

Re: >> Converting a work computer to a home computer?

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<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2007-01/msg01567.html>

- *From:* over@xxxxxxx
 - *Date:* Fri, 05 Jan 2007 01:58:52 GMT
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"gene.ellis@xxxxxxx" <gene.ellis@xxxxxxx> wrote in
<news:1167956486.470392.139560@xx>:

So, my last employer sold me my work computer when I got laid off, so now I have a couple of questions. When I login to windows, I still have to enter in my username and password and still need to login to the domain that I used at work. Then I have to wait forever for the computer to figure out that it isn't connected to the old domain anymore, then it finally logs me into windows. How can I get rid of this domain on my computer and simply have it login into my computer as an administrator? Thanks so much! Anything else that I need to change to completely "divorce" myself from previous employer? Thanks so much.

~ g

Before anything else, you need to be able to log in as an administrator, either a local or domain user that is a member of the local administrators group on the machine. You should then set the password of the local user "administrator" to something you know.

When you remove the computer from the domain, you will no longer be able to log in as any domain user, so you must set it up so that can log in as a local administrator before you remove it from the domain.

You may also lose settings that are stored in your domain user profile, as you will have to log in as a different local user instead (even if the name is the same, it is not the same user). There are various ways to copy these settings from one profile to another. You likely should create a new local user for your daily use, as well as having the local administrator password. You could start to use this user for a while before you remove the machine from the domain, to ensure everything works (the login delay should go away for that user).

If you do not know the password for any administrator on the machine now,

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you may be able to get your previous employer to help out there. If not, there are boot disks that you can download that will let you reset the local administrator password (one of the reasons why physical access to a machine can negate a lot of security). If that fails, you could do a repair install of XP.

That last brings up the point that you should have a copy of XP to go along with the machine. If you did not get this, you may have a volume-licensed copy, which would quite likely not be legal once the machine is not owned by the licensee (your previous employer). This may also be the case with some other software on the machine as well.

Once you log in as a local admin, go to System Properties (control panel, or right-click My Computer and select Properties). Under the Computer Name tab, click on the Change... button – there you can switch from a member of a domain to a workgroup. You can name the workgroup, and should set it to match the workgroup name of any other computers that you might have. After you press OK it will ask you for an administrator login again to verify. If it says welcome to the workgroup, it is no longer a member of the domain, and will then want to reboot.

Other things that you may want to change (before domain removal):

- any drive mappings that look for domain servers
- network settings that point to invalid servers (DNS, WINS...)
- static network IP settings that are no longer valid
- NTFS filesystem permissions (need to allow for local user access)
- remove profiles for other domain users that may have used the machine
- remove programs such as VPN clients that connected to previous servers
- remove antivirus or other software that relied on company servers for updates
- remove network printers

And of course, keep a copy of the incriminating emails that you copied from the boss before you were laid off :)
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