

ntlib.cmd (Advanced NT/2K/XP/K3 Command Library)

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Development/microsoft.public.win32.programmer.tools/2004-06/0016.html>

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The latest (FREE) Advanced Command Library for Windows NT/2K/XP/K3 provides over 200 resources to assist with writing RELIABLE and MAINTAINABLE shell scripts without adding any third-party software. Using our Expert Compress script, the new release is 22% smaller than the previous version while doubling the number of resources.

Many of the most requested items from the "Almost Free" Expert Library are now in the FREE Advanced Library. These include GetLogDate (returns the date as yyyyymmdd, regardless of regional settings), GetLogTime, GetFree, GetDirSize, ListFree and NetIPAddr.

The new System_Info procedure returns the current Service Pack in the Advanced Library and then adds HotFixes, IE Version and all installed applications in the Expert Version.

See (<http://ntlib.com>) for details, or see the Master Catalog at (<http://TheSystemGuard.com/MasterCatalog.asp>) for a more complete list of everything available.

One of the biggest challenges you will face when writing shell scripts is learning the many inconsistencies and "special cases" associated with each NT-based platform. While the NT/2K/XP/K3 shell scripting environment is MUCH more powerful than DOS or Windows 95/98/ME, the lack of certain "basic" features can cause much Fuming.

In addition, many environments prohibit third-party tools due to security and/or stability concerns. Whether you agree or disagree with this policy, it is a reality that Windows SysAdmins have to deal with every day.

And finally, many tools (free or otherwise) provide the same functionality that is ALREADY AVAILABLE in a default install.

The reason that they are widely used is because getting the information that you want, packaged in a way you can use, using only the builtin utilities, is SUCH A FUMING CHORE!

Here's what we recommend (some of these are FREE and some are "Almost Free" – from \$9 to as little as \$1 per system).

#1 – Write your scripts using Mount\Commands

.Mount\Commands are extensions to the "builtin" commands and utilities that are present on ALL INSTALLATIONS of all NT-based operating systems including Windows NT4 SP6a+, 2000, XP and Server 2003.

They are constructed entirely of builtin commands common to all four platforms (NT/2K/XP/K3). There is NO BINARY CODE, only scripting commands! If your installation allows you to run batch files, then you can use Mount\Commands!

They can be run on any NT4 or later installation RIGHT OUT OF THE BOX! A single file contains the entire Mount\Command Set and they can be loaded or unloaded as a group in under 2 seconds on a typically loaded system.

.Mount\Commands are specifically designed for use in shell scripts and are coded for Compatibility, Clarity and Speed.

Compatibility means that ALL M\Cs perform CONSISTENTLY across NT/2K/XP/K3. When the command is created, those aggravating special cases (the source of much Fuming) are masked within the M\C code so that a CONSISTENT RESULT IS ALWAYS OBTAINED.

Clarity means that scripting code written using MountCommands can be easily understood and maintained, even by those without extensive shell scripting experience.

Speed means that all available methods are employed to enhance the performance of each command, including preloading the code so NO DISK ACCESS is needed to invoke it! (just like the internal commands such as FOR, ECHO, DIR, etc.)

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The Expert Command Library contains over 300 of these powerful commands. For more information, see (<http://NTCmdLib.com>).

#2 – Learn structured scripting techniques.

Our Free KnowledgeLetter, "BoomingOrFuming?" provides valuable knowledge regarding the creation and maintenance of reliable cross-platform shell scripts.

Subscribers also receive FREE versions of our Pattern Scripts that help you to create your own custom Mount\Commands to add to the Standard Set.

You can find the sample issues at (<http://BoomingOrFuming.com>)

#3 – Get the FREE Advanced NT/2K/XP/K3 Command Library (ntlib.cmd)

ntlib.cmd provides over 150 sample Mount\Commands to assist with writing and documenting shell scripts. To get your FREE copy, go to (<http://ntlib.com>).

You will also want to take a look at TheGuardBook, Online Reference for Cross-Platform Shell Scripting at (<http://TheSystemGuard.com/TheGuardBook/CCS-Int>).

All the commands internal to cmd.exe are documented here in "Mounted Help" pages. This includes a color-keyed page highlighting the differences among all internal commands in NT/2K/XP/K3. The "Common Help" from each OS's help screen is also available for comparison.

For an example of what a "Mounted Script" looks like, see the "Cmd Source" for our FREE Advanced Snapshot script at (<http://TheSystemGuard.com/Scripts/Snapshot>).
[click ".cmdSrc"]

Advanced Snapshot is free and is included with ntlib.

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| COMPATIBILITY | CLARITY | SPEED |  
| Write code ONCE | Make it clear | THEN...Make it fast! |  
\-----+-----+-----/  
400+ command-line resources using ONLY native NT commands!  
(http://TheSystemGuard.com/default.asp#MasterCommandList)
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