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Windows Administrators Meeting
January 9, 2009
Notes (taken by Steve Kunz)
Updated: 01/16/09

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Meeting Started (9:00)

Announcements

- Some people using Outlook have reported not receiving university-wide email sent out by the President Geoffroy on budget issues (subject "Message from President Geoffroy"). This appears to be caused by having Outlook's "Junk E-mail Options" setting too high, causing the item to be placed in the "Junk" email folder. The default setting of "Low" (in Exchange 2003 and 2007) causes no problems. The "High" level appears to cause the unwanted filtering in this case. The setting is found in "Tools -> Options -> Preferences -> Junk Email.
- The ITS Security Group would like to warn everybody about system threats from e-cards. Wayne Hauber [ITSEC] talked about several systems having to be rebuilt after their users opened up cleverly crafted e-cards. While some hacker call-back sites have been blocked, this is a constantly moving target that is getting worse. The safest advice is to never open an e-card, even if it appears from a "good" site from a known sender.

AutoRun Domain Policy – Steve Kunz [ITSYS]

At the last WinAdmin meeting Wayne Hauber [ITSEC] and Steve Kunz [ITSYS] talked about a proposal to change the Enterprise Domain Policy to disable AutoRun by default for all Enterprise Domain member systems. Discussion at that WinAdmin meeting was positive. See the December 2008 meeting notes for more details: http://www.tech.ait.iastate.edu/win2000/admin/WinAdmin.2008.12.12.pdf Discussion at the Dec 16 CCSG meeting and on the WinAdmin and CCSG mailing lists produced only positive feedback (with many IT managers indicating they had already made such a policy change).

People at today's meeting agreed that the domain AutoRun policy should be changed and proposed a date of January 26, 2009. Kunz will post a formal announcement of that date (and the specific policy change) to the CCSG and WinAdmin mailing lists.

Demo of ITS Tools – Mark Bland [ITSYS]

Mark Bland [ITSYS] gave a demonstration of two products developed for internal ITS usage that other IT managers may find useful.

"Backup Wizard" is a "frontend" to Microsoft's "User State Migration Tool" (USMT). The Backup Wizard provides a GUI interface to walk you through backing up selected users on a system (including special file locations outside the normal "Documents and Settings" area). This is most useful when replacing a desktop while

retaining the users settings, documents, etc. OS upgrades (XP to Vista, for example) are handled.

The "Active Directory Enumerator" (or "ADE" or "BlandADE") is an application to perform interrogation and management of users, groups, and computers within Active Directory. It is the "Swiss army knife" of user, group, and computer management within an Active Directory OU environment. ADE can expand the entire group-membership tree for a user or show the users that are members of a group structure. AD attributes can be displayed.

Both tools will be deposited in the OU manager's toolbox on the ITS DFS share at \\iastate.edu\ITS\Oumgr in the near future. Documentation will be limited for both tools (but you should find them easy to use anyway). Questions/comments can be sent to Mark Bland (mbland@iastate.edu).

[Update 01/16/09 - SLK]
Both tools are currently deposited in the following folders:
\\iastate.edu\ITS\Oumgr\ADToolsMisc\ADE
\\iastate.edu\ITS\Oumgr\ADToolsMisc\BackupWizard
Important: The Backup Wizard is still coded with ITS-specific defaults. As a result the default path for USMT will need to be changed while doing backups.

The question was asked if this tool was valuable in re-building systems. The answer was basically "No". A corrupt system cannot be restored with this utility but it may be useful to recover some files and settings that have been backed up by it. Another product from Microsoft called "Microsoft Deployment" is being looked at for easier imaging of systems.

Open Discussion

Darin Dugan [C EXT] gave a status report on his problems in creating a Windows Server 2008 "server core failover cluster". He has had a support case open with Microsoft for a couple of months with no success and is now giving up. Darin has tried feedback from a Microsoft support list and may try posting the problem to a higher-education Windows support list to see if anyone else has encountered and solved the problem.

Chris Thach [CIRAS] asked if anyone had any comments about moving regular file and print servers from Windows Server 2003 to Windows Server 2008? People who had done it reported no major issues.

Jim Wellman [AER E] asked if anyone had any experience with HP universal print drivers. One person commented they had used them and didn't like them. They apparently install with every option possible enabled. You may be stuck using them on older printers as they may be the only driver available.

Sly Upah [H SCI] asked if there were any know issues with the upcoming Internet

Explorer 8 and WebCT? Kunz will forward the question to the WebCT staff.

Meeting Adjourned (10:00)

Next meeting is scheduled for February 13.