

Windows Administrators Meeting

July 13, 2007

Notes (taken by Steve Kunz)

Meeting Started (9:00)

Announcements

- ITS has allowed the “Hummingbird HostExplorer” license to lapse. This is a licensed Windows product that allows telnet connection to hosts. In the past the main reason for supporting this product was to provide secure telnet connections to the “public access DECalpha” servers. Because of cost and declining need, the license (which allows us to get upgrades) has been allowed to lapse. This does NOT mean you need to discontinue use of the current version of “Hummingbird HostExplorer”. It only means ITS will no longer receive updated versions of the product. The current version will continue to work. It should be noted that SSH is a viable alternative in many cases for remote connectivity. The “XWin32” product license continues to be renewed and may also fill similar needs in some cases.

WSUS 3.0 on Enterprise WSUS Server – Kunz and Pruski [ITS]

ITS plans to upgrade the Enterprise WSUS server from WSUS 2.0 to WSUS 3.0 before the start of classes this fall. WSUS 3.0 is a superior product in terms of performance and features. The upgrade is fairly simple for ITS and requires no changes on the client side by client system admins. Microsoft advertises that a WSUS 3.0 is twice as fast (on the same hardware platform) as WSUS 2.0 and can support over 25,000 clients. Watch for further announcements in the WinAdmin and CSSG mail lists as finalize a date for the upgrade of this critical service.

Scout Kerberos 5 Conversion – Kunz [ITS]

ITS is in the process of converting services that use the Kerberos 4 protocol to Kerberos 5. One of those services is the Scout system (which includes the Windows Scout clients and the ITS Scout-Server). The ITS Scout-Server code has been ported from running on a “DECalpha” platform to “RedHat Linux Server 5.0”. In addition the Kerberos protocol handling has been upgraded to work for both Kerberos 4 and Kerberos 5. Once remaining work is completed (relating to the www.sitelicensed.iastate.edu web services) and new Intel-based server hardware is acquired, the production service will be upgraded.

After the new Scout-Server is in production, a new Windows Scout client (version 9.0) will be released which uses Kerberos 5 to communicate with the Scout-Server. For a time both old (Kerberos 4) and new (Kerberos 5) Scout clients will talk to the new server. After a suitable “client conversion period” the Kerberos 4 protocol will be turned off on the Scout Server (and old Scout clients will cease to function).

Watch the WinAdmin and CSSG mailing lists for more announcements on this upgrade as work progresses. Current estimates are that this process may take 3-6 months to complete.

Kpoprelay Demo – Kunz and Pruski [ITS]

While a “Kpoprelay” demo did not actually happen, the function of “Kpoprelay for Windows” was explained. “Kpoprelay” is a locally-written software product that is a replacement for SideCar. “Kpoprelay” has been around for several years in the UNIX and Macintosh arenas at ISU. A port was recently done to Windows.

“Kpoprelay” runs on the local system and “sits in-between” the local POP3 mail client (such as Outlook or any other non-kerberized mail client software) and a kerberized POP3 server (like the ITS main POP3 servers). It intercepts the “clear text” authentication attempts by the mail client and performs a kerberos authentication automatically. The only configuration change needed on the mail client is to tell it the POP3 mail drop is “127.0.0.1” (the “localhost” instead of the normal “<netid>.mail.iastate.edu” mail drop). Kpoprelay will automatically figure out the proper POP3 server to retrieve the mail from using Hesiod calls and handle authentication and mail delivery for the local mail client.

The only difference (other than mail client configuration) a SideCar user would see when converting to Kpoprelay is an “icon change” in the system tray. Performance and security remain the same. Kpoprelay is compatible with Windows Vista systems.

Watch for further announcements on the release of this product. It is anticipated that this product will be released in conjunction with the Windows Scout 9.0 client (see previous section).

Open Discussion

Mark Mehl asked if Microsoft would be converting their mail clients to talk native Kerberos to POP3 servers. The feeling was generally “no”, since Microsoft’s main support effort will be through “Exchange mail” (already AD/Kerberos authenticated). It is not anticipated that native Kerberos authentication will be layered into their POP3 support.

Kunz [ITS] mentioned a problem that he experienced that others may be struggling with. There is an issue after March 2007 with “HTML typing delays” in Outlook 2003. Systems which exhibit this typing delay must have ALL the following conditions met:

1. HTML emails
2. on Outlook 2003
3. with IE7 installed
4. on Windows XP (probably SP2)

The effect of the “bug” is that you use Outlook to compose an HTML email and the typing performance is incredibly slow (a character every few seconds). The reason

for the bug is that Outlook is examining the “Restricted Sites” lists upon every character entered to check for “bad web sites” from the “Restricted Sites” list. If your “Restricted Sites” list is long (and many anti-spyware products such as “Spybot Search and Destroy” will load in a very long lists of sites here) then typing delays get very long, too.

Kunz indicated there are several discussions on the net about this, some offering various registry hacks and circumventions (such a removing your anti-spyware products). In his opinion the best fix is probably the simplest (and safest). Set Outlook 2003 to start with “Outlook Today” as the start-page (not your “Inbox”). Doing this makes the problem go away. Hopefully a patch will come out in the future to alleviate this problem. Upgrading to Outlook 2007 will also make it go away.

Jim Wellman [AER E] asked if ITS plans to continue Eudora Pro support in the future. Kunz responded that like any product, as long as there is a “need” and the “cost justifies the satisfaction of the need” then support for Eudora will continue. This product is not longer supported by Qualcomm and is “open source” but apparently has a group of people devoted to continue work on it (see <http://wiki.mozilla.org/Penelope>). Since there is now little cost in supporting Eudora Pro and it is still a popular product at Iowa State, we will continue to support it.

Meeting Adjourned (10:35)

Next meeting is scheduled for Aug 10, 2007.