COOPERTEAM

White Paper

DeskTop Manager versus Domino Administrator V7

1. Introduction

Notes administrators spend a large amount of their time managing the Notes clients. Troubleshooting, maintenance and update requires in many cases an on site intervention.
Up to version 6, Lotus Notes did not provide any possibilities to interact and take remote actions. This meant that any large scale changes on the client side required internally developed tools or third party product like DeskTop Manager.

With version 6 was introduced new parameters options and policies. These features provided by the Domino Administrator are very useful and the validity for using third party solution needs to be carefully evaluated. Version 7 brings further improvements in this respect.

This document is set out to objectively compare the product and provide a technical guide of the feature set.

2. Method

The study was conducted to provide a simple, straightforward explanation of the DeskTop Manager features and pinpoint the specific ones which are not present in the Domino Administrator. To complete the comparison, the features have been rated in terms of their usefulness for the Administrator. The rating has been marked from + to +++, from the least to the most interesting feature with comments on the scope of application.

3. Desktop Manager Overview

Desktop Manager provides a complete remote administration of your companywide Lotus Notes clients. All aspects of Client administration and maintenance can be defined and managed centrally. Your administrators will be able to make necessary changes on each Desktop without wasting time in moving from one desk to another: Rule definition regarding user preference, deployment of new applications, administration process launch such Fix up, compact, updatall... Users can also rely on an automated system that ensures that their Lotus Notes configuration remains conform to Company standard and therefore guarantees optimum performance.

The product is made of two main parts which are quite distinct although complementary:

Notes client audit

- Audit of the workstation
- Audit of the Lotus Notes installation & configuration

Management of the client

- Maintenance operations
- Configuration changes

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4. Audit of the client desktop

4.1. Workstation audit

This first part of the audit is to gather information base on the workstation itself. The table below presents the information provided after the audit by DeskTop Manager.

Subject	DeskTop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional Comments
Notes shortcuts	YES	NO	+++	Useful for upgrades
Processor	YES	NO	++	Useful for upgrades
Memory	YES	NO	+++	
Screen Resolution	YES	NO		
Local Hard Drives (Size – Free space)	YES	NO	+++	Useful for upgrades
Network Identity	YES	YES if NT synchronization has been activated		
Workstation Name	YES	YES		
Network Addresses	YES	YES (active only)		
Workstation type (laptop)	YES	NO		
Workstation user rights	YES	NO		
OS	YES	YES	+++	Useful for upgrades
Service Pack	YES	NO	+++	
Local settings	YES	NO	+	Allows comparison with the Notes settings
Time zone	YES	NO	+	Allows comparison with the Notes settings
Environment variable (PATH)	YES	NO	+	
Temporary directory	YES	NO		
User Profile directory	YES	NO		
Installed programs, version and installation directory	YES	NO	+	

Comments:

Desktop Manager provides more information that the Domino Administrator on the hardware and software of the audited workstations. This is an extremely useful feature when looking for an inventory of your existing workstations prior to an upgrade.

4.2.   Lotus Notes installation & configuration audit

Desktop Manager analyses the client installation configuration as well as the user preferences or/and replicator page options. The presentation below follows the order within DeskTop Manager.

4.2.1. General Information

Subject	DeskTop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional Comments
Client Version	YES	YES	+++	Useful for version update
Client Type	YES	YES		
Program directory	YES	NO	+++	
Data directory	YES	NO	+++	
Notes.ini access path	YES	NO	++	
Path & Names of cache.dsk and desktop.dsk	YES	NO		
Path & Name of the valid ID file	YES	NO	+++	Allows the link between the user and its Notes client.
Location document used	YES	NO		

4.2.2. Files

Subject	DeskTop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional Comments
Notes.ini				
Path	YES	NO	+++	Useful for update
Size	YES	NO		
Creation date	YES	NO		
Last modified date	YES			
Attached files	YES	NO	+++	Allows visualization of content
Presence of other notes.ini files	YES	NO	+++	Useful for update
ID File				
Name & Path	YES	NO		
User Name	YES	NO		
Expiration date	YES	NO		Expiration date may be visualized in CERTLOG.NSF but does not always match the active ID date.
Size	YES	NO		
Creation date	YES	NO		
Last modified date	YES	NO		Allows recovery in order to create backup copies.
Attached files	YES	NO	+++	Useful for manual recertification
cache.dsk file				
Size	YES	NO	+	Useful for evaluation of size
Creation date	YES	NO		
Last modified date	YES	NO		
Maximum size	YES	NO		
desktop.dsk file				
Path				
Size	YES	NO		Useful for evaluation of size

Creation date	YES	NO		
Last modified date	YES	NO		
Number of referenced databases	YES	NO		

4.2.3. User preferences

Subject	DeskTop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional Comments
SmartIcons settings	YES	NO		
Database settings	YES	NO		
International settings	YES	NO	++	Allows you to verify and compare differences.
Mail settings	YES	NO	+	
Ports settings	YES	NO		
Execution Control List	YES	NO	+++	Allows the verification of the administration ECL.

4.2.4. Execution control list

Subject	Desktop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional comments
List Entries	YES	NO		Allows to check consistency with the administration ECL.
Permissions	YES	NO		

4.2.5. Cross-certifications

Subject	Desktop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional comments
Notes Certificates	YES	NO	+	Allows checking presence of unwanted certificates
Internet Certificates	YES	NO		

4.2.6. Workspace

Subject	DeskTop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional Comments
Display options	YES	NO		Interesting for troubleshooting
Names and colors of pages	YES	NO		
Names of servers hosting databases present in the workspace	YES	NO	++	Interesting when replacing the server
List of databases (page, replica ID, server, file name)	YES	NO	++	Interesting for troubleshooting
List of removed databases	YES	NO		

4.2.7. Local database inventory

Subject	DeskTop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional Comments
Number for databases	YES	NO		
Number of models	YES	NO		
Number of de databases that could not be opened (encryption, ACL, corruption)	YES	NO	+	Useful for troubleshooting
Number of de databases requiring fix up	YES	NO	+	
Number of documents in mail. box	YES	NO	++	
Number of documents in SMTP. box	YES	NO	++	
Replication alerts (30 days)	YES	NO		
Total size	YES	NO	++	Useful for evaluation of size
List of databases in error	YES	NO		Useful for troubleshooting
Replicated databases				
Name and path	YES	NO	++	Useful when replacing the server
Replica server	YES	NO	++	
Number of documents	YES	NO		
Last emission	YES	NO		
Last reception	YES	NO		
Alert	YES	NO		Useful for troubleshooting
Document database				
Name & Path	YES	NO	++	Identify the NO available databases
Replica ID	YES	NO		
ODS version	YES	NO	++	Allows the comparison of the Notes version and the ODS version
Last modified date	YES	NO		
Number of documents	YES	NO		
Folder Size	YES	NO		
% usage	YES	NO	++	Allows to pinpoint NO optimized databases
Encryption level	YES			
Associated model	YES	NO	+	
Model				
Name & Path	YES	NO	++	Identify the NO available models
Replica ID	YES	NO		
ODS version	YES	NO		
Last modified date	YES	NO		
Number of documents	YES	NO		
Folder Size	YES	NO		
Model Name	YES	NO		

4.2.8. User's current mail file

Subject	DeskTop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional Comments
General information				Most of the information can be accessed with the Domino Administrator only by consulting the properties for each database, which makes it a time consuming process.
Name and path	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)		
Mail server	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)		
Size	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)		
Number of documents	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)		
Quota size	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)		
ODS version	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)		
Name and path of local archive	YES	NO		
Database title	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)		
Replica ID	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)		
Name of associated model file	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)		
Server hosting the model	YES	NO		
Warning level	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)		
Model name	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)	+	
Category and name	YES	YES (if database hosted on server)		
Local replica				
Name and path	YES	NO		
Number of replicas	YES	NO		
Date of last emission	YES	NO	+	Useful for troubleshooting
Date of last reception	YES	NO	+	
Size	YES	NO		
Number of documents	YES	NO		
Differences with the server (nb of docs)	YES	NO	++	Useful for troubleshooting
Model name	YES	NO		
Category and name	YES	NO		
ACL				
Entries name	YES	NO		Useful for troubleshooting
Access level	YES	NO		
Public accesses	YES	NO		
Types	YES	NO		
Administration server	YES	NO		
Updating Authors/Readers fields	YES	NO		
Presence of delegations	YES	NO		
Alerts	YES	NO		

4.2.9. Audit of the personal Client elements

Subject	DeskTop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional Comments
Location document (as present on the workstation)	YES	NO	+++	Allows to pinpoint configuration issues
Connection document (as present on the workstation)	YES	NO	+++	
Account document (as present on the workstation)	YES	NO	++	
Replicator Page by location				
Location name	YES	NO		Interesting for troubleshooting
Number of activated databases	YES	NO		
Activation status for mail.box	YES	NO	++	
Activation status by database	YES	NO		Interesting for troubleshooting
Replica ID	YES	NO		
Database name	YES	NO	+++	
Server name	YES	NO	+++	
Database type	YES	NO		
Replication direction	YES	NO		
Type of replication (complete, selective)	YES	NO		
Agenda profile and delegation (as present on the workstation)	YES	YES (if database is hosted by server)		Most of the information can be accessed via Domino Administrator only by consulting the properties for each database, which makes it a time consuming process.
Absence agent (as present on the workstation)	YES	YES (if database is hosted by server)		
Archive profile (as present on the workstation)	YES	YES (if database is hosted by server)		
Mail rules (as present on the workstation)	YES	YES (if database is hosted by server)		
Directory profile (as present on the workstation)	YES	NO		Interesting for troubleshooting
Internet Profile (as present on the workstation)	YES	NO		
Local log analysis (by keywords)	YES	NO		

Comments:

Here is a strong point for Desktop Manager. The Domino Administrator cannot provide such a complete audit feature of the Notes client. However any required changes would need a foreknowledge of the Notes installation and configuration in order to successfully update, change, merge or consolidate it. Desktop Manager reveals to be a critical tool when it comes to provide in depth audit of the desktop and of their Notes installation.

5. Management of the Notes client

This is the second type of features provided by Desktop Manager. This is also on these features that the Domino Administrator has been most improved, especially when it comes to user preferences. Desktop Manager includes the following features, aimed at controlling the workstation.

- Profiles, which are applied upon your selected criteria when the client connects, are interesting as they keep the same configuration for a given user group.
- Tasks, which are usually run once or on a regular basis, are useful when it comes to change the configuration setting of a workstation or to run maintenance tasks.

5.1.   Profiles, to modify the configuration of the client workstation

Modifications may affect the following items: desktop, user preferences, location documents, connection documents, account documents and replicator page(s) options.

Subject	DeskTop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional Comments
Modification of location documents				
Modification of all locations	YES	YES		Requires to change the names.nsf
Selection of location to modify	YES	NO	++	
Selection of connection documents to send	YES	Dial Up only	++	Interesting for mobile users or within a consolidation process
Selection of account documents to send	YES	YES		
Selection of location documents to send	YES	NO	++	
Databases				
Purge of Log.nsf	YES	NO		
Addition of database icons to the desktop	YES	NO	+	Interesting for troubleshooting or within a consolidation process
Removal of database icons from the desktop	YES	NO	+	
Moving of database icons to the desktop	YES	NO		
Removal of Desktop pages	YES	NO		
Modification of Desktop page names	YES	NO		
Creation/Modification of Desktop pages	YES	NO		
Creation of a local replica	YES	YES		
Selection of name	YES	NO		
Selection of encryption	YES	NO		

mode				
Activation of replication	YES	NO		
Modification of ACLs	YES	NO	++	
Modification of a database replica ID	YES	NO		
Application of a unique quota	YES	NO	+	
Replicator				
Activation of a database replication by location and selection of the server, direction and mode	YES	NO	++	Useful for troubleshooting
Removal of replicator page(s) from a database	YES	NO	+	
Cross-certificates				
Deletion of a certificate	YES	NO		
Bookmarks				
Addition of the Desktop as a bookmark	YES	YES		
Desktop set as the default home page	YES	NO		
Addition of database bookmarks	YES	YES		
Bookmark position	YES	YES		
Bookmark set as the default home page	YES	NO		
Deletion of a bookmark	YES	NO		
Files				
File installation on the client workstation	YES	NO	++	Interesting for maintenance / installation operations
Register keys				
Modification of a key	YES	NO		
Creation of a key	YES	NO		
Agents				
Agent triggering	YES	NO	++	Avoids modifying the mailbox structure
Automatic execution of a program	YES	NO	++	Interesting for maintenance / installation operations
Notes.ini				
Addition of a variable	YES	YES (names modification)		
Modification of a variable	YES	YES (names modification)		
User preferences				
Desktop display options	YES	NO		Useful for troubleshooting
Smart Icon palette display options	YES	NO		
General preferences	YES (not all of them)	YES		

Comments:

This feature gives DeskTop Manager a strong advantage over the Domino Administrator. DeskTop Manager ensures that actions are taken on items that cannot be handled by policies. Also Notes policies are applied only once to the workstation whereas DeskTop Manager profiles can be applied continuously with your chosen frequency.

5.2. Tasks: Direct configuration modifications & maintenance operations on the client workstation

Desktop Manager includes tasks for taking actions on the client workstation's "local" items. Depending on the case, these tasks can be applied individually or to group of users. Please note that among all the items available, **only items not presented in the profile documents are mentioned in the table below.**

Multi-user mode

Subject	DeskTop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional Comments
General				
Selection of users	YES	YES		
Scheduling of the execution	YES	NO	++	Useful for merge or consolidation operations
Change/Review of a site	YES	NO		Useful for troubleshooting client workstations or forcing configuration review
Restart of Notes	YES	NO		
Creation of Windows shortcuts	YES	NO		
Files				
Removal of the Desktop	YES	NO	+++	Useful for troubleshooting client workstations
Renaming of a database in the Desktop	YES	YES with DSKTool	+	
Removal of the cache	YES	NO	+	
Definition of the maximum size	YES	NO	+++	
Notes.ini file				
Addition of a line	YES	YES but a value line only	+++	Very useful for maintaining and troubleshooting client workstations
Removal of a line	YES	NO	+++	
Value change	YES	NO	+++	
Execution control list				
Update	YES	YES		
Local databases				
Compact	YES	NO	++	Very useful for maintaining and troubleshooting client workstations
Fixup	YES	NO	++	
Rebuild of view indexes	YES	NO	++	
Rebuild of full text indexes	YES	NO	++	
Removal of full text indexes	YES	NO	++	
Removal of replication history	YES	NO	++	
Update of private views	YES	NO	++	
Database removal	YES	NO		
Update of structure	YES	Mail only	++	Interesting for an update process
Replacement of structure	YES	Mail only	++	
Creation of a replica	YES	YES		
Creation of a copy	YES	NO		

Comment:

Desktop Manager tasks feature proves to be a very useful tool for Notes administrators. Except for replica creation, ECL updates and database addition to the desktop, the Domino

Administrator does not provide any of the features included in Desktop Manager. So, unless the workstation is accessed physically, these maintenance operations will not be performed.

Single user mode

In addition to modifying settings in multi-user mode, the single user mode allows to take actions on device-specific configuration documents. These modifications are applied directly on the documents as they are stored on the client workstation.

Subject	DeskTop Manager	Domino Administrator	Interest Level	Additional Comments
Modification of user preferences	YES	YES		
Modification of a location document	YES	YES		
Removal of a location document	YES	NO	++	Very useful for maintaining and troubleshooting client workstations
Modification or removal of a Connection document	YES	NO	++	
Modification or removal of an Account document	YES	NO	++	
Modification of a Replicator page	YES	NO	++	
Modification of the agenda and delegation Profile	YES	YES		
Removal of the agenda and delegation Profile	YES	NO		
Modification or removal of the absence Agent	YES	NO		
Modification of the archive Profile	YES	YES		
Removal of the archive Profile	YES	NO		
Modification or removal of mailing rules	YES	NO		
Modification or removal of the directory Profile	YES	NO		
Modification or removal of the Internet Profile	YES	NO		

Comments:

By using the local forms with the local notes version, Desktop Manager allows to modify any field in a document, or even to remove documents. Again, this is one of the benefits provided by Desktop Manager: the Domino Administrator allows to modify location documents but, on one hand, it does not allow to delete them and, on the other hand, changes can only be made to the active location document or to all documents in the local directory.
As for the connection and account documents, the Domino Administrator only allows to create them, and not to modify them.

The Domino Administrator makes it possible to modify the general behavior of replication on a client workstation but does not allow direct intervention on a replicator page for individual modifications of its elements. In this respect, Desktop Manager proves once again its efficiency.

Finally, the Domino Administrator does not provide any capabilities to take actions to the directory profile and the mailing rules.

6. Conclusion

The study shows that despite the improvement of Domino administrator v 7, there is an array of features provided by Desktop Manager which remains critical to daily administration tasks. Outside user preferences, DeskTop Manager provides an outstanding complement to the Domino Administrator and can also be useful in many other situations. To conclude, we ought to note that one of the tool major assets is the fact that you can use it independently of the Notes client version unlike the advantages of the Domino administrator v6 & v7 improvements.

Contacts:

www.cooperteam.com

CooperTeam | USA

245 First Street
Riverview II - 18th Floor
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02142
Phone: (617) 444 84 38
Toll-Free: (877) 405 03 50

Contact E-mail:
- info@cooperteam.com
- product@cooperteam.com
- sales@cooperteam.com
- support@cooperteam.com

CooperTeam | EMEA

2 Sheraton Street, Soho
W1 8BH London - UK
Phone: +44 870 366 99 47

CooperTeam | France

55 Bd Sébastopol
75 001 Paris

Tel. 33 1 53 40 90 80
Fax. 33 1 53 40 90 81