

Group Policy Preferences

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Group Policy Preferences is a technology that was added with Windows Server 2008 which greatly expands what can be achieved with Group Policy. Group Policy Preferences allows the administrator to configure options that would normally be configured using login scripts. This video looks at how to configure and use Group Policy Preferences.

Group Policy Preferences

- Introduced in Windows Server 2008
- Originally 3rd party product PolicyMaker
- Provides a lot of functionality
- Previously done with scripts
- Preferences not enforced



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Group Policy Preferences

Group Policy Preferences was originally a 3rd party product called PolicyMaker. Microsoft purchased this technology and added it to Windows Server 2008.

Preferences can be used to configure settings like map network drives, install printers and update files. A lot of this functionality was previously done with login scripts. Unlike Group Policy, the user can change the preferences after they have been applied. For example, if a network share is connected they can disconnect it and connect to a different share.

Group Policy Preferences

- Preferences available in
- Windows Server 2008/Windows7
- Available as optional Windows update
- Windows Vista/Windows XP



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Group Policy Preferences

Preferences are included in the operating system in Windows Server 2008, Windows 7 and newer operating systems. In older operating systems like Windows Vista and Windows XP the Client Side Extension (CSE) needs to be added to the operating system in order to use Group Policy Preferences. This can be added to the operating system using Windows Update.

Demonstration

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Demonstration

Group Policy Preferences are part of any Group Policy Object. Thus to configure Group Policy Preferences in the Domain, Open Group Policy Management Editor and edit a Group Policy Object. Preferences are found in their own folder under Computer Configuration and User Configuration. Even though Group Policy Preferences was introduced in Windows Server 2008, you do not require a Windows Server 2008 Domain Controller on your network in order to use group Policy Preferences. In order to configure Group Policy Preferences you only require an up to date copy of Group Policy Management Editor.

There are a large number of settings that can be configured in preferences. All the settings have a common tab with a

number of options. If you only want setting to be applied once you can tick the option “Apply once and do not reapply.” For example, if you configure a map drive to a server and the user removed the map drive, the mapped drive would be reestablished when the next Group Policy refresh is performed. Using this option means that use can delete the mapped drive and not have it connected again. There is also an option called “Item-level targeting”. This option gives the administrator a lot of control over how the settings are applied. Options like which OS, hardware, IP address can be selected just to mention a small amount of the available settings.

References

“MCTS 70-640 Configuring Windows Server 2008 Active Directory Second Edition” pg 253