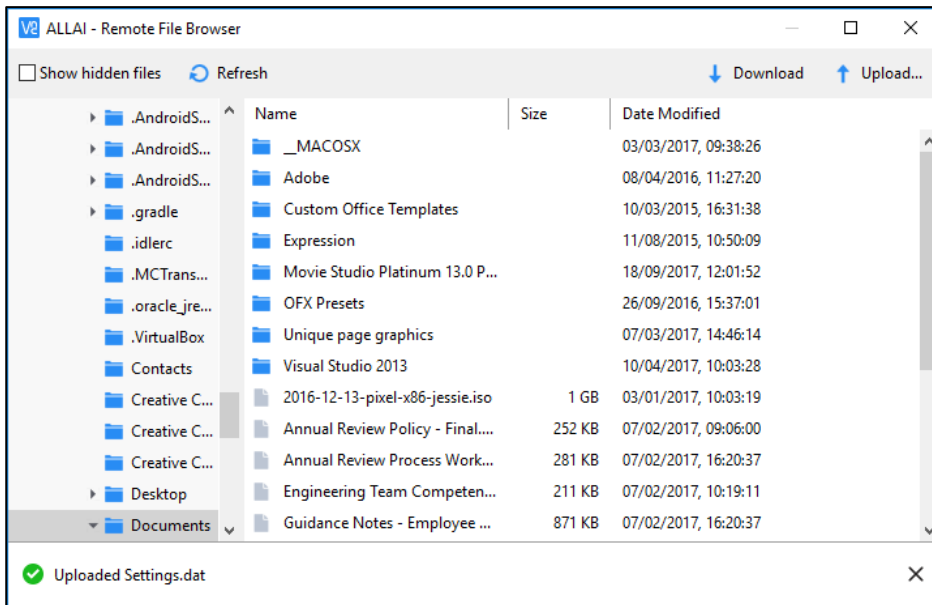
## 4.6   Sending a text-based chat message to an end user

Text-based chat messages can be used to overcome a language barrier or leave an instruction for an end user who has left their desk during a session.

Note: Text-based chat messages remain on the end user's screen after the session has ended, meaning any instructions you leave can be read when they return.

To leave a text-based chat message, click the **Chat** button on the VNC Viewer toolbar:

Your messages are displayed in the end user's chat/activity log:
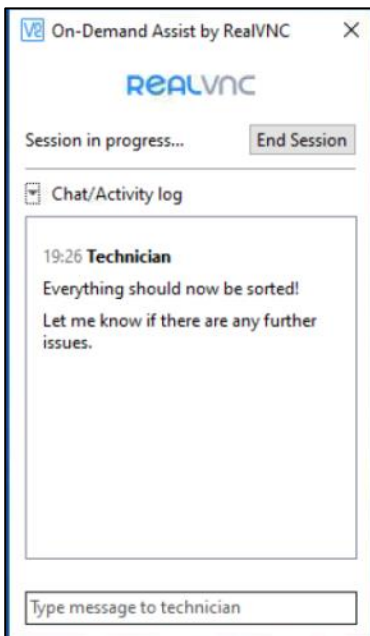

4.7   Rebooting an end user's Windows computer

You may need to reboot the remote computer to solve the problem. Please note, if you are connected to a Windows computer, you must elevate before trying to reboot so the session can seamlessly resume afterwards. If you do not elevate, you will be disconnected and have to start over with a new session code.

Note: It's not possible to reboot an end user's Mac computer and seamlessly resume the session in this release. Please reboot as you would normally and generate a new session code when the end user's computer powers back on. We hope to introduce automatic resume for Mac soon.

To reboot a remote Windows computer and seamlessly resume the session, use the VNC Viewer toolbar's **Reboot remote computer** button, rather than the remote computer's desktop reboot facility:

If you do not have elevated permissions (see *Requesting elevated privileges on an end user's computer*), pressing this button will prompt you to elevate the session. This ensures your session will seamlessly resume at the earliest possible opportunity:
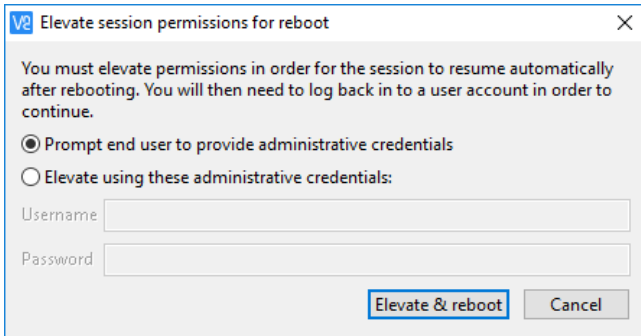
Note: The end user may be prompted to confirm your permissions can be elevated, before their system reboots.

5   Ending a session

Once you've made the necessary changes to the end user's computer, you can use the VNC Viewer toolbar to end the session. To do so, click the **End session** button:

Note: Chat messages remain on the end user's computer after you disconnect, allowing you to leave instructions if they have left their desk:
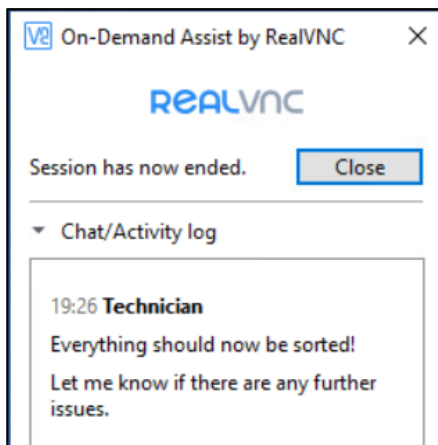
If you wish to reconnect, you must follow the steps in *Generating and entering a session code* in full.

6 Branding the support experience for the end user

If your subscription includes branding, you can customize the branding of the disposable app that end users download for On-Demand Assist, and the web site that delivers it, so users experience a brand they recognize and trust.

To do this, sign in to your RealVNC account online and navigate to the **Branding** page. By default, **Use RealVNC branding** is selected; choose **Customize the branding** instead. You can specify:

- A download URL. This slug is appended to the default address of `www.realvnc.help`, so if for example you specify `acme_industries` then end users must navigate to `www.realvnc.help/acme_industries` in order to download the disposable app.

- A company name, logo and app icon that appear on the download web site and in the app UI.
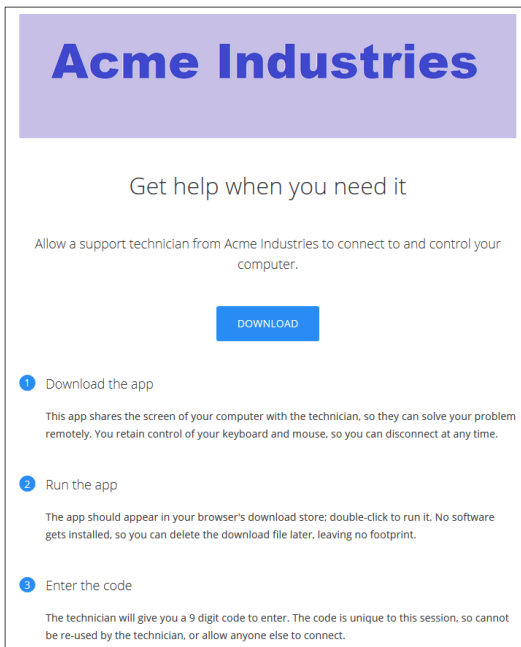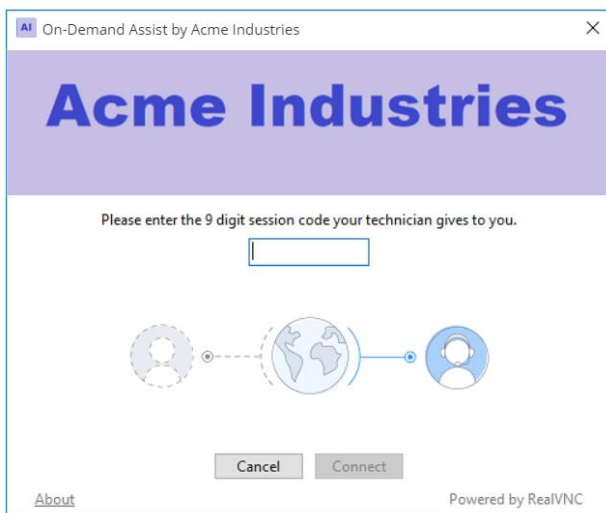
For example:

6.1   Previewing branding changes

The **Preview download web site** and **Preview download app** buttons at the bottom of the page allow you to check how your branding will appear:
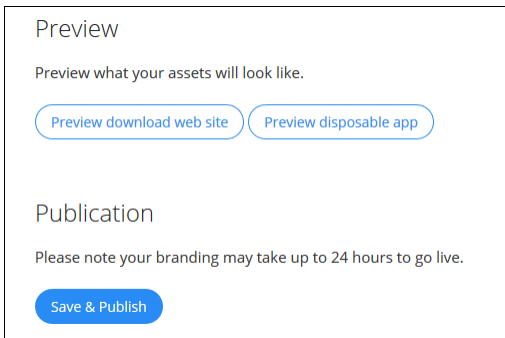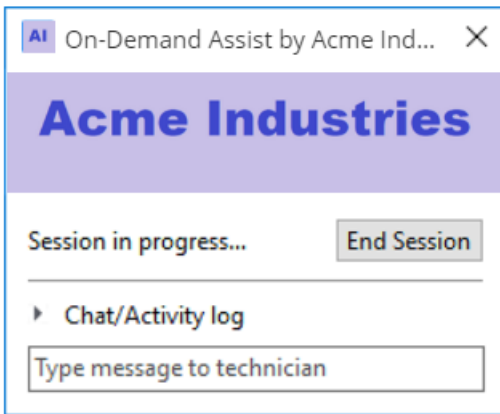

6.1.1   Download web site

6.1.2   Session code entry screen

6.1.3   In-session chat dialog

6.2   Publishing branding changes

When you are happy with the branding, click the **Save & Publish** button to confirm your changes. Note that the branding may take up to 24 hours to go live.

7   Troubleshooting and support

7.1   Accessing your session history

You can review your session history in your RealVNC account online. To do so, sign in and navigate to the **Sessions** page.

By default, all sessions completed in the last seven days are listed, most recent first. You can use the filters to see earlier sessions.

As well as viewing the session history online, you can download this information as a CSV file if your subscription includes comprehensive session logging,
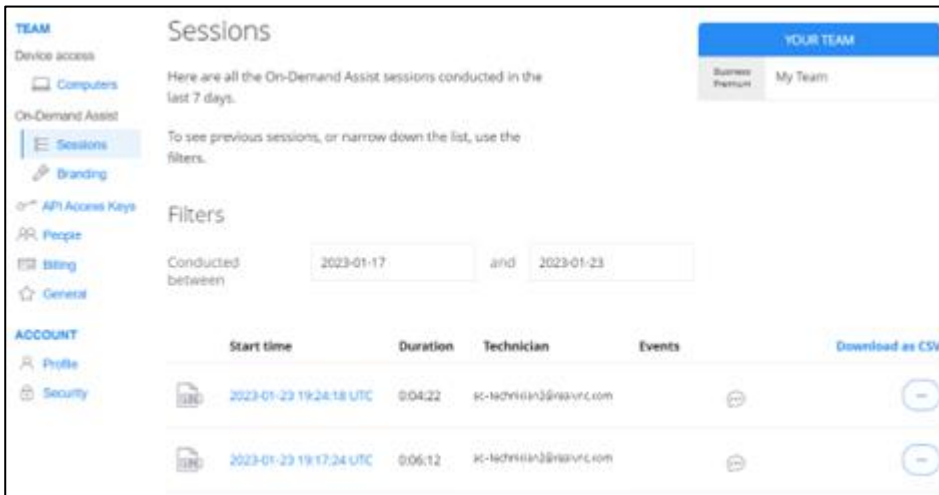
7.2   Accessing a detailed activity log

If your subscription includes comprehensive session logging, you are able to drill down into an individual session and view a detailed activity log.

To do this, click the timestamp link for the session, or the three dots at the end of the session row:
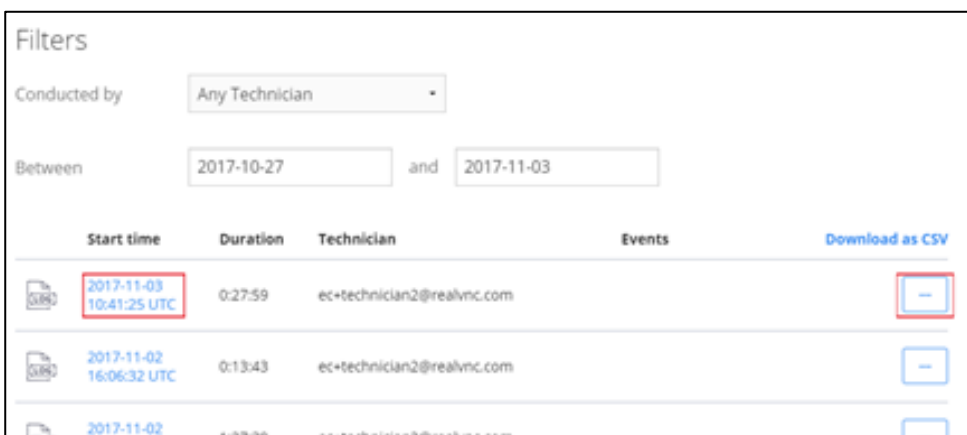
The following events are recorded (if they occurred):

- Files transfer operations, including file names, and whether those operations succeeded

- Elevation requests, and whether operations succeeded

- Reboot requests, and whether operations succeeded

- Chat transcripts.

For example:

You can download this information by clicking the **Download as CSV** link.

7.3   Understanding error messages

An On-Demand Assist session relies on three prior conditions being met:

1.   You and the end user are both connected to the Internet at all times.

2.   Neither of you have a proxy server/firewall that is blocking outgoing connections to RealVNC's services (*Network Access Requirements*).

3.   RealVNC's services are operational (visit *https://status.vnc.com*).

If the above statements are correct and you still experience issues, see the tables below.

Error messages *you* may experience:

Error message	Description	Fix
There was a problem establishing this connection.	VNC Viewer is unable to communicate with RealVNC's services.	Ensure your Ethernet cable is plugged in. Otherwise, contact your system administrator.
Session stopped by the end user.	The end user has pressed their **End Session** button.	If you need to reconnect, you must follow the instructions in *Generating* and entering a session code in full.
Timed out waiting for a response from the computer	VNC Viewer is unable to communicate with the end user's computer.	Inform the end user their network may be down. Ask them to ensure their Ethernet cable is

		plugged in, or otherwise contact their system administrator.
Timed out waiting for peer to join.	Your 9-digit session code has expired.	Close the dialog and click the **On-Demand Assist** button once more to generate a new code.
`Proxy:AuthenticationRequired` `Proxy:AuthenticationFailed`	You are not authenticated to your proxy server correctly.	Authenticate to your proxy server. If you do not know the credentials, contact your system administrator.
`Proxy:`*<any-other-error>*	You are unable to communicate with RealVNC's services due to your proxy server settings.	Contact your system administrator.
`NoMatchingCipherSuites`	Your VNC Viewer settings are not compatible with your VNC Connect subscription.	Inform your system administrator that VNC Viewer has `AlwaysMaximum` encryption set, but your subscription does not support it.

Error messages *the end user* may experience:

Error message	Description	Fix
The session code does not match the software download	The end user has entered your 9-digit session code correctly, but the disposable app has been downloaded from an incorrect download URL.	Instruct the end user to obtain the app from the download URL in your On-Demand Assist dialog.
This version is too old. Please download the software again.	The end user is trying to use an old version of the disposable app.	Instruct the end user to visit your download URL, and download the latest version of the app.
Incorrect session code entered	The end user has entered your session code incorrectly.	Ensure the end user knows your 9 digit session code, and has entered it correctly.
`Proxy:AuthenticationRequired` `Proxy:AuthenticationFailed`	The end user is not authenticated to their proxy server correctly.	Instruct the end user to authenticate to their proxy server. If they do not know the credentials, have them inform their system administrator.
`Proxy:`*<any-other-error>*	The end user is unable to communicate with RealVNC's services due to their proxy server settings.	Instruct the end user to contact their system administrator.

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www.realvnc.com