

What VINCI Users Need to Know

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VA Informatics &
Computing
Infrastructure



Agenda

- VINCI Overview
- What you need to know
 - Common user issues & pitfalls
 - New user tips
 - Misconceptions/Misunderstandings

VINCI Overview

- VINCI is an HSR&D Resource Center under OI&T, BLSL
- VINCI is for research, not for active patient care
- VINCI is growing in usage but remains resource constrained by a flat budget
- VINCI offers:
 - VINCI Central web site
 - VINCI Workspace
 - Applications
 - Data
 - Services



Services Overview

VINCI Concierge

- Education and training
- Data Needs Assessment
- Our mission is to assist you in gaining access to research data. We can help answer your questions in a timely manner for this process. If we can't answer your questions, we can find someone that can. **We are here to help!**



Services Overview

- Data Provisioning
- Technical Support
- Study feasibility assessment
- Clinical trial recruitment
- Annotation and Chart Review
- Natural Language Processing (NLP)
- Analytics and Data Services

VINCI Central Overview

My VINCI Dashboard shows all your VINCI resources in one place.

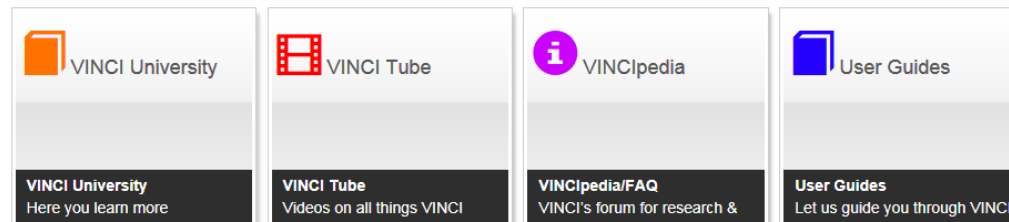
The screenshot shows the VINCI Central dashboard. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, About VINCI, and Skip to Content. The main header area includes the VINCI Central logo, a welcome message for the VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure, a keyword search bar with a search button, and contact information for Timothy Trautman, including his email (VINCI@VA.gov) and a concierge desk phone number (1-801-872-3324). A vertical feedback button is located on the right side of the dashboard.

The dashboard content is organized into several sections:

- Left Sidebar:** A list of navigation links including Launch Workspace, New To VINCI, My VINCI Dashboard (highlighted with a red circle), VINCI University, VINCI Tube, VINCIpedia/FAQ, User Guides, VINCI Services, Computing Cloud, Data Sources, Applications, Events, Policies and Forms, and Quick Links. Below this list is a section titled "What VINCI Users Need to Know" with a link to a cyberseminar.
- Main Content Area:** Titled "My VINCI Dashboard", it features a note about data population and a list of resource categories, each with a dropdown arrow: Databases, File Shares, Collaboration and Correspondence Sites, Virtual Machines, DART Requests, My Requests, My Projects, and My AD Groups.

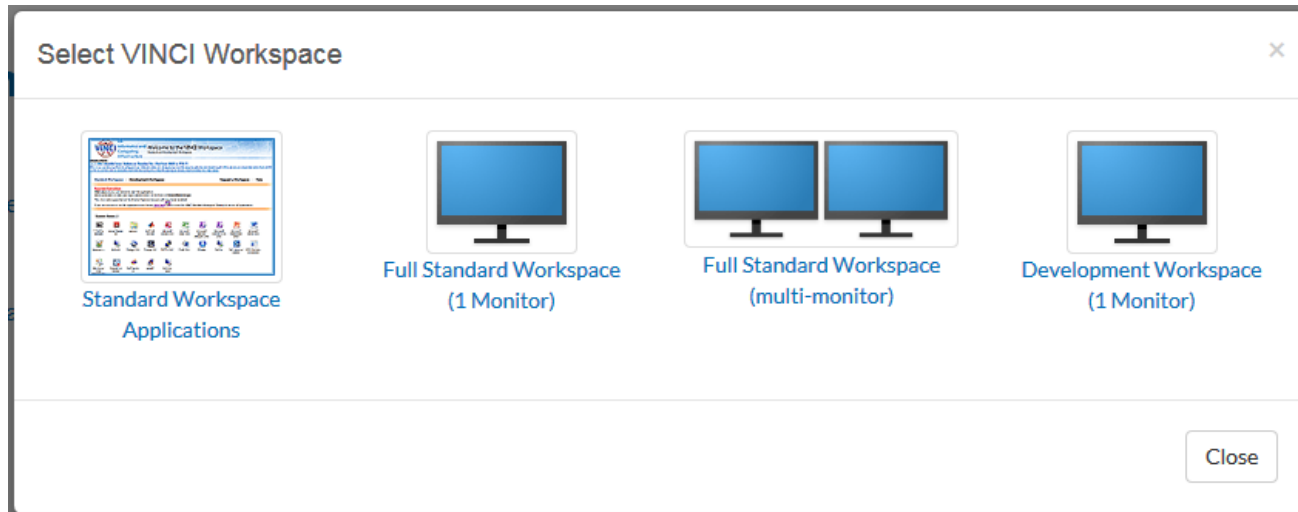
VINCI Central Overview

- New to VINCI? We have several pages to get you started with step-by-step procedures for:
 - IRB Research studies
 - Preparatory to Research studies
 - Operations and Quality Improvement projects
- Home for user guides, videos, presentations, and VINCIpedia!



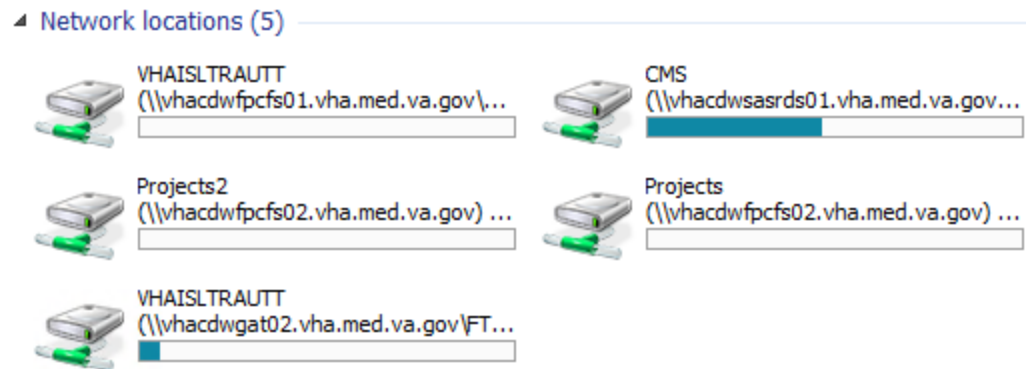
VINCI Workspace Overview

- Several variations: Standard (individual apps, 1-monitor, 2-monitor) and Development.
- Standard for most uses.
- Development for custom coding or own software.



VINCI Workspace Overview

- File storage (O:, P:-drives are not the databases but project file folders)
- Databases (where your project data is stored)
- Home (H: Drive)



VINCI Workspace Considerations

When you are unable to use a stored link or bookmark for access, go to VINCI Central and try from there.


The screenshot shows the VINCI Central website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, About VINCI, and Skip to Content. The main header includes the VINCI Central logo, a search bar with the text "Keyword Search" and a "Search" button, and user information for Timothy Trautman, including his email (VINCI@VA.gov) and a Concierge Desk phone number (1-801-872-3332). A "Request Help Online" link is also present.

The left sidebar contains a list of navigation options: "Launch Workspace" (circled in red), "New To VINCI", "My VINCI Dashboard", "VINCI University", "VINCI Tube", "VINCIpedia/FAQ", "User Guides", "VINCI Services", "Computing Cloud", "Data Sources", "Applications", "Events", "Policies and Forms", and "Quick Links". Below this list is a section titled "What VINCI Users Need to Know" with a sub-heading "Cyberseminar Jan. 12 at 2PM ET" and a "More Details" link.

The main content area features a "Welcome to the VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure" message. Below this is a "New To VINCI" banner with the text "Learn more about VINCI, VINCI Studies and the virtual environment." To the right of the banner is a "My VINCI Dashboard" section with the text "All your VINCI resources in one place!".

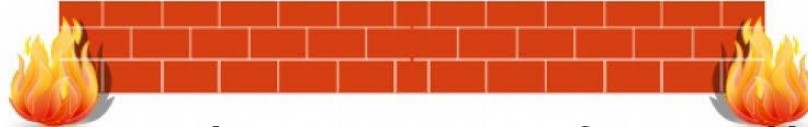
The main content area is organized into a grid of tiles. The first row includes tiles for "VINCI University" (Here you learn more), "VINCI Tube" (Videos on all things VINCI), "VINCIpedia" (VINCI's forum for research &...), and "User Guides" (Let us guide you through VINCI). The second row includes tiles for "VINCI Services" (Support and concierge services), "Computing Cloud" (Computers, software, and...), "Data Sources" (Learn about our available data), and "Applications" (Applications available in VINCI).

VINCI Workspace Considerations

- The VINCI Workspace and CAG or Rescue VPN are different things. A common misconception is that because you've remoted into the VA, it also means you're "in" the VINCI Workspace. Once on the VA Intranet, you launch the workspace separately.
- There's no Internet connectivity inside the workspace due to data security reasons. 
- Copy and paste doesn't work between applications that are on different servers. Save to a file from the first application and then open in the second application.

VINCI Workspace Considerations

- A document created in a remotely served software application will not automatically open in its native program when you click on the filename. You must open the program and then open the file from within the program.



- The VINCI Workspace is a firewalled environment which is why you need to use our custom upload and download tools in order to move information in and out. Additionally, downloads are audited to ensure compliance with data security.



VINCI Workspace Considerations

To switch between Remote Desktop Connections (such as the workspace and SAS), slide the top blue bar to the side exposing the other server's top bar. Grab it and pull it down to create its own window.



VINCI Workspace Considerations

- Please logoff your session using the Start button and then Logoff button. Do not close the window using the white “X” in the top bar as it does not close your session, just the window.



Yes

No

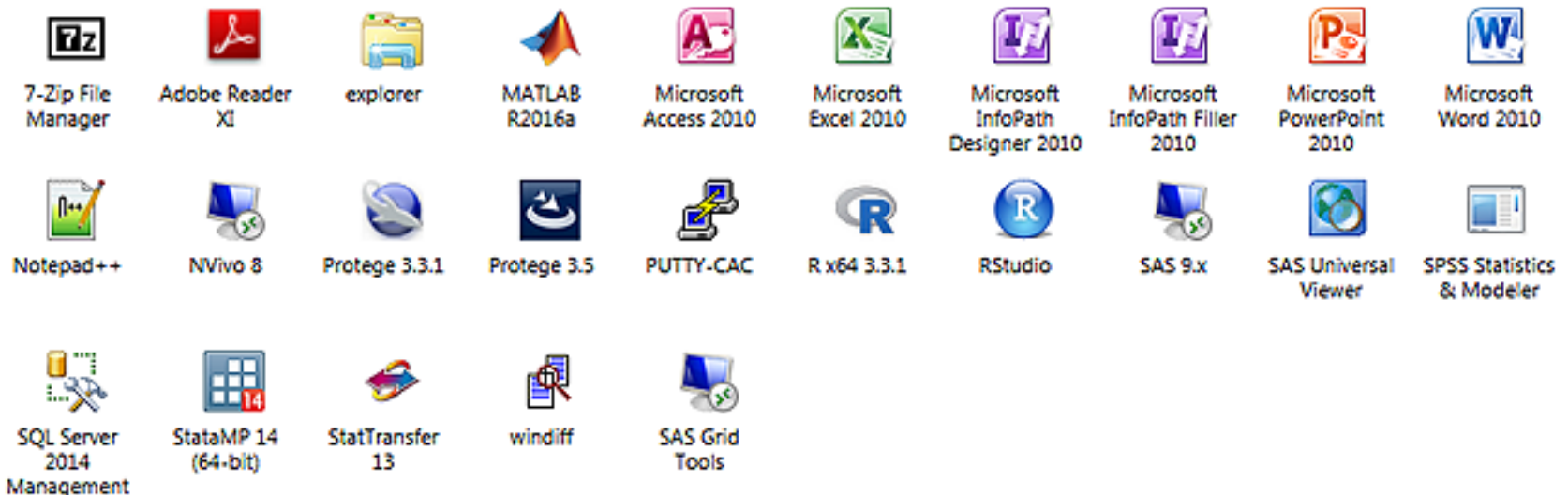


- Linux is available as an option in the workspace and uses your Windows credentials, and from Linux, you can access Windows resources, such as shares and SQL databases. There are some 40,000 packages in our software repository.
- If you have PIV errors, contact the National Service Desk.



Applications Overview

- Analytics - R, SAS, Stata, MATLAB, SSMS, PASW, AnyLogic, and Power BI.
- VINCI's copy of SPSS pending phase out or rescue?
- NVivo is being phased out.
- Only available in the workspace.



SAS Considerations

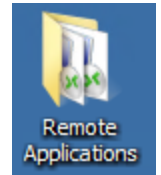
- We have lots of SAS guides on VINCI Central under User Guides
<https://vaww.vinci.med.va.gov/VinciCentral//Guides/Index>
- Start with document “[Grid - Where to Begin?](#)”

The screenshot shows the VINCI Central website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, About VINCI, and Skip to Content. Below this is a search bar and a welcome message: "Welcome to the VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure". On the right side of the header, contact information for Timothy Trautman is provided, including his email (VINCI@VA.gov) and a concierge desk number (1-801-872-3324).

The main content area is titled "User Guides" and features a list of categories: VINCI User Guides, VINCI Software Guides, OMOP Guides, and SAS Guides. The "SAS Guides" category is highlighted with a red oval. To the left of this list is a sidebar with various navigation options, including "User Guides", which is also circled in red. To the right of the "User Guides" list is another sidebar titled "Additional Resources" with a vertical "Feedback" button. The "Grid - Where to begin?" link is circled in red at the bottom of this sidebar.

SAS Considerations

- In the full VINCI Workspace desktop, access SAS programs in the “Remote Applications” folder on the desktop instead of the Windows Start button.
- Why use SAS/Grid over SAS?
 - Load-balanced, parallel-processing very robust venue.
 - Greater storage capacity.
 - All statistical procs reside on the Grid, not the Desktop.
 - More efficient OS venue.
 - Greater security



SAS Considerations

- SAS Enterprise Miner is very robust and easy to use. It also allows rapid, efficient data mining and modeling with a minimal amount of programming (parameter inclusions). Proc IML also allows the inclusion of R into the SAS world. Vastly enhancing the abilities of R thusly.
- SAS Enterprise Guide is a point-and-click, menu- and wizard-driven tool that empowers users to analyze data and publish results.



SAS Considerations

- Why should SPSS users transition to SAS?
Because SAS EG format is more analogous to SPSS than other statistical formats.
- What are common misunderstandings and misconceptions that customers have?
Where data resides in respect to the Linux and Grid environment. Where the statistical procs reside.
- Optimize queries and code and run in parallel mode as often as you can.

Data Overview

- VINCI's data is in SQL formatted databases and will be provided in this format. It does not come in an Excel spreadsheet.
- VINCI is not a “Data Steward” and does not own the data or approve access to it. The respective Data Stewards approve data access through DART.

- Our data domains are:

MedSAS

CDW Production

CDW Raw

TIU Notes

OMOP

CAN Scores

MyHealtheVet

HERC

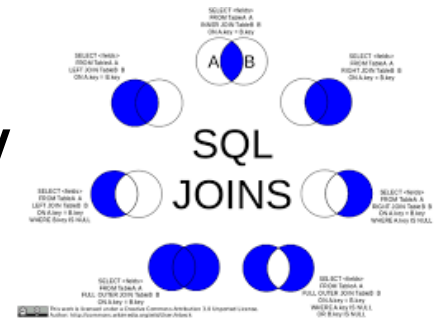
DSS

Vital Status

Data Analysis Considerations

- Studies need their own data analyst.
VINCI cannot do data analysis for you.

- If using VINCI, data analysts need to be fluent in SQL and know how to do JOINS.



- SQL code that works just fine in a 1000-row database can kill the entire VINCI environment so be thoughtful, efficient, and succinct with your queries.

Data Analysis Considerations


- Use Page compression for your Tables.

- ICD-9 and ICD-10 codes are very different and there isn't a simple crosswalk. Both of these are different from CPT codes.

ICD-9	ICD-10
13,000 billing codes	68,000 billing codes

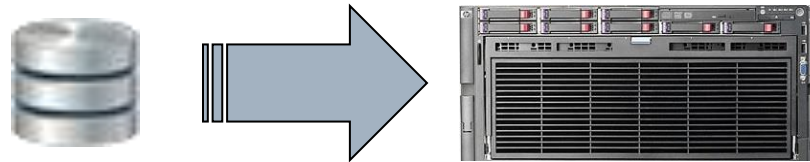
- [ICD Diagnosis] codes are different from [ICD Procedure] codes.

DART Considerations

- VINCI is not the approver for DART requests.
- The DART User Guide with step-by-step instructions can be found on the VHA Data Portal and VINCI Central. Please use it when creating requests.
- When do I need to update my Research Request Memo when amending a DART?
 - When you add IRB approved study participants to your DART request.
 - When a study member leaves the study and/or the VA.
 - When you add a data source to your DART request.
 - When moving approved data sources to or from VINCI.

Other Considerations

- A “VINCI Project” is when you store your data in VINCI and use our tools for analysis. A “Local Download” project is when VINCI provides the data for hosting on your local secure server and utilizing your own tools.



- All communications between a study and their VINCI Data Manager runs through a VINCI correspondence SharePoint site so check your email often.

Other Considerations

- Primary Investigators are responsible for knowing and conducting their research in accordance with ORD policies and guidance. VINCI is not responsible for ensuring you meet policy except for data security.
- If you used VINCI for your study, then give us a citation in your publication:

*VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure (VINCI),
VA HSR HIR 08-204, U.S. Department of Veterans
Affairs. (2008). Retrieved [date], from
<https://vaww.VINCI.med.va.gov>*

Questions?

VINCI@va.gov