

F1 Solutions January 2005

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Hello All,

If you are like me you are wondering what the blazes happened to 2004. Where did it go? But I suppose starting a new business is like that. I want to thank you for your support over the last year and hope that I can continue to earn your trust. I have some plans for the upcoming year that I hope you will find as exciting as I do.

One area I plan to expand is in free tools. This issue describes a new HTA that can be used to monitor and manage Exchange 2000/2003 services. I've already received some very positive feedback. Additional tools are in the works. Look for announcements in upcoming newsletters.

This month's technical tutorial is a quick demonstration of the WHOAMI utility that comes as part of Support Tools. The article will illustrate how to use the tool and where it might come in handy,

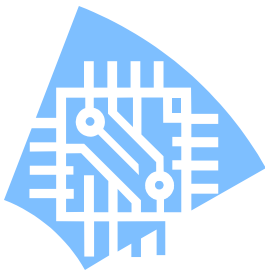
And since I seem to be on an Exchange roll lately, this month's quick script will return the names of all storage groups on the specified Exchange 2003 server by querying Active Directory.

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

Welcome to 2005! May it be a prosperous and healthy year for us all.

~Jeff

ExchangeMon



As you are undoubtedly aware, my company name is JDH Information Technology Solutions. As the name suggests, my emphasis has always been on **solutions** for IT professionals. In addition to the many resources I already make available on the web site, I hope to offer other tools and utilities that are a bit more feature-rich and ones that ideally will save you time.

I've recently finished a set of HTA tools designed for monitoring and managing Exchange servers. I originally intended to leverage the new WMI classes for Exchange 2003 and create a tool only for this platform. However, during beta testing I received a number of comments and requests for a version that would work on Exchange 2000. So I did it. The ExchangeMon200x.hta works pretty much the same for both Exchange 2000 and 2003.

When you start the tool a drop down list is populated with all the Exchange servers in your organization. Select a server and click Check. A table showing all the Ex-

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Special points of interest:

- ExchangeMon
- AximSite.com
- Who Are You?
- Get Exchange Storage Groups

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“The vast majority of \$1 billion-plus companies are now choosing to standardize their distributed computing on the Windows Server platform. The increasing tendency toward server consolidation and centralization are driving the need for more mature management technologies — not only for Windows Server itself, but also for Active Directory, Exchange, and other applications running on this platform. Consequently, the Windows Server platform management technologies market will continue to grow strongly through at least 2007 ”

—Forrester Research



ExchangeMon- cont'd.

change services is displayed that shows whether the service is running and it's start mode (i.e. Automatic, Manual, Disabled). Each service entry has a buttons that let you stop or start the service, as well as change the start mode. The status will be refreshed by default every 30 seconds, but you can change that.

I wanted to include a screen shot here, but the resolution wasn't satisfactory. I have several screenshots at <http://www.jdhitsolutions.com/exchangemon>

I am making these tools free for download at the same URL. Make sure you get the appropriate version. You can use ExchangeMon2000 to monitor Exchange 2000 and 2003 servers, but ExchangeMon2003 will only monitor Exchange 2003.

I developed the tools with the assumption an administrator would run them from their XP desktop in order to keep an eye on the health of their Exchange servers. These tools will only monitor a single server at a time. However, I

also developed ExchangeMonPlus which will display service status for all Exchange servers in one console. In addition, you can get server detail such as storage group utilization and queue status. Screen shots and a short Shockwave demo can be found at <http://www.jdhitsolutions.com/exchangemonplus>

I hope you'll try these tools out and let me know what you think.

Web Crawling—Aximsite.com

I've been very happy with my Dell Axim over the last year. In fact the lack of Pocket PC options for popular open source applications like Thunderbird is one of the main reasons I still run Outlook. On the few occasions over the last year that I had a problem or question with my Axim (usually something I caused) I would head to the Aximsite (<http://www.aximsite.com/>). This site is **not** run by Dell but is a very popular meeting ground for the Pocket PC community, especially Dell Axim owners. While Dell's support forums are useful, it can sometimes be a bit daunting finding the information you need. Aximsite provides a much more focused approach. The site features the expected news and product announcements, but the best part is the very active and responsive discussion board. The discussion boards are primarily organized by Axim model. While you can search and read the discussion areas for free, you need to register in order to post. If you need some technical assistance or insight, you might also want to take a look at their tutorials, reviews, FAQs and other resources.

So if you got a new Axim for the holidays, or want to learn more about the one you had all last year, I encourage you to visit <http://www.aximsite.com>.

IT Bookshelf—VBScripting for Windows

Ok. You know you need to learn some scripting but can't find the time to make it through the usual hefty tomes I recommend. Time is short and you just need the good stuff. Well this is as about distilled as it gets. Don Jones has put together an e-book that will guide you through the basics of vbscripting. You'll learn not only Windows Script Host fundamentals but also how to use ADSI and WMI. If you've been waiting for something short and sweet, this is it. And best of all it is free, although you do need to register.

The e-book is an 85 page PDF file (don't worry, big fonts and wide margins) that is very easy to read and comprehend. Once you've got this under your belt, then you can tackle some of the other books I've recommended in the past or drop by <http://www.scriptinganswers.com> for even more insights and ready-to-run scripts.

Visit <http://cc.realtimepublishers.com/publicationhome.asp?pid=62>

Tech Tutor — Who Are You?

This month we'll cover a tool that is a part of the Windows XP Support Tools. It can be a valuable resource when troubleshooting permission problems. After you work with it, you may even want to incorporate it into your system documentation process. If you install Support Tools normally, it will be a part of your path statement. Otherwise, copy whoami.exe to C:\Windows (or whatever you are using). This is a command line tool that doesn't require any special privileges, which makes it ideal for incorporating into a logon script. I'll cover that at the end.

At it's simplest, whoami will show you the currently logged on user. Open a command prompt and type whoami. You should get something like this: DOGHOUSE\Jhicks

In this case DOGHOUSE is the name of my laptop which does not belong to a domain. Otherwise the domain name would be displayed. Where whoami truly helps, especially troubleshooting permission problems, is the /groups switch. (Use the /noverbose switch for an easier to read result). Here is the result for a domain based user:

```
c:\scripts>whoami /groups /noverbose
```

```
MATRIX\Domain Users
Everyone
BUILTIN\Administrators
BUILTIN\Users
NT AUTHORITY\INTERACTIVE
NT AUTHORITY\Authenticated Users
LOCAL
MATRIX\FinanceRollup
MATRIX\Account Executives
MATRIX\Accountants
```

Whoami **will resolve** nested group membership. In this example, FinanceRollup's members are other groups, including Accountants..

Two other useful switches are /SID and /PRIV. When using /SID in combination with /USER or /GROUPS, not only will the group name be displayed, but it's associated SID as well:

```
C:\Program Files\Support Tools>whoami /user /sid /noverbose
DOGHOUSE\jhicks S-1-5-21-776561741-1606980848-1343024091-1003
```

The /PRIV switch will display all user privileges held by the current user:

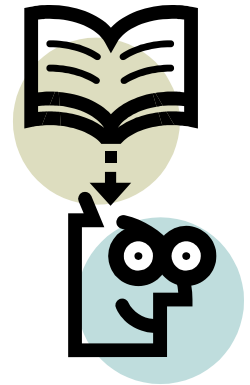
```
C:\Program Files\Support Tools>whoami /user /priv /noverbose
DOGHOUSE\jhicks
```

```
SeChangeNotifyPrivilege
SeSecurityPrivilege
SeBackupPrivilege
SeRestorePrivilege
SeSystemtimePrivilege
```

For maximum enjoyment, run whoami /all to get all of the above in an easy to read summary. Since the command only displays information pertinent to the current user, you could easily add a line to your logon scripts to save this information to a text file. Then when the user calls the help desk, you can use the whoami audit log to begin the troubleshooting process. You might include lines like this in a batch file to create a new file each time the user logs on:

```
Set whoamilog=\\server01\logs$\%username%-whoami.txt
Whoami /all >%whoamilog%
```

I hope you'll make a visit to your nearest command prompt and start your own journey of self-discovery.



*“Year chases year,
decay pursues decay,
Still drops some joy
from with’ring life
away;
New forms arise, and
different views engage.”*

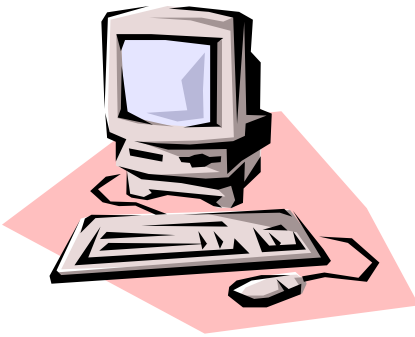
— Samuel
Johnson

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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 quick script will query the specified Exchange 2003 server and return a list of all it's storage groups. You do not need anything special, like Exchange Management tools installed locally. You will want to add some error handling.

```
'GetSGList.vbs
On Error Resume Next
strSrv="TRINITY" 'EXCHANGE 2003 SERVERNAME MUST BE UPPERCASE
Set objRootDSE = GetObject("LDAP://rootDSE")
strConfiguration = "LDAP://" & objRootDSE.Get
("configurationNamingContext")
Set objConfiguration = GetObject(strConfiguration)
SGList=GetStorageGroups(objConfiguration.ADSPath,strSrv)
wscript.echo SGList
wscript.quit

Function GetStorageGroups(strPath,strSrv)
strQuery="Select distinguishedname,name,canonicalname from '" &
strPath & "' WHERE objectclass='msExchStorageGroup'"
set cat=GetObject("GC:")
for each obj in cat
set GC=obj
Next

AdsPath=GC.ADSPath
set conn=Createobject("ADODB.Connection")
set cmd=CreateObject("ADODB.Command")
conn.Provider="ADSDSOObject"
conn.Open

set cmd.ActiveConnection=conn
set RS=conn.Execute(strQuery)
do while not RS.EOF
if InStr(rs.Fields("distinguishedname"),strSrv) Then
strResults=strResults & rs.Fields("name") & ";"
end If
rs.movenext
Loop
rs.Close
conn.Close
GetStorageGroups=strResults
End Function
```