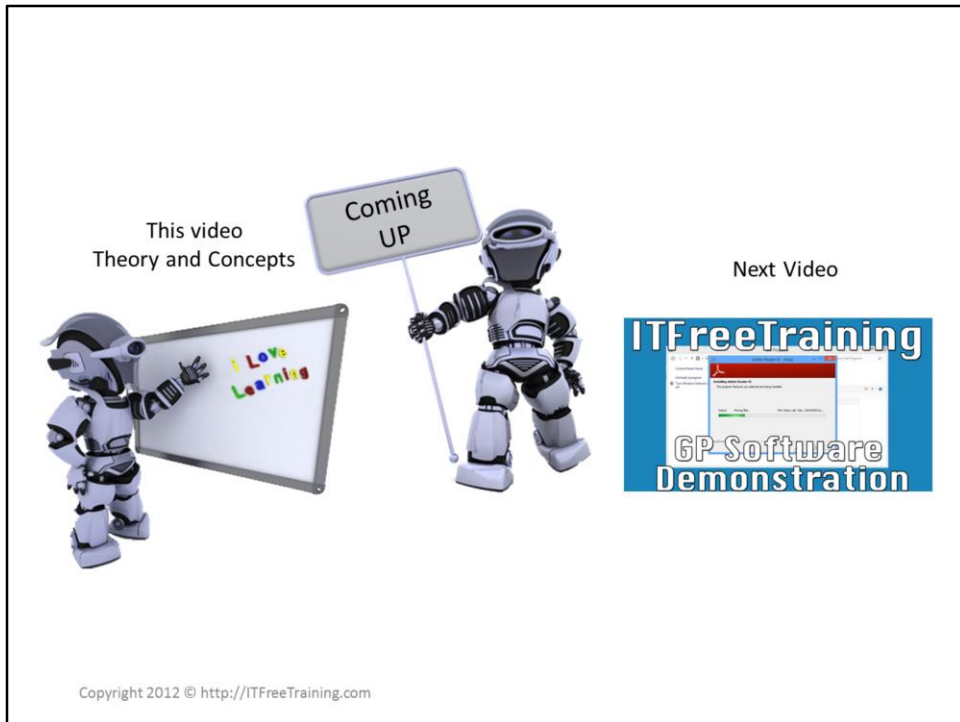


Group Policy Software Deployment Concepts

- For the free video please see
<http://itfreetraining.com/70-640/GPDeploymentConcepts>

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This video will provide an introduction and explain the concepts to what can be achieved using Group Policy for installation and managing software. The next video will go through how to configure Group Policy to install and manage software in your organization.



This video theory and concepts.

Next video demonstration on how to deploy software using group policy.

Deployment Solutions

- Microsoft's commercial Solution
 - System Center Configuration Manager
- Requires no user intervention
- Supports installing, updating, removing



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A deployment solution should manage software throughout the software cycle. The software cycle includes the install, maintenance and retirement of the software. Group Policy is a free software solution. Other solutions like Microsoft Center Configuration Manager offer more features; however, they also cost money.

GPSI

- Group Policy Software Installation
- No additional software or cost
- Software deployed per user

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Group Policy Software Installation (GPSI) is the system that Group Policy uses to install software. Software can be deployed per user or per computer. No additional software is required other than a Domain Infrastructure.

Assigning & Publishing

	Publishing User only	Assigning Computer	Assigning User
Installed by	Control panel	Already installed	User logs in Running shortcut
User opens associated file	* Yes	Already installed	* Yes
Can user remove software	Yes	No	Yes
Supports ZAP	Yes	No	No

* If software supports it and it is enabled

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Software can be deployed by assigning or publishing. Publishing is available only to user configuration. Assigning and publishing is available for both user and computer configuration.

Publishing user: Software that is published needs to be installed by the user using the control panel. If the software supports it, the software can also be installed automatically if the user opens a file that is supported by that application. Publishing to the user also supports the ZAP file discussed later on.

Assigning computer: Software assigned to the computer is automatically installed on the computer before the user logs in.

Assigning User: Software that is assigned to the user is installed when the user launches the shortcut for that application.

Microsoft Windows Installer (MSI)

- Contains all files and configuration
- Defines features
- Used by Windows Installer

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Microsoft Software Installer (MSI) is a package format used by Windows Installer. It is essentially a database that defines how to install the software. It also includes information like what features and options are available when the software is installed. It is the primary format used to install software using Group Policy.

MST

- Microsoft Windows Installer Transform
- Allows MSI files to be customized
 - Shortcuts
 - Configure install directory
 - Choose components
 - Plus more

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Windows Installer transform (MST) is essentially a modification and answer file for an MSI package. Using an MST file, any changes to the MSI package can be applied. The advantage of this is that MST files are very small. By using an MST file, it is possible to make a completely automated software install and perform actions like adding additional shortcuts and deciding which features should be installed. The manufacturer of your software may provide an application to create these MST files.

MSP

- Patch file
- Can have updates, services packs
- Software needs to be installed
 - MSP can only update

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This is a patch file that only contains updates. It requires the original MSI package to be installed on the computer in order for it to be used. For this reason, the MSP file is usually smaller than the original MSI file.

ZAP

- A text script that installs the application
- Does not support elevation
- Installs only once
 - No install fail detection
- Does not support roll back

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A ZAP file is a text file that contains instructions on how to install the software. An example of a ZAP file is shown below. ZAP files do not support elevation and Windows will only attempt to run the install script once. Software can only be installed by a ZAP file by publishing it to the user. Lastly ZAP files do not support removing of the software via Group Policy.

Zap file example

[Application]

FriendlyName = "Program"

SetupCommand = "\\FileServer\Share\setup.exe" /q

“MCTS 70-640 Configuring Windows Server 2008 Active Directory Second Edition” pg 353 – 360

“Windows Installer” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windows_Installer

“ZAP File” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ZAP_File