Windows Administrators Meeting
November 08, 2002
Minutes (taken by Vince Oliver and Steve Kunz)

Meeting Started (9:05)

Announcements

- SPAM prefix taken off email "Subject:" headers as per announcements.

- Kunz has performed a complete "re-synch" of Active Directory attributes (name, title, office, phones, ect.) with master LDAP data. This was done for all "non-bang" accounts (i.e. those Active Directory usernames that are synched with ISU Net-IDs). During this process the "displayName" attribute changed from "John Q User" to "User, John Q" followed by the short abbreviation for the department (such as "[AIT]") for faculty and staff users. This change was discussed at last month's WinAdmin meeting.

- Exchange 2000 "mail enable" project is in final testing. Mail-enabling the non-Exchange usernames in the domain should happen soon.

- We currently have 36 college/departmental OUs with over 2,750 member systems in the domain. Over 43,000 usernames (synched to ISU Net-IDs) are present. We are currently adding a new department every two weeks or so.

MicroNet Windows Software (Kunz)

Kunz provided some information relating to software packages distributed by the MicroNet Group (via Scout).

- Netscape Communicator: Several people have inquired as to why we are still distributing Netscape 4.71 (which is fairly old). The answer is that prior to this fall, WebCT would not operative correctly with newer versions. However, that problem has been remedied (with an upgraded version of WebCT) and plans have been made to distribute Netscape 7.0 as soon as time allows.

- Eudora Pro: Some people have inquired when Eudora Pro 5.2 will be released on Scout (Eudora Pro 5.2 was recently released by Qualcomm). The answer is "when we get it from Qualcomm" (we have not received the software or license keys yet). Users are cautioned not to use the "software update" feature on Eudora Pro 5.1.1 or they will activate the "sponsored" version (with ads).

- SSH: A new Windows kit for an SSH client (from SSH.com) is available in the "Advanced" Scout-kit list. This product is a good quality (maintained) commercial

product for which we have a (free) site-license. This is a "client only" – you must provide your own SSH server on the systems you wish to connect to.

Open Discussion

Bill Frazier mentioned that we have noticed that the Microsoft Office installation/update procedure for Macintoshes will scan all mounted drives (including network mounted drives) during the update process. If you are using an AFS drive that is at the "root" of the AFS tree it will attempt to scan all AFS nodes the world-over. This can take quite some time (said with a smile). Be aware of this. The Windows installer may do the same thing.

Jim Wellman (AE EM) reported continued problems with IBM/Transarc AFS clients. The problem was previously traced (by AIT and Telecomm) to port scans being run against his subnet. The problem, while better, continues. He inquired as to what other network file systems were available besides AFS. Options from the audience were 1) Classic Windows file sharing (NetBIOS) 2) Novell Netware 3) Samba (really another form of Windows file sharing) 4) NFS. Bill Frazier said that AIT is not looking beyond AFS at this time. Kunz stated that the vulnerability of IBM/Transarc AFS will be reported as a problem to IBM/Transarc. Without a fix the best protection seems to be firewalls (personal firewalls such as ZoneAlarm and BlackIce work well).

Martin Teply (Microbiology, Food Safety/Science, NASA) talked about his interest in Active Directory for enterprise authentication and authorization for file servers within a managed OU. He has a mix of several systems (Novell 4, Apple, Windows) and would like to use Active Directory for enterprise accounts, authentication, and authorization. Several departments voiced comments indicating he could certainly achieve what he wanted with the current environment.

During the discussion of file-sharing capabilities, the topic of file sharing across the campus borders came up. Bill Frazier (AIT) remarked that people should keep in mind that the possibility exists that NetBIOS traffic could be blocked at the campus borders in the future to prevent virus spread and system attacks (such as the AFS problem talked about by Wellman). Other campuses have taken this approach. Kunz commented that even if these service ports were blocked, it is presumed we could offer an alternative to perform the same function via a different connection. One possibility is VPN, in which connections are tunneled via a secure encrypted path from the remote host to an "on campus" IP address. Again, other campuses are already doing this.

Paul Lustgraaf (AIT) asked if anyone had been seeing any problems with Windows XP Home Edition and wireless connections. Paul has personally seen such systems "lock up" and disconnect all applications randomly. While not a lot of people noticed exactly the same thing, a few people commented that there are problems

with DHCP on campus. AIT and Telecommunications are already looking at one area on campus where DHCP connections will fail (with what appears as a "lack of response" or "lack of response within the allotted time) from the enterprise DHCP servers. Others reported similar experiences. Paul indicated this might be a problem with software in the building routers. The investigation continues.

Meeting Adjourned (about 9:50)

Next meeting is December 13.