

Re: Any way to kill "Automatically search for network folders and printers"?

Source:

http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Windows/microsoft.public.windows.group_policy/2004-12/0190.html

From: Bruce Sanderson (*bsanders_at_junk.junk*)

Date: 12/10/04

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If you set the following registry entry (using regedit) on an XP workstation (or Windows 2003 Server) to 0 or 1, I think you will find that the the offending setting disappears from Windows Explorer for any user that logs on to that workstation. 0 is disable NoNetCrawling (check mark present); 1 is enable NoNetCrawling (check mark absent). At least, that is my experience on any Windows XP workstation or Windows Server 2003 I've tried it on.

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\policies\Explorer
NoNetCrawling (DWORD)

You don't even need to logoff and logon again, just close all open Windows Explorer Windows, then launch Windows Explorer.

The above registry setting is set via GPO by the combination of:

1. the ADM content from my earlier post
2. a GPO with the setting
 - Computer Configuration
 - Administrative Templates
 - Windows Components
 - Windows Explorer
 - Disable Automatically search for network folders and printers:
Enabled
3. the above GPO linked to the OU containing the target computer (workstation or server) computer account
4. allow enough time for the change to be propogated to all domain controllers (typically not more than a few minutes)
5. restart the target computer or run the gpupdate /force command

For GPOs linked to Computer accounts, only settings in the Computer Configuration (CLASS MACHINE) part of the GPO will be effective. For GPOs linked to User Accounts, only the User Configuration (CLASS USER) part of the GPO will be effective. You can see this using the Resultant Set of Policies tool in GPMC.

Computer specific GPOs are acquired by the computer when the OS starts. If

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you change a Computer Configuration setting in a GPO after the computer is started, it will not be acquired by the computer until either the automatic GPO refresh takes place (about every 12 hours) or the command

gpupdate

is run (use gpupdate /? to get an explanation of the available options).

I've just verified again that this works as I have described on Windows XP SP2 workstations and Windows Server 2003 Enterprise Edition in a Windows 2000 domain.

The advantage of making this a "computer" policy as opposed to a "user" policy is that it is applied automatically to all users that logon to the computer, no matter what OU that users account is in. It is also applied to those who logon using local user accounts.

--

Bruce Sanderson MVP

It is perfectly useless to know the right answer to the wrong question. "Gregg Hill" <bogus@nowhere.com> wrote in message news:00JdTmc3EHA.3616@TK2MSFTNGP11.phx.gbl...

> Bruce,

>

> I think our goals were different. I was trying to find a way to do it on
> all computers on the network, especially the workstations. When I used
> your suggestion as is, it did not remove the setting from the Windows
> Explorer > Tools > Folder Options >View menu. My experience with this
> obnoxious item has been that every time a new user logs on, it is set to
> crawl for folders and printers. I can uncheck it for all current users,
> but the next new user to log on gets it again by default (prior to any GPO
> stuff, just a normal installation).

>

> After changing it to CLASS USER, the item is no longer on the Windows
> Explorer > Tools > Folder Options >View menu. I haven't tried logging into
> anything as a new user to see if it actually stops the crawling.

>

> I'll go look at the thread you mentioned.

>

> Thank you!

>

> Gregg Hill

>

>

> "Bruce Sanderson" <bsanders@junk.junk> wrote in message
> news:u0462Yb3EHA.2624@TK2MSFTNGP11.phx.gbl...

>> Having read all of this stuff again, here's some observations:

>>

>> 1. settings put into the registry key
>> HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Explorer
>> are applied to all users that logon to a computer. That's why CLASS
>> MACHINE is used in this ADM - to set the "policy" for all users of some
>> computers. . This is explained in the KB articles 330929, 812669 and
>> 831129. . In the case I was interested in, the computers in question are
>> Windows 2003 Servers running Terminal Services.

>>

>> 2. Settings inside CLASS MACHINE show up in the Computer Configuration
>> part of the GPO. The implication is that GPOs with setting need to be

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>> applied to OUs with the Computer Accounts these settings are to be
>> applied to. This is what I did and my testing demonstrates to me that it
>> works as Mark Renoden said it would in the thread with the subject
>> "Windows Explorer NoNetCrawling" in the newsgroup
>> microsoft.public.win2000.group_policy.
>>
>> 3. Using CLASS USER, adding the setting in the User Configuration part of
>> a GPO and applying that GPO to User Accounts most likely accomplishes the
>> same objective, but the setting then applies to specific users
>> regardless of what computer they logon to, which is not quite what I
>> wanted to accomplish.
>>
>> 4. using GPO Loopback Processing, the CLASS USER approach as you did and
>> applying the GPO to the OU containing the Terminal Servers would most
>> likely accomplish what I wanted - I just didn't approach the problem from
>> that direction.
>>
>> --
>> Bruce Sanderson MVP
>>
>> It is perfectly useless to know the right answer to the wrong question.
>>
>>
>> "Gregg Hill" <bogus@nowhere.com> wrote in message
>> news:er5BQM12EHA.2156@TK2MSFTNGP10.phx.gbl...
>>> Bruce,
>>>
>>> I haven't read any articles yet, but I did try the suggested ADM that
>>> you showed. It does not remove the choice
>>>
>>> I was sure it was a user-specific entry, so I guessed at how to modify
>>> the ADM file to make it change HKCU instead of HLKM key. I changed:
>>>
>>> CLASS MACHINE ;This modifies the HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE portion of the
>>> registry
>>> to
>>> CLASS USER ;This modifies the HKEY_CURRENT_USER portion of the registry
>>>
>>> I then saved it.
>>>
>>> I guessed correctly and it now removes the "Automatically search for
>>> network folders and printers" entry from Windows Explorer. I am going to
>>> see if it works by logging on as a new user.
>>>
>>> I'll start in on those articles later this week. Thanks once again for
>>> all your fine help!
>>>
>>> Gregg Hill
>>>
>>>
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>>>
>>> "Bruce Sanderson" <bsanders@junk.junk> wrote in message
>>> news:urlH%23gm2EHA.1204@TK2MSFTNGP10.phx.gbl...
>>>>I agree: all of these "features" that attempt to keep the content of
>>>>Windows Explorer panes up to date are a pesky nuisance. This is
>>>>particular so in a Windows 2003 Terminal Services environment. I
>>>>surely wish there was a simple way to tell Windows Explorer and whatever
>>>>it interfaces with to completely turn off anything involved in keeping
>>>>the Windows Explorer contents current. This "feature" causes lots of
>>>>next to useless network traffic, uses a lot of CPU time in the user's
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>>>>session and results in the user's session being locked up for frequently
>>>>for long periods of time.
>>>>
>>>> Unfortunately, I've not yet found a complete solution, although I have
>>>> made some progress. I'd be interested in whatever you find out about
>>>> this.
>>>>
>>>> See these articles:
>>>>
>>>> http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=330929
>>>> http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=812669
>>>> http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=816375
>>>> http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?kbid=834350
>>>> http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=831129
>>>>
>>>> To answer your original question, create a custom ADM with the content
>>>> shown below. I've used this and when I enable the policy, the
>>>> "Automatically search for network folders and printers" disappears from
>>>> Windows Explorer's Tools, Folder Options, View panel, but telling
>>>> whether or not is having the desired affect is not entirely clear.
>>>> See
>>>> http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=E7D72FA1-62FE-4358-8360-8774EA8DB84
>>>> and http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=323639
>>>> for information about building and using Custom Administrative
>>>> Templates.
>>>>
>>>> CLASS MACHINE ;This modifies the HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE portion of the
>>>> registry
>>>>
>>>> CATEGORY !!WindowsComponents
>>>>   CATEGORY !!WindowsExplorer
>>>>     KEYNAME !!KeyMachinePoliciesExplorer
>>>>   ; allows turning on or off Explorer, Tools, Folder Options, View,
>>>>   Automatically search for network folders and printers
>>>>     POLICY !!PNoNetCrawling
>>>>       EXPLAIN !!ENoNetCrawling
>>>>       VALUENAME !!VNoNetCrawling
>>>>       VALUEON NUMERIC 1
>>>>       VALUEOFF NUMERIC 0
>>>>     END POLICY
>>>>   END CATEGORY
>>>> END CATEGORY
>>>>
>>>> ; the following strings section assigns character strings
>>>> ; to the variable names specified in the previous section
>>>> [strings]
>>>> WindowsComponents="Windows Components"
>>>> WindowsExplorer="Windows Explorer"
>>>> KeyMachinePoliciesExplorer="SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Explorer"
>>>>
>>>> PNoNetCrawling="Disable Automatically search for network folders and
>>>> printers"
>>>> ENoNetCrawling="This policy controls whether Windows Explorer (when
>>>> Windows Explorer window is open) will periodically search the network
>>>> for new shared folders and printers.\n\nIf this policy is Enabled,
>>>> Windows Explorer, Tools, Folder Options, View, "Automatically search
>>>> for network folders and printers" is not present and Windows Explorer
>>>> behaves as there is no check mark (the automatic searching feature is
>>>> Off).\n\nIf this policy is Disabled, Windows Explorer, Tools, Folder
>>>> Options, View, "Automatically search for network folders and printers"
>>>> does not display and Windows Explorer behaves as if the check mark is
>>>> present (the automatic searching feature is On).\n\nIf this policy is
```

