

Re: Oops! The first sentence got lost in copy & paste...

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- *From:* "James Blevins" <james.blevins@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 21 Nov 2006 10:50:30 -0800
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Thanks for the reply. I am familiar with VNC, but VPN is new territory for me. Do you have a recommendation as far as VPN resources for an utter n00b?

I have my doubts that we'll have enough bandwidth to handle displaying the graphics remotely. I mean we're talking 3D part assemblies with perhaps dozens of individual components here. Our engineers use workstations with 2GB RAM, dual Xeon processors, and an NVIDIA QuadroFX 4000 graphics card. My guess is that our engineer will have to use a VPN to get in and then maybe we should implement the Autodesk Vault in order to enforce file check-in and check-out. Yes... Perhaps this will work.

It's funny that you should ask if I were from TN. I actually lived right off Exit 10 of I-81, just over the TN state line into Bristol, VA. Ironically, you're from Rhea Co, and my elementary school was named Rhea Valley Elementary (in VA). ::SIGH:: I miss the mountains...

mtstream wrote:

As you've discovered CAD isn't very friendly to remote users – graphic intensive and very large files.

Your best bet is VPN – this takes care of step one – providing remote access into the network. There's no need for a point to point dedicated connection. Any VPN solution w/ high speed internet will work. The next question is where the work should be done?

If you give him a home workstation (assuming he has to have a desktop for CAD) then he will probably need to copy the file down locally, work on it then copy it back to the server (opening the file from the server will cause it to take forever to save). Remembering to do all these steps will be entirely on him – there's no way for you to ensure he gets the most current file where it should be.

The other option is desktop control – this is different than remote desktop or Terminal Server. The desktop control software is actually controlling the

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office machine so all the work is done using it's resources – only the video it transferred back. You can test this with a free version of VNC – if it's close to acceptable performance try some of the others to see if they're faster. By using VPN first then VNC you won't have to open any extra ports in the firewall. He may not like the video quality.

BTW – you're not from TN are you? I went to high school (Rhea co) with a James Blevins.

"James Blevins" wrote:

My message should read:

Recently, our company president promised one of our design engineers that he could start working from home on days he didn't feel like coming in to the office. Now I, as Network Administrator have been tasked with making that promise a reality.

Here is the pertinent information:

- * We are running a Windows Server 2003 domain with a .local extension.
- * All clients are running Windows XP+SP2
- * The engineer will need to use Autodesk Inventor and Mechanical Desktop in order to do his job.

At first I thought that perhaps he could use Terminal Services to remotely access his desktop and work that way. Unfortunately, due to the intense graphical requirements of 3-D CAD applications, my idea will not work. In fact, we already tested this setup on our local gigabit network and it was unbearable trying to even rotate a part assembly. I can only begin to imagine what would happen over a much slower connection.

So the idea of using RDP or a VPN to access the engineer's workstation remotely is out of the question.

Our other option would be to set up an identical machine at his home, and permit it to log in to the domain. I'm not sure what ports would have to be open, or if by opening those ports I would be opening up the network to remote exploitation.

If it's not reasonable to open up the network, then our next option would be to make a copy of all the engineering drawings to an external USB drive, and then before he decides to work a day at home and whenever he comes in to work, he would synchronize any changes he made. This poses the problem of being able to ensure accurate synchronization—that we wouldn't accidentally overwrite files that should remain unchanged, or that we fail to overwrite a file that needs to be overwritten. Shouldn't there be software that could do this?

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The other thing I was thinking about was the possibility of having a dedicated connection of some sort that only connected from the engineer's house to our network. I believe this is possible, but I cannot for the life of me recall the proper term for such a connection. If anyone knows what I am trying to talk about, please let me know.

So that's where I stand with this. If I have posted this to the wrong group, would someone be so kind as to point me in the right direction (after flaming me if it makes you feel better ;-)?)

Thanks in advance for any help.