



F1 Solutions - June 2004



::REM

Hello All,

I'm sure ready for everything that summer has to offer and I hope this edition of F1 Solutions whets your appetite to try something new. In this issue we profile an alternative browser that may become your new favorite tool. And since summertime is usually about reading, my recommended web site will help you find the right technical titles to bring to the beach or pool. (Ok, maybe that's a bit of a stretch). I also highlight a new title that will help you get a handle on managing day to day administration of your Windows based network.



We wrap up with the second part of my tutorial using the FOR command and a quick and dirty script that lets you send an email message without having SMTP installed on the system executing the script.

The web site slowly continues to evolve. I am planning on new features and content so please check back every once in a while. If there is something you would like to see on the site, please let me know.

Finally, I want to send a Happy Father's Day greeting to all the dads out there. If you can't be with your dad, I hope you will recall some happy memories and perhaps raise a glass.

As always, I appreciate your continued support and welcome all comments, suggestions and feedback at jhicks@jdhitsolutions.com.

~Jeff

Product Feature – Firefox 0.8

If you are still using Internet Explorer, you probably have had to enhance it with all sorts of add-ons and utilities. You have probably heard of the Mozilla and the development of open source browser products. One of the technologies is a fast browser that offers many features such as tabbed browsing, called FireFox. (This product was previously developed under the code-names Phoenix and Firebird but due to some trademark conflicts it now is being released under the FireFox moniker). The current version is 0.8 which I've been running for some time now. Except for a few sites that absolutely require IE, I use Firefox on a daily basis.



My favorite feature is tabbed browsing. If I have never used a tabbed browser, once you do it's very difficult to go back. With tabbed browsing I can have multiple pages open in a single browser instance. Page rendering is fast and pop-up blocking is built in. The browser will import your IE favorites and managing them is much easier and more flexible than in IE. If you have a group of bookmarks, you can also open

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Special points of interest:

- Firefox 0.8
- Managing Windows with VBScript & WMI
- What Are You Waiting FOR? (Part 2)
- Send CDO Mail

Inside this issue:

Web Crawling	2
IT Bookshelf	2
Tech Tutor	3
10 Minute Scripts	4

Top 10 Issues for Enterprise Network Managers in 2004

1. Network Strategic Plan and Architecture
2. Telecom Contracts/Pricing
3. Cost Reduction
4. High-Availability Networking
5. Network Security
6. Sourcing
7. Emerging Technologies
8. Networking Improvements
9. New Users and Applications
10. Value-Added Services

—Gartner



Don Jones

Firefox 0.8 - cont'd.

them all at once on separate tabs. You can reload all tabs, a single tab, or close all tabs with a single click.

Firefox offers an integrated search function that utilizes Google. Since the browser also offers pop-up blocking, there is no need for the Google Toolbar.

For those of you who are interested, Firefox offers theme and skin support. Additional themes can be downloaded from <http://texturizer.net/firefox/themes/>.

Another useful feature is Page Info. In a single dialog box I can see all the links on the page, details on all images, meta tags and details on any forms being used. Page Source opens a Firefox source viewer that displays the html code using colorized syntax highlighting.

Firefox includes a Java machine, and support for most common plugins. Although I have had to take the time to install items like the Shockwave plugin. But finding and installing the necessary plugin

is pretty easy. Speaking of downloads, the download manager is far superior to the default download behavior in IE. I can set a default location, pause a download and maintain a history of downloaded items.

Technically, Firefox is a “technology preview”, but I’ve been using it daily with very little problem.

If you want to try for yourself, you can download the latest version at <http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/>.

Web Crawling - Bookpool.com

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Managing Windows with VBScript and WMI

by Don Jones (Addison-Wesley 2003)

There are many scripting books on the market and I was lucky enough to get a sneak peak at a recent addition when reviewing the manuscript for Don Jones’ latest work. I’m very impressed with the final book. The title provides a wealth of easy to use real-world examples, demonstrating how to use VBScript and WMI in day to day operations of your network. Don’s easy to read prose leads even novice scripters step by step through each script, explaining what each line of code accomplishes. But the book is not just for beginners. There are sections on script components, script signing, and advanced WMI techniques to name a few.

All the scripts are included on a CD as well as a few other goodies. If you are wondering what you should (or could) be doing with script in your network, take a look at this title. Don also has a new web site devoted to enterprise scripting at <http://scriptinganswers.com/cmd/index.php>.

Tech Tutor — What Are You Waiting FOR? (Part 2)

Last month we looked at an introduction to the FOR command. Now let's look at some advanced uses of the FOR command and demonstrate how to use this powerful command to enhance your command line scripts.

If you type FOR /? at a command prompt, you will get a lengthy help screen. One of the switches is /L which will perform a series of commands based on a number sequence. Here is the help screen for this particular switch:

```
FOR /L %variable IN (start,step,end) DO command [command-parameters]
```

The set is a sequence of numbers from start to end, by step amount. So (1,1,5) would generate the sequence 1 2 3 4 5 and (5,-1,1) would generate the sequence (5 4 3 2 1)

To see this in action, at a command prompt, type FOR /L %i in (1,1,5) do @echo %i and you should see:

```
1
2
3
4
5
```

You might at first think this isn't very useful, but supposed your servers are named Server01, Server02 up to Server07. And you have a process you want to run against the servers. You could create a text list and use the /F switch (to be discussed in a later article) to execute your script, but why not do it on the fly?

```
FOR /L %i in (1,1,7) do @c:\scripts\monthly.bat Server0%i
```

You'll notice that /L won't use leading zeroes so I have to include one for my script to work. Or perhaps you do need a large text list but don't want to have to type a hundred computer or server names. I recently needed a text list of 80 computers. I simply ran:

```
FOR /L %i in (1,1,80) do @echo SYSPC%i >>syspc.txt
```

I had to manually edit the first 9 entries to correct the leading zero, but that was certainly easier than cutting and pasting or anything else. If you use this technique, be sure to use the >> redirection symbols. You want to append each entry to the file. If you only use >, your file will only have the last entry, SYSPC80.

This technique would also work for populating user accounts, perhaps you are testing Active Directory and want to quickly setup 1000 user accounts. Assuming you are using a script to create the accounts, such as Addusers.vbs, use the following command then go get a cup of coffee while it runs:

```
FOR /L %i in (10,1,1000) do @cscript addusers.vbs USR%i
```

If you want to see what variable will be passed, execute the command again using do @echo USR%i.

Finally, you can create a list of pseudo-Random numbers with the following command:

```
FOR /L %i in (1,3,30) do @set /a (%i*%RANDOM%)/7 && Echo.
```

Be sure to use the period (.) after the last echo command, otherwise your numbers will all run together. Of course, you can use whatever mathematical formula you would like and any seed pattern, in my case (1,3,30). We'll cover one more topic with FOR next month.



“All our progress is an unfolding, like the vegetable bud. You first have an instinct, then an opinion, then a knowledge, as the plant has root, bud, and fruit. Trust the instinct to the end, though you can render no reason. It is vain to hurry it. By trusting it to the end, it shall ripen into truth, and you shall know why you believe.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

JDH Information Technology Solutions

4233 Lafayette Road
Jamesville, NY 13078

Phone: (315) 256-7023
Fax: (315) 295-2534
E-mail: jhicks@jdhitsolutions.com

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10 Minute Scripts

This quick script lets you send an smtp message using CDO without having SMTP installed locally. You need to configure the name of a properly configured internal SMTP server. In the script. You could incorporate this into other scripts to generate email notifications. Be sure to maintain the right number of quotes in the addressing parameters.

```
'SendCDOMail.vbs
Dim objMail,objConfig,objFields
Set objMail = CreateObject("CDO.Message")
Set objConfig = CreateObject("CDO.configuration")
Set objFields = objConfig.Fields
With objFields
    .Item("http://schemas.microsoft.com/cdo/configuration/
SendUsing")= 2
    'set the next line to the SMTP server on the network
    .Item("http://schemas.microsoft.com/cdo/configuration/
smtpserver")= "jdhit-dc01"
    .Item("http://schemas.microsoft.com/cdo/configuration/
SMTPServerPort")= 25
    .Update
End With

With objMail
Set .Configuration = objConfig
    .To = """Jeff Hicks"" <jhicks@jdhitsolutions.com>"
    .CC = """Jeff"" <jhicks91@yahoo.com>"
    .From = """ScriptDemon"" <jhicks91@hotmail.com>"
    .Subject = "This is a test " & NOW
    .TextBody = "This is a test message sent originally at " &
NOW & VBCRLF & "Have a nice day!"
    .Send
End With

Set objFields=Nothing
set objMail=Nothing
set objConfig=Nothing

'EOF
```