

Folder Redirection Group Policy for My Documents

Source:

http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Windows/microsoft.public.windows.group_policy/2004-04/0015.html

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Date: 03/31/04

Date: Wed, 31 Mar 2004 09:50:06 -0800

My problem is that I can't create a Group Policy on the domain network that will redirect a user's My Documents folder to the user's home directory on the server. I am using Windows 2003 Server operating system. The client machines are using Windows 2000 professional. The My Documents Redirection policy is extremely useful as it backs up data to a central location on the server and it gives the user the illusion that the data is stored locally in My Documents. Anyway, I would like to get this working as it would prove very useful for a project demonstration. I used the following steps below in attempt to implement this folder redirection policy.

Step 1 On the Windows 2003 Server Domain Controller, I logged in as Administrator and created a test user account with a username of mhealy in Active Directory.

Step 2 Then I created a Home Directory on the root of drive D on the Server. I shared the folder and provided all users (everyone) with Full Control Permission to this folder.

Step 3 Then I provided a path to the shared folder by opening Active Directory Users and Computers, right clicking the test user account created from step 1 and then clicking properties from the context menu. On the Profile tab, under user profile, I typed the path information: \\cork\Home\%username% where cork is the name of the server or domain controller and the %username% variable is used instead of typing in the username.

Step 4 Under Home folder, I clicked Connect, and then clicked a network drive e.g. Z:. In to the To box, I typed \\cork\Home\%username% again where cork is the name of the server. Then I clicked OK.

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Step 5 Next, in the console tree of Active Directory Users and Computers, I right clicked the domain (CompanyX.com in my case) and then clicked properties from the context menu.

Step 6 On the Group Policy tab, I created a new GPO named Folder Redirect Policy, and then clicked Edit.

Step 7 Under User Configuration, I expanded Windows Settings, expanded Folder Redirection, right clicked My Documents and then clicked Properties.

Step 8 In the Setting list, click Basic – Redirect everyone's folder to the same location.

Step 9 Under Target folder Location in the drop down box, I selected redirect to the user's Home directory.

Step 10 On the setting tab, I clicked Redirect the folder back to the local user profile location when policy is removed.

Step 11 Finally, I clicked OK

Step 12 Then I went back to the Group Policy Window in Active Directory and moved the Folder Redirect Policy above the default domain policy by clicking the uplink arrow so that this policy would be given first priority.

Step 13 Then I clicked Apply and OK.

Step 14 Then I verified to see if this Folder Redirection policy was working or not by logging in using the test user account created in the first step. I logged on to the domain using the mhealy test account from a client machine running Windows professional. I right clicked the My Documents folder and clicked properties from the context menu. However, with bitter disappointment I discovered that the location of My Documents remained the same. This was the usual default location of C:\Document and Settings\mhealy\My Documents. Instead it should have read \\cork\Home\mhealy if the policy worked. Consequently, I decided to repeat the procedure and went back to Step 9 above to make a slight alternation. Under Target folder location in the drop down box, I selected redirect to a different file location. Having selected this option, I then inserted the UNC path to the home directory below by typing \\cork\Home%\username%. Then I clicked OK and place this policy on top like before. However, this didn't work either as the location of the Documents Folder remained the same.

As far as I remember, I shared the Home directory on the D drive of the server with a sharename of Home. This is the same name as the folder itself. Maybe, the reason why this is not working is because the profile path or home directory path are the same or else the method I used to create the Home directory is wrong from the instruction steps above. I would like to remind you that all the usual services such as DHCP and DNS are working on the network. I would also like to remind you that any user with a domain user account can browse My Network Places, search for cork (i.e. the name of the server running Windows 2003 Server) and locate the Home folder. Furthermore, the new redirection group policy is placed on top in the number one position ahead of the default domain policy. The My Documents Folder Redirected Policy is generally regarded as being the most common Group Policy. Anyway, I would like to succeed in redirecting the My Documents folders to their home directory on the server so that the default location of MyDocuments will be changed \\cork\Home\username.

Therefore, I would really appreciate if you could kindly offer some technical support on how to redirect the MyDocuments folder to the user home directory on the server. My apologies for such a lengthy description of the problem but I had to include the laborious steps so that any errors can be identified.

Trusting that you can offer some assistance on this problem.

Thanking You.

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