

Re: Where did my administrator go?

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.basics/2005-01/2146.html>

From: Vanguard (*see_signature*)

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"mike gray" <omgray@worldnet.att.net> wrote in message
news:a5gGd.25057\$w62.10563@bgtncs05-news.ops.worldnet.att.net...

> (*snip*)

>

> *Thanks to both of you.*

>

> *Wish there was a simple way to create a new account with all the
> preferences etc. of the administrator. It's really a pita to find and
> transfer stuff like email settings, bookmarks, address books, and such
> for a non-tech type like meself.*

>

> *Why not a "transfer all" function, maybe with a menu showing delete
> options?*

>

> *m*

Well, there is if the method I mention is what you are looking for. I have the Administrator account which I never touch (except as noted below when copying profiles). I have an AdminBackup account as a backup admin-level account and also needed as the 3rd account required in the copy method mentioned below. I have my own account (which happens to be an admin-level account) and is the one I always use for login.

1. Logout of your account (which I'm presuming is an admin account).
2. Login under the AdminBackup account. This is required so that none of the files under either the source or target profile are in use, including the registry .dat files. (See <http://support.microsoft.com/?id=291555>.)
3. Now copy the profile for your normal login (admin) account over the Administrator account:
 - Right-click on My Computer, Properties, Advanced, User Profiles.
 - Select your own admin account (as the source profile).
 - Click "Copy To".
 - Browse to the profile path for the Administrator.
 - Make sure the Administrator account has permissions to its new overwritten profile:

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- o Click the Change button (under the "Permitted to Use" section).
 - o Click Advanced.
 - o Click Find Now.
 - o Select the "Administrator" account. Click Ok.
 - o Click Ok. Should be back to the "Copy To" dialog.
4. Click OK to copy the source profile over the target profile. Besides copying over the profile, the permissions get changed from those for the source profile to the account you specified above.

Now when you login under the Administrator profile, you get the same Start menu, the same application data, same My Documents (which you may not really want a duplicate of), and so forth. Basically I do this so the Administrator profile is a duplicate of my normal login admin account. If my normal profile gets corrupted, the Administrator profile is just like it.

Before I do the above step, I usually change the path to My Documents. I really don't want a copy of all my documents under one profile to get duplicated under another profile. Right-click on the My Computer desktop icon, Properties, and change its path. Then check the permissions on that path allow your account access to that new path (and no one else other than Administrators and System have full access). I move My Documents under D:\Users\<profilename>. Only Administrators and System have any access to D:\Users and I add the user to their own profile underneath there. If I ever have to reformat my C: drive containing Windows, my data remains intact over on D: (and I just have to change My Documents to point over there again). When I copy profiles, I don't end up duplicating the My Documents under one profile under another profile. Maybe you want the duplication but remember that the duplicated docs under the target profile won't be kept in sync with those under your profile.

It sounds like a lot of work but after you move the My Documents path (and make sure permissions are valid) then the only action you have to take occasionally is to use the Copy To for user profiles mentioned above. Obviously you want to copy the profile when everything seems to be running properly for awhile. I tend to toggle between copying to Administrator and to AdminBackup so that I have one profile back I can revert beyond the last time that I copied my own profile. The above looks complicated until you realize the skinny procedure is:

- Log into an intermediary account (with admin privileges).
- Select the source profile path.
- Select the target profile path.
- Make sure permissions are correct so the target account can access the overwritten profile.
- Copy.
- (And you'll probably want to test the target profile still works okay.)

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There is a way using the registry to actually have multiple accounts point at the same profile path. I had that working for awhile but decided to disconnect them. If the profile got corrupted then the same profile was corrupted for all the accounts sharing that same profile. Also, you might modify the above and NEVER copy over the Administrator profile and just copy over the AdminBackup profile (the names for whatever backup accounts/profiles you want to use may vary).

I probably got some of the above from articles like <http://support.microsoft.com/?id=168475> but some I just figured out, like changing the path to My Documents so copying the profile didn't take so long making duplicates of my documents that I didn't want duplicated anyway.

There is one fly in the soup regarding copying of profiles. I noticed there were times that I would login under Profile C but the Copy To button was disable when I attempted to select Profile B (to copy over Profile A). <http://support.microsoft.com/?id=291555> indicates that you can't be logged in under the target account (so it's profile isn't inuse) but you also must not be logged in under the source account (so none of its profile is inuse). However, when I logged off Profile B to login under Profile C, Profile B could not be copied. It turns out Microsoft screwed up a bit perhaps because of their fast switch user mode (which I don't use, anyway). I discovered that the ntuser.dat was from Profile B still had a handle on it from SYSTEM when I was logged in under Profile C (I used the oh.exe tool from the W2K Resource Kit to list open file handles). Since I was logged in under a completely different account and should be using its own ntuser.dat (for that account's registry settings), the ntuser.dat for the account that I was no longer logged in under should have been free. Not always, and the only way around that I've found so far is to reboot and login straight away into the intermediary account so I can copy over my normal account's profile into the other account's profile. I haven't a clue why SYSTEM still needs an open file handle on an account's ntuser.dat file when NOT logged under that account.

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