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When you're troubleshooting a problem in Windows 2000 or Windows XP, chances are that you may turn to Windows Task Manager for more information about the programs and processes that are running on a system. When you first launch Task Manager, it opens to the Applications tab, which shows you a list of all the applications that are currently running. However, when you switch to the Processes tab, you'll see that there are many more processes running than there are applications.

As you know, many of the running processes are easy to identify—especially if they directly represent an application. For example, it's easy to tell that the notepad.exe process corresponds to Notepad. However, not all processes are that easy to identify—especially if they represent services. In fact, as you look at the list of processes, chances are that you'll find multiple processes listed as Svchost.exe, which is a generic host process name for services that run from dynamic-link libraries (DLLs). In addition, you may find other similarly named processes that actually represent services.

The Service Process Identifier script will locate those processes that are hosting services, identify them by their PID number, track down each service running inside the process, compile a list, sort it by PID, and then create a nicely formatted Excel spreadsheet, which can then be used in tandem with Windows Task Manager as a troubleshooting aid.

Requirements

The Service Process Identifier is only designed to work with Windows 2000 or Windows XP. It requires Microsoft Excel and will work with versions 2000/2002/2003.

Installation

ServiceProcessID.zip contains 2 files:

Readme.doc	This file
ServiceProcessID.vbs	The main VBScript Application file

To install the Service Process Identifier, simply copy these two files to a folder of your choice.

Note: Because the Service Process Identifier is a VBScript, certain antivirus programs may flag it as a virus or a malicious script. If so, you'll need to authorize, or allow the script to run. See your antivirus program documentation for information on how to do so.

Using the Service Process Identifier

To launch the Service Process Identifier, just double-click the ServiceProcessID.vbs file. While the script is running, you'll see a series of popup dialog boxes that will keep you informed of the program's progress.

When the script finishes compiling its list of services, it will launch Excel and display the worksheet, which consists of two columns—one for the Process ID (PID) and the other for the Services. The PIDs will be listed in ascending order and appear in red. The Services will be listed by their full name and appear in blue. Right below the full name, you'll find the command line, which will appear in black, used to launch the service.

When the spreadsheet appears, press [Ctrl][Shift][Esc] to access Task Manager. With Task Manager up and running, select the Processes tab. If you don't see a column titled PID, pull down the View menu, choose the Select Columns command, select the PID (Process Identifier) check box, and then click OK.

Now, click the PID column header to sort the list of processes by the PID number in ascending order. If you wish, you can click and drag the PID column to reposition it on the left-hand side of the Processes display.

At this point, you can scroll through the Processes display, locate the process you're interested in and match its PID to the one in the Service Process Identifier worksheet.

Saving the spreadsheet

While this spreadsheet is only meant for temporary use during a troubleshooting operation, you may want to save it for future reference. However, keep in mind that the original format of the data is a simple Comma Separated Value (CSV) file, so Excel will prompt you to make a decision as to formatting before it will allow you to save the file. In order to preserve the formatting and save the file in Excel format, follow the instructions displayed in the dialog box.

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