Windows Administrators Meeting
January 14, 2005
Notes (taken by Steve Kunz)

Meeting Started (9:00)

Announcements

- Telecommunications sent out an announcement to the CCSG and WinAdmin groups that the "VPN Group Password" authentication method is going away Feb 1, 2005. See the email with the subject "Group Password VPN service ending Feb 1st 8:00am : 1st Notice" for more details. This change will only affect people who did not update their VPN clients to use digital certificates. If you use Scout to install Windows software and are using the current kit (in the Advanced Scout-kit list) you are already using the newer digital certificate method.

- Microsoft released a beta version of their new AntiSpyware product. This product seems pretty good except it appears it does not install as a "service" type application and is only launched when a user logs in. As a result, automatic updates and scans do not happen if nobody is logged in at the scheduled time. This product is available at:
    http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/spyware/software/default.mspx

- Microsoft released their "Malicious Software Removal Tool". The product came out with the latest security hotfixes. This product is also available at:
    http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=890830

    It appears to look for a limited number of older problems, but is a "good start" for some systems.

- The "Computer Inspector" web pages were improved this semester to be more "graphical" in nature. Hopefully the pass/warn/fail information provided is easier to interpret for users as they register their systems via NetReg.

Status Reports

Wayne Hauber (AIT) sent an email out yesterday to the CCSG and WinAdmin groups (subject "[winadmin] Help request/login problem") asking for XP SP2 systems in the "stuck login" state. This was discussed in the last WinAdmin meeting (see http://tech.ait.iastate.edu/win2000/admin/WinAdmin.12.10.04.pdf). If you have any systems in this state please contact Wayne Hauber (wjhauber@iastate.edu) while we work with Microsoft Support on this issue.

Frank Poduska (AIT) gave a status report on "MarketScore". MarketScore was discussed in detail at the last WinAdmin meeting (see link above). AIT is finalizing documenting steps on removing MarketScore. Port-blocking action is still under consideration.

New SUS Server

Steve Kunz (AIT) indicated the new SUS server is ready for production. A simple

"system rename" needs to be done some time next week. Since most SUS usage occurs during "non-8-to-5" hours Kunz indicated he felt the system swap should occur during the day. Tentative plans are for Wednesday, January 19 (probably early afternoon). An announcement will be posted to the WinAdmin and CCSG mailing lists when the swap is done.

AutoIt Demo

Jacob Dekkenga (AIT) demonstrated AutoIt scripts AIT uses to "hands-off-install" new systems (including application software). Jacob discussed that while msi installers exist for "silent" installs on many products, there are still some products that use other graphical installers from InstallShield, etc. Wrappering an "AutoIt" script around the installer provides a way to automate even these installs. AutoIt scripts require programming skills about at the same level as VBScript scripting, so people should definitely look into this technique to automate processes such as this.

Tools used (all free) by Jacob to create a system install CD-ROM are:
- DLS
- SetupManager.exe (Free tool from Microsoft in "Support Tools\deploy")
- CDImage - Makes bootable disk
- AutoIt (available at http://www.hiddensoft.com/autoit3)

Jacob has provided three example scripts used in his installation process (to install Adobe Reader, ePO3, and Java) available for download at:
   http://tech.ait.iastate.edu/win2000/admin/AutoItExamples.zip

Contact Jacob Dekkenga (Dekkenga@iastate.edu) if you need further information.

Open Discussion

Jim Wellman (AE EM) asked is there was a status report on Acropolis "class list" synchronization (pushing class lists down to Active Directory as Global Security Groups). Steve Kunz indicated the FERPA concerns have been addressed and users can see some examples on what is planned to be implemented. Start up "Active Directory Users and Computers" on a system that is a member of the Enterprise Windows Domain and look in the "AutoLists" container. Examples of Departmental, College, and Class lists are there. Membership within class lists is hidden to anyone except the "instructor of record" for the class. More information as we near completion of this project.

A question was asked if there was any resolution to problems downloading files from WebCT after Windows XP SP2 was installed. Kunz said he recalled this is covered in the "Windows XP Service Pack 2 Issues" document (at http://tech.ait.iastate.edu/win2000/xpsp2_issues.pdf). It is unknown if any other circumventions (on the host/Apache side) are possible.

Meeting Adjourned (about 10:05)

Next meeting is scheduled February 11.