

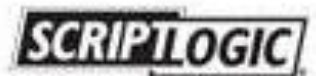


Windows
Desktop Management



DESKTOP AUTHORITY®
VERSION 8

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Five (and a half) Things to Know about Desktop Authority V8.1

A ScriptLogic Technical Brief

Introduction

When we released Desktop Authority 8.0, there were 5 (and a half) things you needed to know, about how the new features in 8.0 worked. Now, we've released 8.1, and 4 (and a half) of those original things haven't changed, but one has, and it's certainly for the better. So here are the new 5 (and a half) things you need to know about Desktop Authority 8.1.

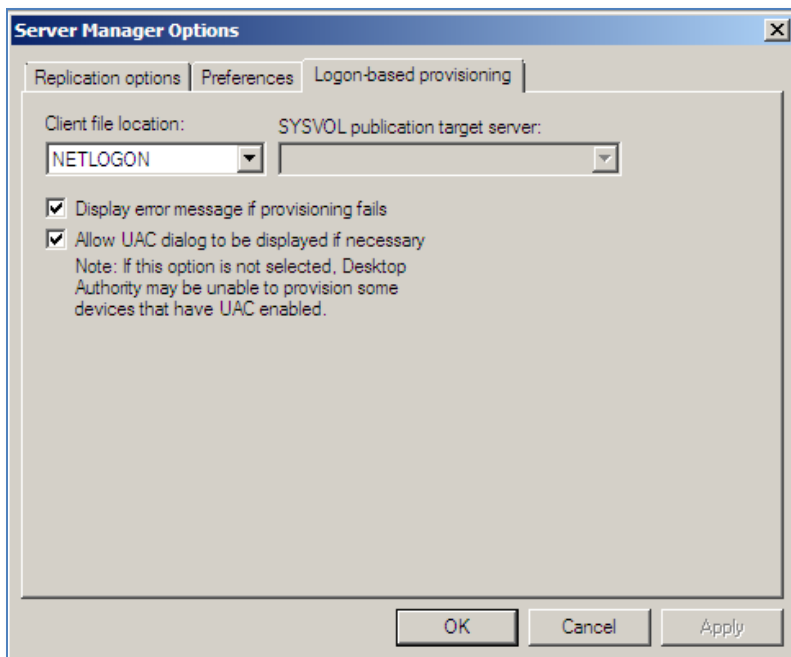
The One Thing You Need to Know About Desktop Authority 8.1

Smart Client Provisioning

With Desktop Authority 8.0, we introduced Group Policy based client deployment. We made this change because the new security and client management model in the newest versions of Windows restricted our ability to use our traditional login-based deployment. While this worked great for our customers who had full domain admin privileges over their network, it created new challenges for customers who were OU admins, or who had rights only over portions of their domain.

If Group Policy based deployment works for your environment, it's still there for you to use. But for Desktop Authority 8.1, we focused on bringing back the simplicity of our login-based deployment, but designed for the new security requirements of Windows Vista and Windows 7. Desktop Authority 8.1 features Smart Client Provisioning: The industry's first flexible, automatic client deployment system.

Smart Client Provisioning analyzes each computer at install time to find the simplest, most effective way



of installing the Desktop Authority client, in most cases eliminating any need to interrupt the end user. Administrators now have a choice. Administrators can use Group Policy Deployment to install the client, or they can use Login Based Deployment, which will analyze each computer and find the best way to install the Desktop Authority client to each computer.

Smart Client Provisioning also offers flexible options for specifying the shares needed for installation files and Desktop Authority data files. This improves support for OU Admins, and other administrators who do not have full domain-admin rights.

The Four (and a half) Things You Need to Know about Desktop Authority 8.0 and 8.1

Computer-Based Management in Desktop Authority

By far, the biggest change for Desktop Authority V8.0 is the addition of Computer-Based Management (CBM) profile elements. Unlike elements in previous versions of Desktop Authority, computer-based management elements execute at the machine level, not the user level. So they can run even if no user is logged into the computer. Combined with the new Wake On LAN and scheduling features, this opens up new options like waking computers after business hours to patch them or install software. The computer-based management elements are managed by the new ScriptLogic CBM service installed on all managed machines.

The Following Computer-Based Management elements are available:

- **Data Collection** – collect inventory and other data from computers that do not have an interactive user
- **Application Launcher** – launch applications, command-lines and batch files
- **Software Distribution** – install MSIs to all users on a computer, or when no user is logged in
- **Patch Deployment** – patch and update computers before users log in
- **Service Packs** – install service packs outside business hours
- **Registry** – change registry keys in the HKLM hive
- **Wake On LAN** – set machines to wake up other computers outside business hours

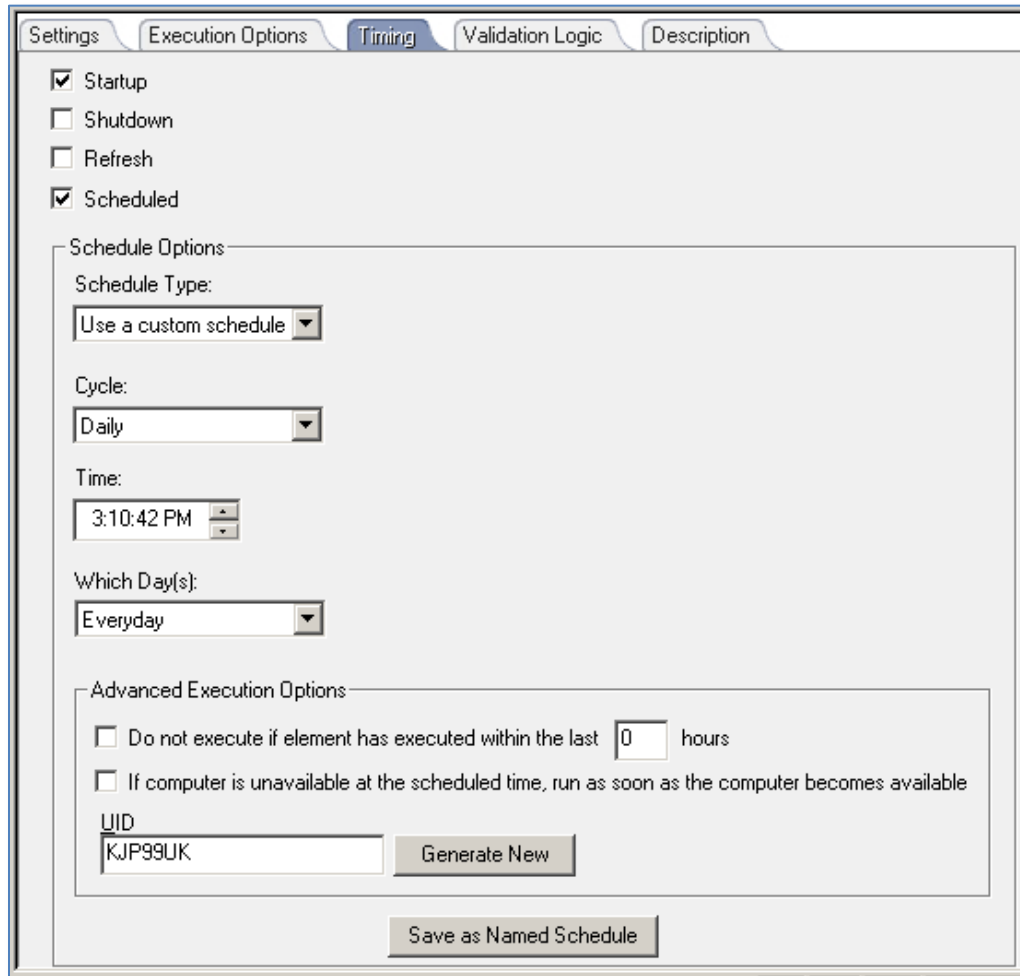
New Timing Elements

Computer-based management elements have four timing events that are independent of the user profile elements. They are:

- **Startup:** These elements will run as soon as the CBM service starts in the system startup process, before the user logon screen loads.
- **Shutdown:** These elements will execute in the shutdown sequence, after the user has logged off, but before the machine shuts down.
- **Refresh:** The CBM service will refresh the profiles every 60 minutes. Elements set to Refresh will execute during the refresh process. This refresh process may not happen at the same time as the user element refresh process.
- **Scheduled:** Computer-based management elements can be set to run at a scheduled time, including on a recurring schedule.

Scheduled Elements

The scheduling system available in Desktop Authority V8.0 is very flexible, and very powerful. Elements can be configured to run once, at a scheduled time, or on a recurring basis. Recurrence options include daily, weekly, monthly, weekday only, and more. Other options include preventing a schedule from running if it has already executed within a set number of hours, and settings to control how a machine behaves if it was not running when the schedule was supposed to run.



The screenshot shows the 'Timing' tab of a configuration window. It features several sections: 'Startup' with checkboxes for Startup, Shutdown, Refresh, and Scheduled; 'Schedule Options' with a 'Schedule Type' dropdown (set to 'Use a custom schedule'), a 'Cycle' dropdown (set to 'Daily'), a 'Time' spinner (set to '3:10:42 PM'), and a 'Which Day(s)' dropdown (set to 'Everyday'); and 'Advanced Execution Options' with checkboxes for 'Do not execute if element has executed within the last 0 hours' and 'If computer is unavailable at the scheduled time, run as soon as the computer becomes available'. At the bottom, there is a 'UID' field containing 'KJP99UK', a 'Generate New' button, and a 'Save as Named Schedule' button.

Figure 1: Scheduling options for computer-based management elements

Named Schedules

If you have routine tasks that need to run on the same schedule, you can define one element with the desired schedule, and then click "Save as Named Schedule." This lets you define a name for that schedule, and use that named schedule for all of the related elements.

Notifications

Computer-based management elements also benefit from a very flexible user notification system. You can notify users in advance of taking action, allow them to postpone action, control reboot options and even customize the text they will see in the notification. These notifications are controlled by the new ScriptLogic CBM User Experience service deployed to managed computers.

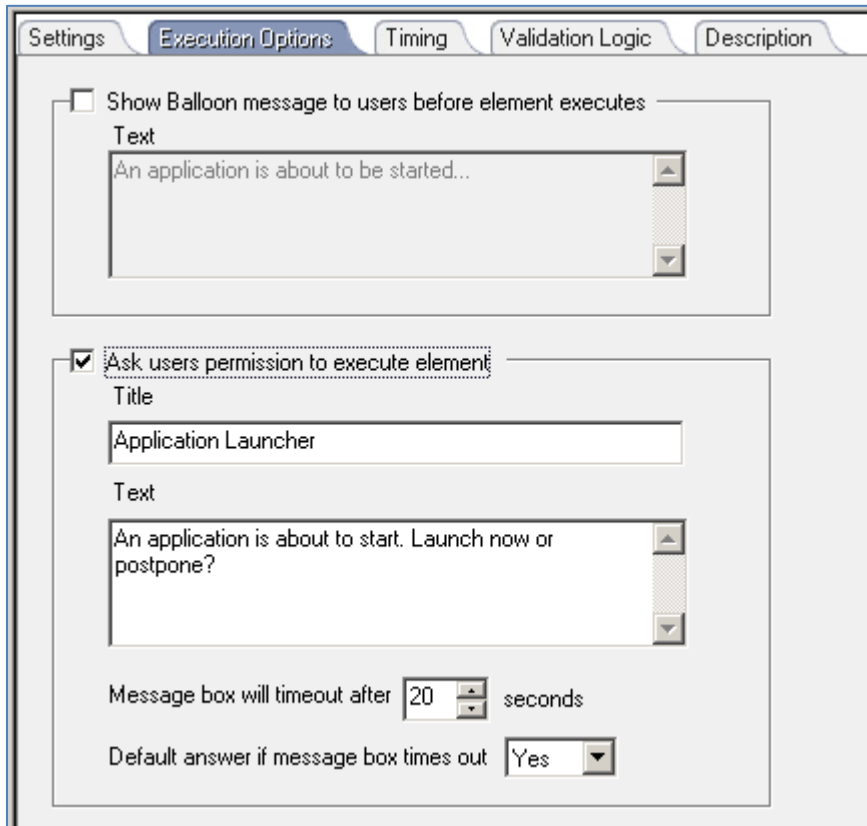


Figure 2: Notification options in Desktop Authority V8.0

Using Wake on LAN

Desktop Authority Wake On LAN is a flexible, robust implementation of a technology that traditionally, could as many problems as it solves. Conventional Wake On LAN often requires special router configurations to work, and lack redundancy to ensure that the computers you need to wake up, actually wake up.

Desktop Authority Wake On LAN uses the power of Validation Logic to get around router configuration problems and allow you to create as many 'beacons' as you need to wake-up machines.

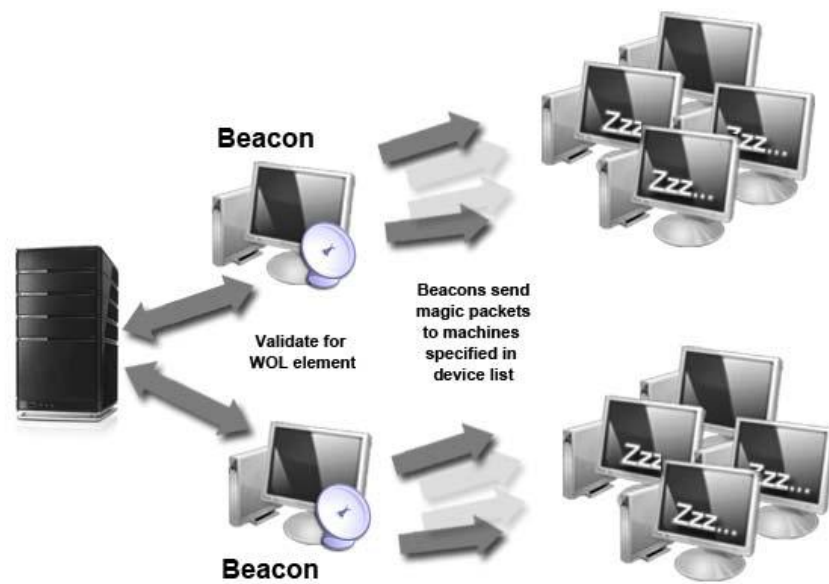


Figure 3: Using Wake On LAN beacons to bypass router issues

To create a beacon, you simply add a new Wake On LAN profile element. In that element, you can specify the computers you wish to wake by computer name, MAC address and TCP/IP address. You can pick computers from inventory, or even import a CSV separated list.

Once the list of computers is complete, you can use the scheduling elements in Validation Logic to depict when those computers should be awakened, and what machines should act as beacons and send the WOL packets. This makes it easy to specify beacons in each subnet, and to specify redundant beacons if necessary.

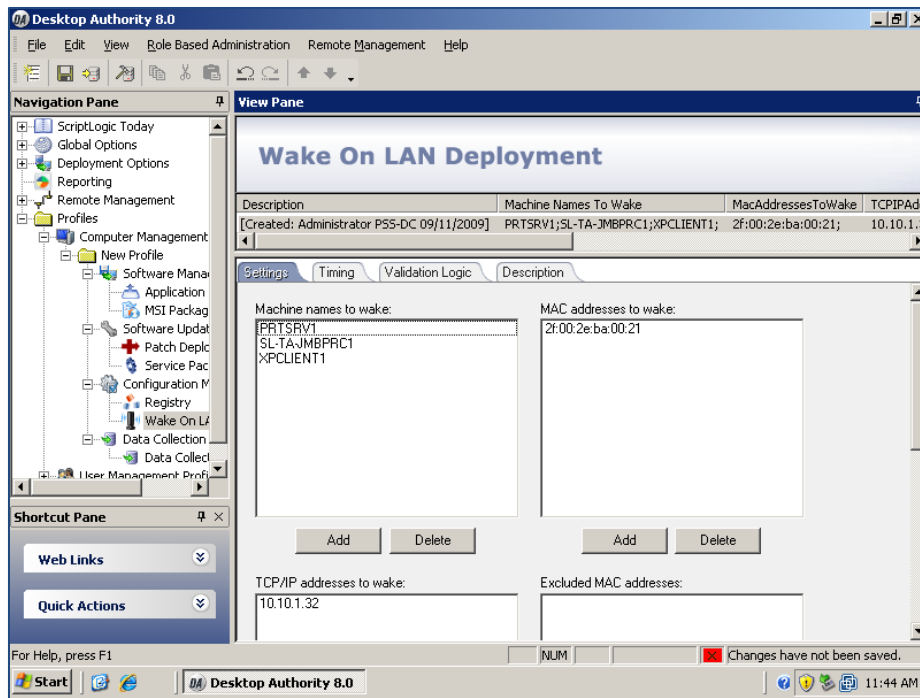


Figure 4: Creating Wake On LAN profile elements

Example:

You have a remote office in Pittsburgh that has 15 users. Routers block the WOL packets from crossing to that subnet from the main office. You need to wake those computers up at 2 a.m. on Tuesday so they can be patched. You have a small file/print server in the Pittsburgh office that is always left on.

To wake these computers with Desktop Authority, you just do the following:

1. Create a Wake On LAN Deployment profile element
2. Click Add to pick all of the machines in the Pittsburgh office from hardware inventory
3. On the Timing tab, pick “Scheduled” and choose Tuesday at 2 a.m.
4. On the Validation Logic tab, set to validate if the computer name equals the name of the print server in the Pittsburgh office.

Now, on Tuesday morning at 2 a.m., the server in Pittsburgh will send the WOL packet to each machine in the list. This completely bypasses any router configuration issues that plague typical Wake On LAN systems.

Other Resources:

You can find more information about Wake On LAN in Desktop Authority in the Administrator’s Guide on pages 182 – 184.

Managing Servers with Desktop Authority 8.0

In Version 8.0, Desktop Authority has moved beyond the desktop. With the inclusion of computer-based management, Desktop Authority can now be used to manage servers. Since computer-based

management elements can run without a logged in user, any CBM profile element can be applied to a server to allow admins to perform a variety of management tasks.

This means that Desktop Authority can now show server hardware and software asset information in inventory reports. Users who have subscribed to the Patch Deployment option for Desktop Authority can now use DA to patch servers as well. The updated patch database now has support for server operating system patches as well as patches for most common server applications.

Server management now supports tasks such as:

- Installing new software to a server
- Launching applications, batch files, command-lines or other executables on a server
- Patching server operating systems and server applications
- Deploying service packs to servers
- Making registry changes to change server configurations and settings
- Collecting and reporting on hardware and software inventory on servers to give a clear view of all of the assets in the organization

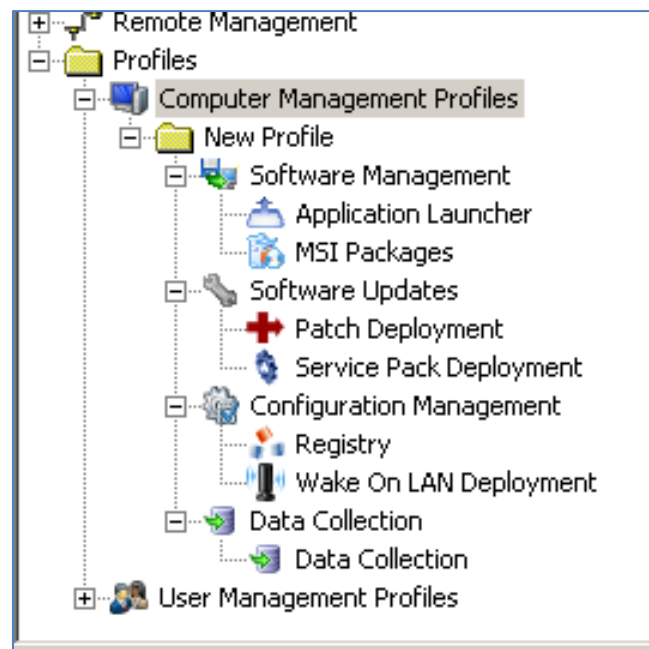


Figure 5: CBM elements for server management

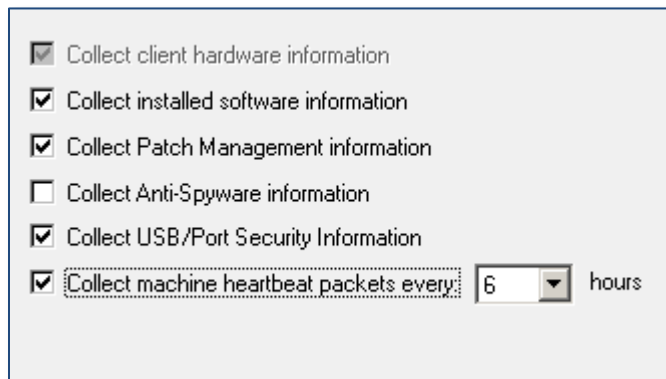
With the scheduling available for computer-based management elements in Desktop Authority V8.0, server management tasks can be completely automated. Validation Logic can be used to apply elements scheduled for different times to different servers, enabling you to stagger routine maintenance to make sure every server in a server farm or cluster is not undergoing maintenance at the same time.

Since servers generally operate 24/7, they make ideal Wake On LAN beacons for waking workstations for off-hours maintenance tasks. To use a server as a Wake On LAN beacon, you create a profile element that lists all of the computers that server should wake, and use Validation Logic to limit execution to that server name.

Changes in Inventory and Other Data Collection in Desktop Authority 8.0

This is the “half” that you needed to know. Prior to Desktop Authority 8.0, all data collection for hardware/software inventory, port security, patch data and other reporting information was completely automatic. Every machine reported all of the data. There were some undocumented registry keys that did let you turn off data collection, but it was on an “all or nothing” basis.

With version 8, all data collection is turned **OFF** by default. Use the Data Collection profile element to specify what data gets collected from what machines.



Collect client hardware information
 Collect installed software information
 Collect Patch Management information
 Collect Anti-Spyware information
 Collect USB/Port Security Information
 Collect machine heartbeat packets every: 6 hours

Figure 6: Data collection options in V8.0

Other Resources:

Find more information about Data Collection in Desktop Authority in the Administrator’s Guide on pages 180 – 181.

Conclusion

Desktop Authority V8.0 is the most flexible, robust and powerful version of Desktop Authority yet. The new deployment, management and inventory options give administrators new tools for completely managing their systems in the easiest way possible... point, click, done!

For more information, visit ScriptLogic at www.scriptlogic.com