

Re: Update Wizard parameters

Source: <http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/SMS/microsoft.public.sms.admin/2004-03/0016.html>

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Date: 03/01/04

Date: Mon, 1 Mar 2004 10:37:24 -0800

The ability to do what you want differs between SMS 2.0 and SMS 2003. The command line you included indicates that this is SMS 2.0 and not SMS 2003 so some of the information below may not apply to you. Specifically the /n and /l:xxx switches aren't applicable except on SMS 2003 advanced clients. Also I believe the wording of the wizard is slightly different.

Also TimeDetected is the time the update is first detected as applicable to the system.

TimeAuthorized is the time you set in the wizard when you add the update to the package (default is now.)

Your understanding here looks pretty good overall. Please check the patchinstall.log to verify that the updates were actually installed and that something else like a pre-install restart of the system wasn't required. A pre-install restart will be required if there are Pending File Rename operations detected by PatchInstall.exe.

Command Line Parameter Distribute Software Updates Wizard Setting
Description

/g:xxx (hours) Three radio buttons on the first Configure Agent Settings page:

a.. Require updates to be installed as soon as they are advertised (/g:0)

b.. Users can postpone updates indefinitely (no /g parameter)

c.. Allow users to postpone installation for: (/g:xxx, where xxx is specified in the Allow user to postpone installation box.

Use this switch to set the grace period (in hours) after which the installation of the software update becomes mandatory.

The grace period is based on either the date/time property created when the software update is authorized for deployment, or the date/time property created when each software update is initially inventoried.

To determine when the grace period will expire, the authorized time or detected time (subject to the /d option, below) will be added to the grace period then compared to local time. This calculation is influenced by the Coordinated Universal Time setting.

The range of values for this switch is from zero (0) to 999 hours. The default setting is 336 hours, or 14 days.

If you enter a value of zero (0) for this parameter the grace period expires immediately, making update installation mandatory, with no opportunity to postpone installation.

The /g switch is optional. If you do not specify it, the grace period feature is disabled, and the update will never expire (installation will be optional for users).

/d The From setting associated with the Allow user to postpone installation setting on the first Configure Agent Settings page. Use this switch to specify that the grace period is based on the time that the update was first determined to be applicable to the SMS client computer rather than the time the update was authorized.

The default value for this switch, after which the installation of the software update becomes mandatory, is the time of authorization plus the grace period specified by the /g parameter discussed above.

/s The Report inventory changes only when inventory is scheduled check box on the second Configure Agent Settings page. Use this switch to suppress the hardware inventory agent from initiating a hardware inventory cycle after update installation.

Initiating hardware inventory at times other than the scheduled hardware inventory frequency can increase network and server load. The /s switch is used as the default setting when the Distribute Software Updates Wizard configures the program command line for the Software Updates Installation Agent.

/p The After Waiting field on the first Configure Agent Settings page. Use this switch to specify that the default action that the Software Updates Installation Agent takes on behalf of an unresponsive user is to postpone installation of the update.

If you use this switch, the Software Updates Installation Agent does not install software updates automatically until the installation grace period (specified using the /g parameter) expires. However, each time the advertisement for the update occurs, the user will have the opportunity to install the software updates even if the grace period has not expired.

By default, without the /p switch, the Software Updates Installation Agent automatically installs the updates for unresponsive users after the countdown period specified using the /c parameter expires.

/i Force installation of required updates only check box, on the first Configure Agent Settings page. Use this switch to enforce the grace period for each update individually, rather than enforcing the grace period for the group of updates within the same SMS package.

When you specify this switch, the Software Updates Installation Agent applies grace period expiration to individual updates, rather than to an entire package of updates. This means that mandatory installation only takes

place for software updates for which the installation grace period has expired.

With the /i parameter in effect, when the user clicks Install Now in the Software Updates Installation Agent user interface, expired updates and optional (currently unexpired) updates are both available for installation. The list of updates shown to the user will include expired updates and optional updates with an indication of the state of each update, allowing the user to proactively install unexpired updates along with the expired updates.

Without the /i switch, when one of the updates expires and the user clicks Install Now, all of the updates in the package will install.

/z:s|w|sw The Postpone automated system restarts setting and associated settings on the second Configure Agent Settings page. Use this switch to suppress automatic post–installation restart requests, and to allow the user to postpone restarting the computer after installation.

This switch can be useful in server environments or in cases where you do not want the computers that are installing the updates to restart by default. However, note that causing a computer to restart after installation ensures that software updates take effect, and that suppressing post–installation restart requests can leave your system in an insecure state.

The s|w|sw arguments allow you to turn off automatic restarts by type of SMS client computer, as follows. (Note that the /z command cannot be used without the s|w|sw arguments)

- a.. The default case (without the /z command) allows automatic restarts if required.
- b.. /z:w disables automatic restart (if required) for workstations only.
- c.. /z:s disables automatic restart (if required) for servers only.
- d.. /z:sw disables automatic restart (if required) for both servers and workstations.

/f The Force client programs to close and discard any unsaved data check box on the second Configure Agent Settings page. Use this switch to force automatic post–installation restart requests, even if there are running programs with unsaved data on the SMS client computer. This switch takes precedence over the /z switch, above.

Caution

- a.. Use caution when using this switch. If a computer is forced to restart with this command–line switch in effect, users could lose any unsaved changes on the desktop. Therefore, only use this switch when business needs require that the software updates take effect immediately, regardless of possible data loss.

By default, without the /f switch, the Software Updates Installation Agent uses the built-in Shutdown process of the operating system, allowing each open application to display a File Save dialog to the user.

Important

a.. If you use this switch, the forced restart will only take place if the Software Updates Installation Agent finds indications that a restart is needed. This switch explicitly does not mean that the computers will always be forced to restart after any update installation. If used, this switch only applies to the current scheduled run of the advertisement.

/c:xx (minutes) The Specify how long the agent should wait for a user or unresponsive update: setting and associated settings on the first Configure Agent Settings page. Use this switch to set the countdown period (in minutes) after which the Software Updates Installation Agent will take action on behalf of an unresponsive user. The action taken following the countdown depends on the other settings that have been specified, and can include: automatic installation of the update, postponement of installation, or post-installation system restarts (configured using the /p the /z, and the /f parameters).

This countdown is useful in cases where a software update installation is necessary, but no user is present to provide input. The delays that could be caused by such cases are important, because while the user interface for software update installation is displayed, all other software distribution using SMS is blocked for that computer. After the countdown expires, the update installation cycle proceeds automatically.

Following the installation, if a system restart is needed and has not been explicitly disabled, a countdown begins allowing users time to save their work. The value that you enter for the countdown is used for both the pre-installation countdown (automatic installation if no user input is received) and the post-installation countdown (restart the computer if restart is not suppressed).

The range of values for this switch is from zero (0) to 99 minutes. The default setting is 5 minutes.

If you enter a value of zero (0) for this switch, installation will start immediately.

/t:xx (minutes) The Wait <N> minutes for the update and then cancel installation setting on the first Configure Agent Settings page. Use this switch to set the failsafe timeout (in minutes) after which a software update is considered unresponsive and that particular update installation is terminated.

Because software updates can come from a wide range of sources with a wide array of behaviors, it is recommended that you proceed with the installation of an update even if it appears to have become unresponsive. However, if a software update is permitted to remain unresponsive for a long period of time, it could leave the system in a vulnerable and inconsistent

state. Therefore, it is necessary to set the timeout value to allow an unresponsive update to be disabled.

If one or more software updates in a package reach the time-out limit, the Software Updates Installation Agent assumes that a system restart is needed to ensure the system can be restored to a consistent state (this parameter is subject to the /z restart suppression parameter).

The range of values for this switch is from zero (0) to 99 minutes. The default setting is 30 minutes.

If you enter a value of zero (0) for this switch, the update will not be given any time to install. To avoid this problem, a minimum of 10 minutes should be allowed for this timeout value.

Note

a.. The Software Updates Installation Agent will continue to record exit codes for as long as it can. However, after the failsafe timeout has expired, the currently executing update will be terminated and its exit code will indicate failure.

/q The Use notification balloons or dialogs setting on the third Configure Agent Settings page. Use this switch to configure the Software Updates Installation Agent to install the specified updates without user interface or interaction. When you specify this switch, the only user interface that appears on the client is the operating system's progress dialog box that indicates that a system restart is being initiated.

Important

a.. Because this switch allows no user interaction by definition, you should not use it in combination with other switches that assume that user interaction is available. In particular, you should not use this switch without also specifying the /g switch, because this would mean that the software updates in the package would be indefinitely postponed. In general, you should specify /g:0 when using /q.

/x The Create reference computer templates during processing setting on the third Configure Agent Settings page. Use this switch to create a reference software updates authorization list file that you can use to distribute software updates to your enterprise in an expedited manner. You use this switch when you use a reference computer for expedited approval processing.

When you run Patchinstall.exe with the /x switch, a local copy of the software updates authorization list, type_patchauthorize.xml (where type is the software update type) is output to the temp directory of the current user (%temp%). This file contains a list of all software updates currently applicable to the SMS client computer, whether installed or needed.

/n The Provide reminders and allow users to reschedule software updates until they become required setting on the third Configure Agent

Settings page. Use this switch to enable the persistent notification icon, an Advanced Client feature that provides local reminders and allows users to reschedule software updates on computers running SMS Advanced Client. This reminder process is independent of the advertisement schedule, and allows the administrator to reduce the advertisement frequency when advertising software updates to collections of computers running the SMS Advanced Client. The interval at which the reminders occur is hard-coded to every three hours.

Users can interact with the notification area icon to:

- a..
- b.. Check for upcoming installations
- c.. Schedule installations and restarts to occur at convenient times of day
- d.. Install software updates immediately
- e.. Remind users of a need for a restart until the requirement is satisfied, if restart is postponed during initial software update installation

Note

- a.. The /n switch has no effect on computers running the SMS Legacy Client.
- b.. If the /q switch is specified, the /n switch is ignored.

/l:xxx The Use a change window setting and associated settings on the third Configure Agent Settings page. Use this switch to specify the duration of the change window (the time within which configuration changes are permitted in scheduled software updates installations.)

The range of values for this parameter is from zero (0) to 480 minutes. The default setting is 90 minutes.

If you enter a value of zero (0) for this parameter, the update will not be given any time to install. To avoid this problem, a minimum of 30 minutes should be allowed for this software update installation window.

The start time for the scheduled software update installation is the scheduled start time for the advertisement. For more information, see Configure Scheduled Software Update Installations.

"Jim Cross" <jim.cross@cgi.com> wrote in message news:175901c3f2f2210\$a501280a@phx.gbl...
> *We are sending out an update using the update wizard and*
> *the advertisement is not performing the way I think it*
> *should. I believe my problem lies in the (time detected,*
> *time authorized) options. Here is what we want – we want*
> *the ad to wait 30 minutes for user intervention and if no*
> *response to postpone the installation. We want the*
> *advertisement to be available for the users to install*
> *from AP. The ad should run every day and not install*
> *without user intervention for 3 days. After the 3 days*

> expires it should install and reboot the system.
> What is happening is, we advertised the program yesterday
> and it installed and rebooted the systems right away.
> I think the reason is that I am not understanding the
> time authorized/detected explanation. If the program was
> detected as applicable more than 3 days ago is that why
> it is installing right away? I need to know where my
> syntax is wrong. This is the way it is currently –
> PatchInstall.exe /g:72 /i /c:30 /t:10 /p /z:ws /s
> Any help with this is appreciated. I have only sent out a
> few ads and have always had trouble with confidence that
> they would perform as needed. It is important that it
> doesn't install right away and reboot so our clients
> aren't disrupted.
> Since then I looked at the properties of the update and
> noticed that the Time Authorized was set to the time that
> I created the package. I then thought this is why it is
> installing right away. I made the package last week, and
> when I send it out today the grace period has passed and
> it installs right away. I then changed the authorization
> date to today and added some more systems to test. I now
> felt sure that it would give the user the 3 day grace
> period. I now had it set to detect and postpone restarts
> for None as well so it would reboot after the install in
> 3 days. Wrong, it installed right away to the new systems
> I added to the collection and gave them an option to
> postpone the reboot. These are the modified parameters. I
> need and expert to examine them and explain why it is not
> performing the way I think it should.
> PatchInstall.exe /g:120 /c:30 /t:10 /p

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