

Re: How do Unix grep, find, sort?

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Windows/microsoft.public.windows.server.scripting/2005-02/0732.html>

From: Roger Abell (*mvpNOSpam_at_asu.edu*)

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Unix find is so highly evolved one could actually consider it a little library of routines invocable on switch. I recall back around 1996 after starting Windows admin after many years in Unix, asking some MS folks where was the "find" utility. They just said, "find, we have find" – a total disconnect in meaning which I attempted to clarify but finally gave up.

You can load the Unix tools, either from third-parties, or look for Services For Unix (SFU) from MS (they did have a free offer some time back). That will get you going in the ways you are used to, with find piped to, with the *greps, etc..

Some of the ability exists with the old commandline syntax, which is actually a legacy from DOS. If you are like me you will find it rather arcane, limited, and systactically ugly.

You may be interested in the next generation command shell MSH, which is in a somewhat open beta at this time – it is (more than) something of a hybrid of the best features of most all previous shell languages in all OSs – at least that is (one of) the objectives. However, its piping capability is much more powerful as one passes objects down the pipe . . .

OK, keeping with the initial comment, that find is really a little library, you will have to do some things by evolving your own little set of vbs scripts.

In your example case you might write a routine that does the replace in file, pretty much

- getargs -> file, search string, replace string
- open file, open temp file
- per infile line use replace function
- close files and replace old with new

locate file, calling replace, pretty much

- get handle to folder
- for each file in folder
 - test age (based on create, access, or modify time)
 - invoke the replace routine
- for each folder, recurse if desired

Now, you can design these so that they are reusable, and you can package them into script

componnets and reference them from a very short driver vhs that you write as a one-off on need. You could also inline the replace into one script and it would be rather short, but then you are in the ball game of reversioning for the next different need (something I find myself doing too much).

But that is all down the road from where you are right now, and you will not find a single library of such script components that has evolved within the community (which is how we evolved find, the grep's, lex/yak, etc.) Right now it is still much a roll your own world, in Windows although with a lot of code sharing by way of examples and also of so-and-so's library, etc..

So getting the Interx portion of the SFU loaded may be the way for you to get immediately productive (not to mention having vi, etc. available).

However, do go down the road with some script language. You will find it is extremely powerful in Windows – much more so than any shell language in Unix – if only because of the ability to instance just about anything and make use of its methods.

Oh yea, do check out MSH.

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"noleander" <noleander@discussions.microsoft.com> wrote in message
news:55BCEE9A9-01A9-4D10-AA5B-E7F1C21095D8@microsoft.com...
> Hi. I'm new to Windows, after programming for 20 years in Unix. I'm
willing
> to give Windows a fair shot, but I'm having a heck of a time getting
started.
> Here is a typical thing I'll need to do:
>
> *** Find all text files that are less than one month old (under a given
> folder) and within those files replace all occurances of string "xyz" with
> string "abc".
>
> I'm used to the Unix approach, piping commands like grep, find, and ex
> together.
>
> But I've been studying VBScript all day, and I swear I cannot figure out
how
> to do the above task.
>
> My question is: What is the normal scripting approach in Windows to
> accomplish the task I describe above? Pointers to sample code would be
much
> appreciated!
>
> Neal
>