

Introduction

This White Paper describes the scenario where Microsoft Systems Management Server (SMS) is already used in an environment and how Specops Deploy still will add real value to the software management administration situation.

Although Specops Deploy have the all the software management features that SMS have, targeting based in hardware, software, Active Directory objects etc, VPN support, reporting, installation in the background Specops Deploy also have a number of features that will add value to an existing SMS installation where SMS and Specops Deploy both are used together to create a complete software management picture.

Specops Deploy is built on the Active Directory Group Policy model built into all Windows Operating Systems beginning with Windows 2000. This means that there is no extra full time running service required when using Specops Deploy and the existing AD infrastructure is used, therefore the actual implementation of Specops Deploy is very short and extra system resources on the client is not needed.

How Specops Deploy adds value to SMS

Specops Deploy is no SMS extension and can be used in any environment without SMS, this is normally the case, but in the case SMS is already used in an environment, Specops Deploy will still add value due to the fact that Specops Deploy have features that SMS do not have, the most important of these features are:

- **Installation during the first computer boot** – Specops Deploy does not have to do inventory and send it to a server that calculates what software that need to be installed. This is all done in runtime by the Specops Deploy Group Policy Client Side Extension, even for inventory related installations. This mean that Specops Deploy can be used to install Anti Virus software from the first time a new computer is installed and the first boot is performed without having to wait for any SMS collections to be calculated. Since Group Policy is linked directly to Active Directory, this is also true if the Active Directory containers, Organizational Units (OU), Sites and Domains, are used to determine where to install software. Software that is not time critical is still installed with SMS in this scenario.

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- **Installation during boot/logon** – Specops Deploy is a Group Policy Extension, this means that it is very integrated with the operating system itself, and it is possible to manage software during the actual boot or logon, not after this has occurred. This means that software can be installed, upgraded and removed before for example the user have logged on and thereby reducing the need for reboots since the number of reboots for software packages due to end users being able to start processes that creates locks on resources that is being replaced or removed by a software management action. In this scenario software packages that is known to replace files that is commonly held by for example the end user is managed with Specops Deploy and all other software is managed by SMS.
- **Delegation of Software Installations** – Since Specops Deploy is a Group Policy extension, it is possible to create a new Group Policy Object and connect to a single Active Directory OU or Group and delegate the permissions on this Group Policy Object to for example an user or administrator that is responsible for only this OU or group thereby software used by only this specific subset of users or computer can be managed locally, in SMS this type of delegation is not as easily and dynamically available. In this scenario software used by only certain groups or parts of the organization is managed using Specops Deploy and Software used by larger parts of the organization is managed by SMS. Specops Deploy is managed using the Group Policy Management Console (GPMC), this mean that the administrators most likely already know how to manage Specops Deploy and thereby the need for training is very little, Specops Deploy also comes with an extra administrative interface that is even easier to use if the user that should manage software does not know how group policy works that can be used instead of GPMC.
- **Native Windows Installer per user installations** – Specops Deploy uses the native Windows Installer – Specops Deploy does uses the native APIs for Windows Installer installations, not command line installations, this makes Specops Deploy a good choice when it comes to Windows Installer packages in a managed environment, i.e. the end users are not are not local administrators, for deploying software on a per-user installation bases. In this scenario SMS is used for all software installed on a computer level and Specops Deploy for software installed on a user level where the users are non-admins.

Conclusion

Even in scenarios where SMS is already installed Specops Deploy will add value and creating a more complete solution for managing software. SMS is used to manage the bulk of software and Specops Deploy is used to manage the software where there are need not covered by the functionality.

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