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Windows Administrators Meeting
February 22, 2002
Minutes (taken by Steve Kunz)

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Meeting Started (9:05)

Announcements

- SNMP security hole – Kunz mentioned the widespread announcement that many implementations of SNMP (Simple Network Management Protocol) need to be patched to close a security hole. This includes a wide range of network devices such as servers, printers, routers, some network cards, etc. Best practice is 1) Don't use/run SNMP if you don't need it 2) Patch your version of SNMP as soon as you can with patches supplied by your manufacturer (patches for Windows SNMP service are out now).

- OU rename/reorg – Kunz mentioned that all but a couple OUs have been renamed to follow the university standard college/departmental OU names. This is in prep for movement of users objects to the OUs. This will happen after the "bi-directional password synch" process is in place. The reason these two processes are linked is because as soon as ISU NetID usernames are moved into the OUs, departmental admins can reset passwords for their users, and the password must "synch upward" to Acropolis. A "Thank you" from Kunz for the cooperation of the OU admins. The process went smoothly.

E500 Going into Service

User Services (Al Vetter and Frank Poduska) announced that the E500 systems would go into production next Tuesday (February 26). The E500 systems are anti-virus filter systems place in front of the enterprise email systems. A detailed announcement was emailed to the major computer support groups this morning. Refer to that email for more details.

A brief discussion followed on what the E500 filters would actually do to infected email passing through them. Additional information will be coming from User Services, but simply put:

1) If attachments can be cleaned, that will be done (with no message to the recipient).
2) If attachments cannot be cleaned, the attachment will be removed and a message inserted for the recipient.
3) If the mail body itself is infected and can be cleaned, that will be done (with no message to the recipient).
4) If the mail body itself cannot be cleaned the mail is dropped (with no message to the recipient).
5) Messages on antivirus-actions take by the E500 NEVER go back to the sender.

Exchange 2000 Status

Kevin DeRoos (ADP) indicated there is no significant news on the Exchange 2000 project due to higher priority projects in progress.

MicroNet Software

Kunz brought up the issue of current software being distributed by the AIT MicroNet group and asked whether or not people had any issues with the current offerings. This is in preparation for the build-cycle being started for the Fall 2002 Solution Center CD-ROM. The current Windows software list is:

   Adobe Acrobat Reader 4.05

Aladdin Expander 5.0
Eudora Pro 5.1
HostExplorer 6.2.0.3
JMP 4.0.4
Netscape Communicator 4.77
Pcafs 1.2.18
Pclpr 1.1.23
VirusScan 4.5.1
WinZephyr 1.99.0.1
Wsftp 5.08
Xnews 4.5.11.0

The MicroNet group is already considering updating to Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.05 and Netscape Communicator 6.x. Nobody in the audience has found any flaws with the latest patch levels of those releases. It was noted that Communicator 4.77 was lacking in many ways for modern HTTP traffic.

Kunz asked about a network time synchronization package (especially for Windows 2000/XP). The MicroNet group is currently looking at "Automachron" as an offering for Windows. Others in the audience reported it was a good product. It was remarked that the Windows "NET TIME" command could be used synch the time. Both products will be analyzed by the MicroNet group.

Kunz remarked he had a query in the past about SSH clients. The MicroNet group had felt there was probably not enough use by the general community yet to warrant a widely distributed kit. There was no great need expressed in the audience, either.

Jess Robinson (CARD) asked about possibly supporting "Ghostview" for postscript viewing. Again, the question of how broad a user base there was is an issue. [Aside: It could be offered as an "Advanced" Scout-kit like other products with this issue]. User Services support issues come into play with any new product offering. It was remarked that the low cost of the full version of Adobe Acrobat make it a good consideration for any department (since it will also provide postscript viewing).

Open Discussion

Steve Heideman (Chemistry) noted that the IBM/Transarc AFS client can cause problems on client systems if the network goes down. The problem is that the AFS service daemon on the client system will absorb about 100% of the CPU when it cannot access the network. This renders the client system unusable (even for local file access). Kunz noted that about all we can do is report this problem to the vendor (which will be done if it appears IBM/Transarc is not aware of it already).

Web Wilke (Residence Halls) asked about other people using authentication techniques to provide web page information to a group in the ISU community (and how Active Directory might be used for this). Kunz remarked Extension had recently asked a similar question on authenticated (SSL) connections. Frazier (AIT) talked about how the issues of "certificate authorities" and "SSL type authentication" are different. Rich Jones (ADP) commented that another large part of the question is the definition of the "group" to provide access control to in Active Directory. Setting up the "authentication" appears to be a small part of the job – defining the "group" is a larger (design) issue. This has already been raised in Acropolis design (specifically in synching Acropolis "class lists" to Windows "security groups").

Meeting Adjourned (about 10:00)

Next meeting March 8.