

# Change and Configuration Management Tools

Get a grip on desktop, laptop, and server changes

If your company has just a handful of desktops, servers, or network devices, tasks such as jumping from desktop to desktop to install software updates or attending to the needs of a specific user aren't that difficult. However, if your company has dozens to thousands of desktops and servers, adding just one security patch can take days.

If you administer a large environment, you need to be able to control your systems centrally without having to visit each desktop. You need a way to report on the current state of affairs and know what happens when someone changes a configuration. Change and Configuration Management (CCM) software gives you those capabilities and helps you get a grip on your sprawling system.

Out of the box, Windows Server 2003 and Windows 2000 Active Directory (AD) include IntelliMirror, a basic CCM framework. IntelliMirror leverages various Group Policy functions to control and manage desktops and servers. Group Policy lets you configure a huge variety of changes to your desktops and servers, set key security settings, control desktop settings, and perform software distribution; it even contains basic desktop deployment facilities. IntelliMirror is free and works well, but some larger customers might need additional features. For instance, IntelliMirror lacks a centralized reporting facility, a centralized data repository, and the ability to schedule software installations, which large organizations might require.

IntelliMirror isn't designed for giant rollouts. To that end, Microsoft Systems Management Server (SMS) is a tool that helps CCM provide a stronger set of core features, such as enhanced software distribution and patch management, and additional features such as remote control and software metering. (For more information about IntelliMirror and SMS, see "SMS, IntelliMirror, and MOM," February 2002, <http://www.winnetmag.com>, InstantDoc ID 23554.) SMS is a baseline product, and although it offers some solid CCM core functionality that IntelliMirror can't provide, SMS implementations also take a lot of planning and contain many intricate components. (For more

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information about SMS feature packs, see "Adding Value to SMS," May 2003, <http://www.winnetmag.com>, InstantDoc ID 38488.) You might want to consider third-party CCM options, such as the products in this article, which compete head to head with SMS in ease of use, additional features, and ease of deployment and manageability.

If you want to find a third-party CCM solution, start your search with this Buyer's Guide. As you evaluate products, think about which capabilities you most need. Being able to query and report on the state of your systems is a vital capability that all tools should provide. If you also need the ability to centralize desktop rollouts, look

for products that provide "bare-metal" OS installations. If you mainly want to manage application settings and the look and feel of desktops, look for CCM tools that let you configure options such as Microsoft Outlook profiles, maps to printers, and desktop shortcuts. SMS 2.0 (and the newly released SMS 2003) include patch-management features, so you might want to choose a CCM tool that also helps you quickly install security hotfixes.

When it comes to selecting a CCM tool, laptop computers are another important consideration. SMS 2003 lets you distribute software to laptops in the background even over slow connections. When the software is finished streaming to the client, the installation occurs locally. So if you have dial-up users with laptops, you might want to investigate a product that has similar functionality.

CCM can help you get a grip on desktop, laptop, and server configuration changes. Instead of running from box to box, check out a CCM tool and make your life a little easier. If you need a tool that can help you manage your network infrastructure, you'll also find help in this Buyer's Guide—see the sidebar "Network CCM Tools."

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## Network CCM Tools

Managing and maintaining your network infrastructure (e.g., switches, routers) is just as important as managing and maintaining your desktop infrastructure. The table that accompanies this article includes several products that perform network Change and Configuration Management (CCM).

Although a relatively new class of tool, network CCM tools have already grown up and distanced themselves from the vendor-specific tools commonly found in the enterprise. Network CCM tools let you manage and report on the status of your network components. When you evaluate network CCM products, make sure they're compatible with your network infrastructure and determine whether you'll actually use the powerful and sweeping management and reporting changes that these tools offer.

## Desktop, Laptop, and Server Management

Contact Information	Product Name	Price	Description
<b>AccuRev</b> 781-861-8700 800-383-8170 <a href="http://www.accurev.com">http://www.accurev.com</a>	AccuRev Enterprise Edition	Contact vendor for pricing	Advanced software configuration management system that supports unlimited parallel development with ease; small-footprint, standards-based CCM system with built-in best practices that enable a new level of control over all development artifacts
<b>Altiris</b> 801-226-8500 888-252-5551 <a href="http://www.altiris.com">http://www.altiris.com</a>	Altiris Client Management Suite	\$80 per node; volume discounts available	Provides easy-to-use, Web-based systems management for heterogeneous desktops, notebooks, and handheld devices; offers zero-touch, bare-metal deployment; integrated Microsoft patch management; hands-off personality and OS migration; AD integration; automated hardware, software, and user inventory; software delivery with mobile support; application metering; and remote control
	Server Provisioning Suite	\$300 per node; volume discounts available	Provides a comprehensive solution for managing heterogeneous, business-critical servers; designed to simplify management of the server life cycle; offers touchless, bare-metal server imaging and scripting, integrated patch management, automated inventory discovery/management, bidirectional AD integration, real-time software delivery, desired state management, Web-based remote control, and monitoring
<b>AutoProf</b> 603-433-5885 <a href="http://www.autoprof.com">http://www.autoprof.com</a>	Policy Maker	Contact vendor for pricing	Extends Group Policy to include service pack and hotfix installation; Microsoft Office, Outlook, and third-party application configurations; network drive mappings and TCP/IP and shared printer connections; and shortcut, registry, and .ini file settings; supports Windows 2003, Windows XP, and Win2K, all versions of Outlook and Office, and reporting through Resultant Set of Policies (RSOP) on Windows 2003 and XP
	Profile Maker 8.0	Contact vendor for pricing	Manages service pack and software patch installations, and desktop, Office, Outlook, and Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE) settings; more than 25 hardware (Windows Management Instrumentation—WMI—Query, CPU, RAM), software (OS, Terminal Session, system/user language), and identity (IP/MAC address range, OU, site, domain/workgroup) filters manage application of software and settings to users and desktops; supports Windows 2003, XP, Win2K, Windows NT 4.0, and Windows 9x
	Profile Maker 8.0 Professional	\$12.25 per seat for 250 seats	Manages OS upgrades, service pack and software patch installations, and desktop, Office, Outlook, and IE settings; more than 25 hardware (WMI Query, CPU, RAM), software (OS, Terminal Session, system/user language), and identity (IP/MAC address range, OU, site, domain/workgroup) filters manage application of software and settings to users and desktops
<b>Configuresoft</b> 719-447-4600 <a href="http://www.configuresoft.com">http://www.configuresoft.com</a>	Enterprise Configuration Manager (ECM) 4.5	\$995 per server; \$30 per workstation	Centralizes and automates the labor-intensive task of monitoring, managing, and auditing hardware and software configurations of Windows systems deployed in large enterprise networks or Web server farms; standardizes server, workstation, and mobile system configurations; enforces compliance with policies to prevent security vulnerabilities, minimize downtime, and enhance system performance

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<b>Novadigm</b> 201-512-1000 800-626-6682 <a href="http://www.novadigm.com">http://www.novadigm.com</a>	Radia Management Suite	Contact vendor for pricing	Solution for managing and securing software infrastructure; lets enterprises automate the CCM process for software and other digital assets on enterprise computing devices such as servers, desktops, laptops, and handheld devices, and specialty devices such as ATMs, point-of-sale terminals, and Internet kiosks
	Novell ZENworks 6.0	\$130 per user; \$69 per user for upgrade and migration	Decreases administrative burdens and increases enterprisewide business efficiency by automating IT management processes across multiple platforms and devices and providing data management and Web self-service capabilities; maintains and enforces policies to dynamically manage the interactions between users, applications, and resources based on their unique identities
	<b>OnDemand Software</b> 239-495-0541 866-495-0541 <a href="http://www.ondemandsoftware.com">http://www.ondemandsoftware.com</a>	IntelliMover OnDemand	Averages \$12 per desktop
<b>ON Technology</b> 781-487-3300 800-767-6638 <a href="http://www.on.com">http://www.on.com</a>	WinINSTALL	Averages \$25 per desktop	Features comprehensive inventory capabilities for discovering and managing hardware and software assets, a wide array of MSI package-related functionalities such as conflict assessment and MSI validation and correction, a full range of software distribution methods for efficiently installing and maintaining software on the desktop, automatic baselining, multicast replication, and results reporting
	WinINSTALL LE	Free	Second generation of the first MSI packager originally built for Win2K; built for Windows 2003; supports the latest Windows Installer (MSI) file format; free MSI packaging product that's available worldwide; provides a reliable and easy method to quickly create MSI packages for software distribution; prelude to the full WinINSTALL software distribution product line
	WinINSTALL MSI Packager Professional	\$3500	Enhanced version of the standard edition packager, WinINSTALL LE 2003; provides editing of MSI files with the WinINSTALL console in native MSI format; no messy conversion from other file formats and no required scripting; provides conflict assessment and MSI validation and correction
<b>ScriptLogic</b> 561-886-2400 800-813-6415 <a href="http://www.scriptlogic.com">http://www.scriptlogic.com</a>	ScriptLogic 5.0	Contact vendor for pricing	Reduces client-side administration through an intuitive point-and-click management console without the need to write code; reduces resource needs through automatic policy-based creation of mail profiles and centralized administration of drive mappings, printer deployment, proxy server access, Office paths, service packs, antivirus updates, and policies

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<b>Snow Software</b> (47) 23-30-89-90 <a href="http://www.snow.no">http://www.snow.no</a>	Snow Inventory	\$20 per desktop	Features deployment and data-collection options for Windows systems; inventories onsite LAN and WAN PCs and disconnected remote users; simple to deploy yet nonintrusive; no-footprint option inventories systems using a logon script or email; detects application start and stop for per-installation and concurrent-use licenses; restricts and prevents application use with deny capabilities; features no-footprint standalone edition; uses fast scanning technology; provides minimal impact, flexible and customizable scans, rapid deployment, and scalability
<b>Symantec</b> 801-437-8900 800-379-2566 <a href="http://www.powerquest.com">http://www.powerquest.com</a>	PowerQuest V2i Builder 2.0	\$39.95 per seat	Automates OS deployments, migrations, software distribution, and image management; extends traditional imaging by combining Virtual Volume Imaging (V2i) technology with plain English, policy-based Action Sets to automate and streamline common IT tasks
<b>Tally Systems</b> 603-643-1300 800-262-3877 <a href="http://www.tallysystems.com">http://www.tallysystems.com</a>	Cenergy	Pricing scales based on the number of clients; \$87 per client at the 1000-client level	Client-management suite with products for software distribution and remote control; manages PCs, servers, laptops, and handheld devices; includes TS.Deploy for automated software distribution and self-healing, TS.Remote for remote control and online support chat; and the Cenergy Discovery Module for device discovery for deployment and support activities; Asset Tracking Edition of Cenergy includes Tally Systems' flagship asset tracking and software usage tool, TS.Census

## Network Management

Contact Information	Product Name	Price	Description
<b>AlterPoint</b> 512-536-8300 888-228-3422 <a href="http://www.alterpoint.com">http://www.alterpoint.com</a>	DeviceAuthority	Pricing starts at \$7995 for enterprises; additional volume-priced device packs are available	Provides multivendor network-configuration management solutions that increase the availability, performance, and security of enterprise networks; targets network managers; reduces network downtime; improves staff productivity; lowers the cost of network device administration; simplifies network configuration and change management; automates error-prone manual network tasks and enhances overall network security
<b>Net Watch Solutions</b> 972-385-3777 <a href="http://www.netwatchsolutions.com">http://www.netwatchsolutions.com</a>	Samantha - System Asset Management System	Contact vendor for pricing	Provides change management as an integral component of asset management; ensures that the asset repository stays accurate; administrators schedule changes and managers provide approval; pre-and post-change reporting and automated email audit the process; tracking provides historical view of how assets change over time
<b>Rendition Networks</b> 425-636-2148 888-876-4626 <a href="http://www.rendition">http://www.rendition</a>	TrueControl 2.0	Contact vendor for pricing 888-876-4626	Tracks and regulates changes across routers, switches, firewalls, and load balancers; provides insight into network changes; enables fast disaster recovery; maximizes engineers' efficiency and lets IT staff identify and correct trends that could lead to problems