

Apache VCL /... / How To's How to Configure the Windows Default User Profile

Added by Josh Thompson, last edited by Andy Kurth on Apr 16, 2014

A Windows user profile defines the look and feel of the desktop environment configured for a particular user. It contains various settings such as desktop colors, backgrounds, icon placement, and Windows Explorer settings. The default profile is a template profile that is used when a user logs on to a Windows computer for the first time. The default profile can be customized by the image creator.

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Windows 7 and Windows Server 2008

Microsoft does not support copying profiles under Windows 7 and Windows Server 2008. The "Copy To" button is grayed out for all profiles except the default profile. The only supported method is built into Sysprep and this method is itself very problematic. The following steps are not supported or recommended by Microsoft but seem to work:

Enable Desktop Background

- 1. Download and edit the RDP file for your imaging reservation from the VCL website to allow desktop backgrounds or else you won't be able to change the desktop background color
 - a. Right-click on the .rdp file and select Edit
 - b. Click on the Experience tab
 - c. Select LAN (10 Mbps or higher)
 - d. Make sure the checkbox next to **Desktop background** is enabled



- e. Click on the General tab
- f. Click Save
- 2. Login to the VCL reservation as Administrator
- 3. Configure Windows Explorer to show hidden and system file
 - a. Open Windows Explorer
 - b. Click Organize > Folder and search options
 - c. Select the View tab
 - d. Select the radio button next to Show hidden files, folders, and drives

Create a Profile Setup Account

- 1. Create a new local user account named **ProfileSetup** (*Note: the name does not matter but should be something that would not match another string in the stock Windows registry. You will be searching the registry for the name of the user you use to configure the profile. Using a unique name will make this easier.*)
 - a. Open Control Panel > Add or remove user accounts
 - b. If there is already an account named **ProfileSetup** and you want to start over with a new account, delete the existing account and then create a new one:
 - i. Click on the ProfileSetup user
 - ii. Click Delete the account
 - iii. Click Delete Files
 - iv. Click Delete Account
 - c. Click Create a new account
 - d. Enter the account name: ProfileSetup
 - e. Click the radio button next to Administrator
 - f. Click Create Account
- 2. Set the password for the ProfileSetup account
 - a. Click on the **ProfileSetup** account
 - b. Click Create a password
 - c. Enter the password and click Create password

Configure the User Profile for the Profile Setup Account

- 1. Logout as Administrator and login as **ProfileSetup**
 - If you intend to arrange the icons on the desktop, use a screen size of 1024x768 when logged in as ProfileSetup. This is the default screen size that most users will use when they connect to VCL reservations. If you arrange the icons using a custom screen size, the icons most users see will be rearranged when they connect using the default size.
- 2. Customize the user profile while logged in as ProfileSetup account (configure the desktop background, arrange icons, etc). The following tips are optional:
 - a. Download and run Autoruns. This free utility will show you all of the things that run when the computer boots, a user logs in, etc. There are several things that can probably be disabled such as Windows Mail.

Copy the Customized Profile to Default

- 1. Logout as ProfileSetup and login as Administrator
- 2. Rename the ProfileSetup user profile folder to Default:
 - a. Open a Windows Explorer window and navigate to C:\Users
 - b. Rename the original default profile folder: C:\Users\Default -> C:\Users\DefaultOriginal
 - c. Rename the customized profile folder: C:\Users\ProfileSetup -> C:\Users\Default
 - Note: if you are unable to rename the ProfileSetup folder, reboot the computer, login as Administrator, and try again. Run the following command from a command prompt to reboot the computer: shutdown.exe -r -f -t 0
- 3. Copy the customized profile folder using the Windows profile copying utility:
 - Note: Windows 7 only allows its built-in profile copying utility to be used to copy the default profile, not profiles of other user accounts. The profile you customized now resides in the default profile location (C:\Users\Default) so the utility can now be used to make a copy of it.
 - a. Open Control Panel > System and Security > System
 - b. Click Advanced system settings on the left
 - c. Click the Settings ... button under User Profiles
 - d. Highlight Default Profile
 - e. Click Copy To...
 - i. Copy profile to: C:\Users\DefaultCopy
 - ii. Click Change under Permitted to use
 - iii. Enter Everyone and click OK
 - iv. Click OK
- 4. Replace the original customized profile directory with the one created by the Windows profile copying utility Note: C:\Users\Default contains the original customized profile. The same profile also resides in C:\Users\DefaultCopy. The DefaultCopy folder is the one which has had the Windows profile copying utility transformations applied to it.
 - a. Open Windows Explorer
 - b. Delete the "C:\Users\Default folder
 - c. Rename the folder: C:\UsersDefaultCopy -> C:\Users\Default
- 5. Delete the ProfileSetup account:
 - a. Open Control Panel > Add or remove user accounts
 - b. Click on the **ProfileSetup** account
 - c. Click Delete the account
 - d. Click Delete Files
 - e. Click Delete Account

Clean the Registry for the Customized Profile

- 1. While logged in as $\ensuremath{\textbf{Administrator}}$
- 2. Run regedit.exe
- 3. Select the HKEY_USERS hive:

📸 Registry Editor				
<u>File Edit View Favorites H</u> elp				
Computer HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT HKEY_CURRENT_USER HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE HKEY_USERS HKEY_CURRENT_CONFIG	Name			
Computer\HKEY_USERS				

4. Click the File menu and select Load Hive:

💣 R	egistry Editor			
File	Edit View Favorites Help			
	Import			
	Export			
	Load Hive			
	Unload Hive			
	Connect Network Registry			
	Disconnect Network Registry			
	Print	Ctrl+P		
	Exit			

5. Browse to C:\Users\Default

6. Enter ntuser.dat in the File name: field (Note: this file is hidden so it normally is not displayed in the list of files)

Organize 🔻 🛛 New folde	r		•	?
🔆 Favorites 📩	Name	Date modified	Туре	Si
📃 Desktop	Desktop	7/13/2009 10:35 PM	File folder	ſ
\rm Downloads	📕 Documents	7/14/2009 1:08 AM	File folder	
📃 Recent Places	📕 Downloads	7/13/2009 10:35 PM	File folder	
=	🕌 Favorites	7/13/2009 10:35 PM	File folder	
🥽 Libraries	🕌 Links	7/13/2009 10:35 PM	File folder	
📄 Documents	📕 Music	7/13/2009 10:35 PM	File folder	
🚽 Music	📕 Pictures	7/13/2009 10:35 PM	File folder	
📔 Pictures	📕 Saved Games	7/13/2009 10:35 PM	File folder	
😸 Videos	📕 Videos	7/13/2009 10:35 PM	File folder	
	📄 NTUSER.DAT.LOG	11/21/2010 1:33 AM	Text Document	
🖳 Windows 7 Base 64	NTUSER.DAT.LOG1	1/2/2014 11:57 PM	LOG1 File	
🚢 Local Disk (C:)	NTUSER.DAT.LOG2	7/13/2009 10:34 PM	LOG2 File	
🚽 C on DITKA 🛛 🔻	•	III		•
File <u>n</u> a	me: ntuser.dat	✓ All Files		-

7. Enter a Key Name: DU

📸 Registry Editor		- • •
File Edit View Favorites Help		
<pre>Computer HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE HKEY_UOERS DEFAULT S-1-5-18 S-1-5-19 S-1-5-20 S-1-5-21-3510770625-4184624928-2873166077-1000 S-1-5-21-3510770625-4184624928-2873166077-1000_Classes S-1-5-21-3510770625-4184624928-2873166077-500 S-1-5-21-3510770625-4184624928-2873166077-500_Classes S-1-5-21-3510770625-4184624928-2873166077-500_Classes HKEY_CURRENT_CONFIG</pre>	Name ab (Default)	Type REG_SZ
Computer\HKEY_USERS\DU		

8. Navigate to: HKEY_USERS\DU\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Shell Folders

You will probably see the path to the ProfileSetup account's original user profile directory saved in many of the values as highlighted below. This can cause problems with programs which use these values. For example, a user may save a file to the Desktop from within a program, but the saved file doesn't appear on the user's desktop.

🃸 Registry Editor 📃 🗖 🗖							
File Edit View Favorites Help							
⊳ - 퉲 Speech	*	Name	Туре	Data			
SystemCertificates		et (Default)	REG_SZ	(value not set)			
D 🕌 WAB		Do not use this	REG_SZ	Use the SHGetFolderPath or SHGetKnownFolderPath funct			
b - 🔐 wrs		[1] 183EA5DC-858	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Wind			
▲ - 👔 Windows		ab {374DE290-123F	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\Downloads			
A - Currentversion		4C5C32FF-BB9	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\Saved Games			
Appres		▶ {56784854-C6CB	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\Contacts			
Advanced		[7D1D3A04-DEB	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\Searches			
	:	赴 {A520A1A4-1780	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\LocalLow			
AutoplayHandlers		Apple 10 (800 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 -	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\Links			
🔉 🛺 BitBucket		赴 Administrative T	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Wind			
		ab AppData	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\Roaming			
🖡 🔰 🖓 CLSID	-	ache 🔁	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows			
🕨 🖓 🖓 🕹 🐌 🕨 Discardable	-	👲 CD Burning	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows			
▶ - 🌺 HideDesktopIcons		and Cookies	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Wind			
		ab Desktop	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\Desktop			
🕨 🔰 MenuOrder		👲 Favorites	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup <mark>\</mark> Favorites			
► Modules		ab Fonts	REG_SZ	C:\Windows\Fonts			
MountPoints2		ab History	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows			
Percent Docr		👲 Local AppData	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\Local			
SearchPlatform		🌉 My Music	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\Music			
Shell Folders		👲 My Pictures	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\Pictures			
StartPage		👲 My Video	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\Videos			
		ab NetHood	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Wind			
▶ - 🚹 Streams		ab Personal	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\Documents			
		PrintHood	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Wind			
	Ŧ	ab Programs	REG_SZ	C:\Users\ProfileSetup\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Wind 🚽			
× >		•		III •			
Computer\HKEY_USERS\DU\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Shell Folders							

9. Delete all of the values under Shell Folders except for (Default) and "!Do not use this registry key":



- 10. Select the DU key in the left pane
- 11. Click on the Edit menu and select Find...
- 12. Search the DU key for the string ProfileSetup. In general, you want to clean up everything that references the user named ProfileSetup and the C:\Users\ProfileSetup directory. There will probably be several places under DU where these are saved. You will need to analyze each match. Most matches won't cause problems. Some will such as the Shell Folders key you previously cleaned up.
- 13. IMPORTANT: Unload the Default user registry hive:
 - a. Select the DU key
 - b. Click the File menu and select Unload hive ...

Any new local user accounts created on the computer should receive a user profile configured with the customizations you made to the Profile account.

Configure the User Account Picture (Optional)

- 1. Navigate to the directory: C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\User Account Pictures
 - (Note: you will need to enable "Show hidden files" to see this directory)
- 2. Rename **user.bmp** to something such as user-original.bmp
- 3. Copy the .bmp file you want used as the account picture to this directory and name it user.bmp

Force the Desktop Background to Appear on Windows 7 & Windows Server 2008 (Optional)

The following procedure should force a desktop wallpaper image to be displayed for all users regardless of whether or not the *Desktop Background* option is selected in the .rdp file. This could be useful if you want a logo or an image containing instructions for the user to always be displayed. There are some local group policy settings which can be configured to force a wallpaper to be shown and prevent users from changing it. However, this only seems to work if the *Desktop Background* option is selected in the .rdp file.

You may encounter difficulty getting the wallpaper to be displayed under all situations. One known situation is when a user connects with the *Desktop Background* option disabled. The wallpaper should be displayed initially. If the user disconnects from the remote computer (but does not log out) and then reconnects, the wallpaper will probably not appear.

- 1. Run gpedit.msc
- 2. Navigate to User Configuration > Windows Settings > Scripts (Logon/Logoff)
- 3. Double-click Logon
- 4. Click Show Files...
- The following directory should open: C:\Windows\System32\GroupPolicy\User\Scripts\Logon
- 5. Create a new text file with a $\boldsymbol{.cmd}$ extension in this directory
- 6. Add the following to the file:

<pre>reg.exe ADD "HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Remote\2\Control Panel\Desktop" /v Wallpaper /d "%WALLPAPER_PATH%" /f</pre>
reg.exe ADD "HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Remote\2\Control Panel\Desktop" /v WallpaperStyle /d 0 /f
reg.exe ADD "HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Control Panel\Desktop" /v Wallpaper /d "%WALLPAPER_PATH%" /f
reg.exe ADD "HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Internet Explorer\Desktop\General" /v WallpaperSource /d "%WALLPAPER_PATH%" /f

- 7. Save the .cmd file
- 8. Click the Add... button on the Logon Properites pane:

Logon Properties			8	X
Scripts PowerShell Scrip	ots			
Logon Scrip	ts for Local Comput	er		
Name	Parameters			
			Up	
			Dowi	n
			Add	
			Add.	
			Edit.	
			Remo	ve
To view the script files s the button below. Show Files	tored in this Group F	^o olicy Object, pr	ress	
	ОК	Cancel	A	pply

- 9. Click Browse...
- 10. Select the .cmd file and click Open
- 11. Enter the path to an image file in the Script Parameters box:

Add a Script	×
Script Name:	
set_wallpaper.cmd	Browse
Script Parameters:	
C:\Windows\Web\Wallpaper\Landscapes\img7.jpg	
ОК	Cancel

- 12. Click OK twice
- 13. Close the Local Group Policy Editory
- 14. Run gpupdate.exe /force

Windows XP and Windows Server 2003

Create a Profile Configuration Account

- 1. While logged on as **Administrator**, create a local Windows user account named **Profile** and add it to the **Administrators** group
- 2. Configure the profile:
 - a. Log on as Profile
 - b. Make desired profile, desktop, and application changes
 - c. Log out

Copy the Customized Profile to "Default User"

- 1. Log back on as Administrator
- 2. Rename the C:\Documents and Settings\Default User directory to something like Default User Original
- 3. Open the Control Panel
- 4. Open System Properties
- 5. Select the Advanced tab

- 6. Click the Settings button next to User Profiles
- Select Profile's profile, click Copy To : Copy profile to: C:\Documents and Settings\Default User Permitted to use: add the Everyone group
- 8. Click OK

Clean up the Profile Configuration Account

- 1. Delete the Profile user
- 2. Delete C:\Documents and Settings\Profile

You can then create another account and log in using it to make sure your profile settings take affect for new users. Be sure to delete it once you're done testing.