

F1 Solutions October 2004



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Hello All,

I'm writing this at about 35,000 feet somewhere over Nevada. I'm heading to the TechMentor conference in San Jose. I'm looking forward to some terrific sessions and meeting a lot of new people. I'm sure the conference will give me plenty to write about in the coming months. I'll also be posting information on the web site.



This month's Tech Tutor will probably start a series of articles on using NETDOM. This is probably one of the most important command line utilities every Windows administrator should know about. I'll start out by demonstrating how to use NETDOM to join a computer to a domain.

The featured product section this month offers two for the price of one. I'll review two "Live Linux" distributions. These distributions run completely from a CD allowing you to try or test Linux without installing anything on your computer. If you've always wondered about Linux, these are great tools with practically no downside, except for all the time you'll burn exploring!

Some of you may be aware that I am involved with ScriptingAnswers.com. I wanted to let you know that the site has migrated to a new server with many new features. If you are at all interested in automating common Windows tasks, be sure to stop by. Registration is free.

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

~Jeff

Knoppix & Gnoppix

Live Linux distributions contain fully functioning Linux desktop, complete with a full suite of tools and utilities such as Ethereal, Open Office and The GIMP. Through some very, very clever programming and compression almost 2GB of program files are stored on a standard CD. After downloading an ISO image, and burning it to a CD, simply boot from the CD. Within minutes you have a fully functioning Linux desktop, with no changes to your existing system. These distributions make use of RAM drives, so plenty of memory (at least 256MB) and a fast processor will make this a more enjoyable experience.

Knoppix (<http://www.knoppix.net>) is the premier live Linux distribution. Developed in Germany as a training tool, it uses the KDE interface and offers more software options. Gnoppix (<http://www.gnoppix.org>) is very similar, except it uses the GNOME interface. While I'm personally partial to GNOME, Knoppix has a bit more maturity and a few more default programs that I am apt to use.

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Special points of interest:

- Live Linux CDs
- MSEXchange.org
- NETDOM
- List Shares

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“ According to the August CIO Magazine Tech Poll, CIOs expect their IT budgets to grow by 8.9 percent in the next 12 months—up from 8.1 percent reported in July. IT executives will allocate resources to IT projects that have taken a back seat to budget constraints and overdue hardware upgrades over the past two years. .”

—[CIO Magazine](#)

Knoppix & Gnoppix - cont'd.

Most network administrators know that there are many excellent Linux tools such as [Ethereal](#) and [Ettercap](#). While some utilities have been ported to Windows, the native Linux versions are usually more feature rich. With a live Linux CD, you can use these programs on your network. Both programs have default settings which should work with most hardware. Linux has come along way in device detection and support. Even on my Dell Latitude, both distributions detect all my hardware. Once booted, I have a complete Linux system on my network. While I primarily use

these CDs for Linux experience, there are ways in both distributions to save any custom configuration and commands to a floppy. If you have VMWare, you can create a VM with no hard drive and a CD linked to the ISO. I've had pretty good success running both Knoppix and Gnoppix in VMWare in this manner.

One last use of these CDs is as a last resort method for failed systems. If you need to recover files from a hard drive, and the Windows OS fails, you could boot either CD and use Linux's terrific disk management tools to repair

the disk or recover files. Even on an NTFS partition. Both CDs will provide network connectivity so you can easily move files between the failed system and a network share. If the system has a CD burning drive, chances are there is a Linux tool that could burn files to CD as well.

If you've always wondered what Linux looked or felt like, both these programs let you take Linux out for a spin. The distributions are free to download and use. The ISO files are very large and you might consider using BITTorrent for downloading them.

Web Crawling - MS Exchange.org

This month's site is a sister site to ISAServer.org and WindowsNetworking.org. As with the other sites, MSEExchange.org offers a decent selection of articles and tutorials on Microsoft Exchange. If you have a pesky problem, the site offers a number of message boards. The boards are pretty active and posts appear to get prompt responses from people who know what they are talking about. The site covers Exchange 5.5 through Exchange 2003 as well as certification.

There is also a nice section devoted to third party tools and utilities. Be sure to take a look at the anti-spam section for recommendations and reviews of anti-spam products.

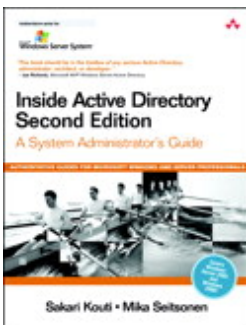
Recently the family of sites has offered an RSS feed. I've added the sites to my RSS reader so I can do a better job of keeping on top of the latest articles.

If you are an Exchange administrator, you need to at least visit this [site](#) once. I believe you'll end up bookmarking it and referring to it frequently. It is starting to be one of my primary sites for Exchange 2003 resources and information.

Inside Active Directory—2nd Edition

If you are looking for a definitive reference work on the inner workings of Active Directory, this is the book for your library. The book begins with a great overview of Active Directory then delves into areas of Active Directory most system administrators are probably not even aware of. There are many real-world examples and an easy to follow writing style that makes even the most complex concept easy to follow. I especially like the sections on automating Active Directory and detailed information on extending the schema. This title is in its second edition and covers changes in Windows 2003 such as forest operational levels and the new group policy management tool. This is a very comprehensive book with something for system administrators, developers, consultants and trainers. You must have this book on your bookshelf.

You can learn more about this title or order it at <http://www.awprofessional.com/title/0321228480>.



Tech Tutor – Netdom

If I had to make a list of the top 5 utilities that every administrator should know, Netdom.exe would absolutely be on that list. This command line utility is a veritable Swiss army knife. If you have trust issues, this is your tool. If you want to reset a secure channel, this is your tool. If you want to join a domain from the command line, this is your tool. Open a command prompt and type `netdom help` to see the available options. Of course, you have to install netdom first. It is freely available in both server and desktop support tools.

This month we'll explore using netdom to join a workstation or member server to a domain.

```
NETDOM JOIN machine /Domain:domain [/OU:ou path] [/UserD:user]
[/PasswordD:[password | *]]
[/UserO:user] [/PasswordO:[password | *]]
[/REBoot[:Time in seconds]]
```

One major benefit of using **netdom** is that you can remotely join a computer to the domain. As long as you have RPC connectivity to both the remote system and a domain controller, and you have administrative credentials, you can remotely join a computer to the domain. Obviously, it is best if nobody is using the computer at the time. The remote system just needs to be on the network, nobody needs to be logged in. The remote system can be running Windows NT or later. For simplicity, open a command prompt on the domain controller with domain administrator credentials. Assuming a remote administrator password of P@sswOrd you would type:

```
Netdom join desktop01 /domain:JDHITSolutions /UserO:Administrator /
PasswordO:P@ssword /Reboot:10
```

This will join the computer `desktop01` to the JDHITSolutions domain and reboot the system in 10 seconds. The default reboot time is 30 seconds. If you prefer not to have passwords clearly displayed, you can use an asterisk (*) in place of the password, in which case you will be prompted and the password will not display. You can also run the command directly from the workstation, in which case you need to specify domain administrator credentials. The UserD and PasswordD parameters are for the domain account and password respectively.

When you manually join a computer to domain, the computer account is created in the default container, typically "Computers". This requires a second manual step to move the computer account to the proper OU, or create the computer account ahead of time. With netdom, you can specify the OU. To add `desktop01` to the Sales Computers OU, which is a child of the Company Computers OU, you would type:

```
Netdom join desktop01 /domain:JDHITSolutions /OU:"OU=Sales Com-
puters,OU=Company Computers,DC=jdhitsolutions,DC=Local"
/UserO:Administrator /PasswordO:P@ssword /Reboot:10
```

You need to specify the full distinguished name of the OU and put it in quotes. This is especially true if you have any spaces in the name.

If you have problems with the command make sure you have proper name resolution and connectivity. The server service must be running on the remote system, which typically requires that Microsoft File and Print be enabled. The C\$ and Admin\$ shares should also exist. There are a few other details on the command, so be sure to look at all the help information or search Tech-net for more information.

With this command and a list of computers, you can quickly put together a batch file to join as many computers as you want to the domain, all without leaving your desk. If you have an automated server or workstation build, you could incorporate this command into your process.

Next month we'll look at using netdom to work with trust relationships. Trusts are a critical element in Microsoft networking, not only between domains, but between domain members and domain controllers. We'll explore more next month.

"Ideas are only lethal if you suppress and don't discuss them. Ignorance is not bliss, it's stupid. Banning books shows you don't trust your kids to think and you don't trust yourself to be able to talk to them."

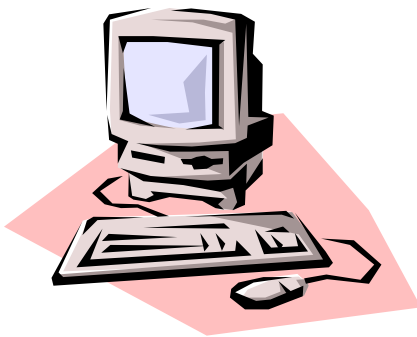
- Anna Quindlen

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Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide outstanding information technology consulting services and solutions to our clients utilizing a value-oriented approach. We recognize that most information technology projects are goal not hour driven. Our aim is to leverage technology to solve our clients' business challenges in the most cost-effective manner possible. We succeed when they succeed.

10 Minute Scripts

This month's task is to get a quick listing of shares and share information on a specified server. This script utilizes ADSI by connecting to the *lanmanserver* service and enumerating share information. This works for all shares, visible and hidden, but it won't display admin shares such as C\$. If you want to save output, redirect to a text file:

```
cscript //nologo listshares.vbs fileserver > output.txt
```

If you want to do a list of computers, create a text list of computers:

```
server01
server02
server03
```

At a prompt run the following command from the same directory as this script:

```
for /f %i in (servers.txt) do @cscript listshares.vbs %i
```

You should use CSCSCRIPT to execute this. If you don't specify a server, you will be prompted for a name. The default is the local system.

```
'ListShares.vbs
'usage: cscript listshares.vbs [servername]
On Error Resume Next
dim obj_Share,wshNetwork,wshArgs
Set wshArgs=WScript.Arguments
Set WshNetwork=CreateObject("WScript.Network")

If wshArgs(0)=" " then
  sServer=InputBox("What server do you want to look at?","Server
Shares",wshNetwork.ComputerName)
Else
  sServer=wshArgs(0)
End if

wscript.echo "Checking Server " & sServer & " for Shares."
set obj_Share=GetObject("WinNT:// " & sServer & "/lanmanserver")
WScript.echo "Server Name = " & sServer
For Each share in obj_Share
  WScript.echo "Share Name = " & share.name
  WScript.echo " Share Path = " & share.path
  WScript.echo " Description = " & share.description
Next

WScript.quit

'EOF
```