



Volume 9, Issue 6, November 2002

Technology Electronic Reviews (TER) is a publication of the Library and Information Technology Association.

Technology Electronic Reviews (ISSN: 1533-9165) is a periodical copyright © 2002 by the American Library Association. Documents in this issue, subject to copyright by the American Library Association or by the authors of the documents, may be reproduced for noncommercial, educational, or scientific purposes granted by Sections 107 and 108 of the Copyright Revision Act of 1976, provided that the copyright statement and source for that material are clearly acknowledged and that the material is reproduced without alteration. None of these documents may be reproduced or adapted for commercial distribution without the prior written permission of the designated copyright holder for the specific documents.

REVIEW OF: Sakari Kouti and Mika Seitsonen. (2002). Inside Active Directory: A System Administrator's Guide. Boston: Addison-Wesley.

by Aaron W. Dobbs

Inside Active Directory: A System Administrator's Guide is arguably the best single-volume Active Directory book available on the market today. It is eminently suitable for both system administrators already having some Active Directory experience and system administrators of older Microsoft domains looking for insight into how their processes will change when they migrate.

Combined, the authors bring over four years of real-world Active Directory administration experience to this book and convey their knowledge in an understandable and readable style. Each section starts out with a high-level overview descending into advanced topics. This allows readers with less understanding to get acquainted with high-level subject matter before getting down and dirty with more advanced concepts. This also allows more advanced readers to glance through the overviews and quickly get into the advanced topics that hold an interest for them. This style is especially welcome, since the book weighs in at over 900 pages.

The authors begin with a quick 120-page review of background knowledge about Windows 2000 system administration. This section is a good comparison and review for system administrators familiar with and/or currently administering Windows NT 4.0 domains. The next section contains 450 pages of detailed descriptions and explanations on topics ranging from managing user, computer, group, and group policy objects, to domain structure, to an overview of securing Active Directory. This is the core of how to administer a domain. The last section, containing 320 pages of advanced concepts and detailed advice on scripting for ease of administration, is the treasure trove of this work for experienced Windows 2000 administrators. This is nirvana for administrators tired of manipulating the Graphical User Interface (GUI) for hours on end.

The background skills section starts with a description and history of the development of Windows 2000 and Active Directory, then details operating system and Active Directory installation processes and mentions steps for automating the installation process. An overview of troubleshooting installation and recovery processes, from incompatible devices to incorrectly detected devices, is also given.

The core skills section starts by describing what to expect after Active Directory is correctly installed, from predefined objects to changing the domain mode, administering the various object types, and the administration tools provided with Active Directory. From here, an overview of securing Active Directory with native tools is given and the distinction between Active Directory security and NT File System (NTFS) security is described. Active Directory replication and consideration of physical sites is detailed next. Naming conventions within the Active Directory structure, including Forests, Trees, Domains, and Leaves, are placed in context, and strategies for design and management of this structure are given. Group policy, the system administrators' way to enforce business rules, is the juicy, last part of this detail-laden section.

The advanced skills section starts by detailing the Active Directory schema, its role, its data model, and how to view, manage, and alter this data. Guidelines and steps for extending the schema to meet business needs are also provided. From here, the authors delve into getting comfortable with the scripting environment, basic scripting in VBScript, and calling existing components. Saving the best for last, the authors provide wonderful examples of used and usable administration scripts.

The authors treat some important Active Directory concepts rather lightly. While this can be seen as a liability, most of these concepts are covered in depth elsewhere.

Some important, though usually only needed one-time, Active Directory concepts, such as domain migration and Domain Name System (DNS) integration, are wisely omitted. These topics already have plenty of books dedicated to covering planning and deployment. Some good examples of books on these subjects are: *Windows 2000 Active Directory Design and Migration* by Gary L. Olsen, and *Windows 2000 DNS Server* by William Wong.

Industry standards, such as Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP), Kerberos, and Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) also received light treatment, in the background review. While more in-depth information on how these standards are embraced in Active Directory would be welcome, the White Papers and Requests for Comment (RFCs) describing them are available online for those people truly interested; they are not central to the "how-to" nature of the work.

The minor problem with this book, that it lacks a CD-ROM containing the administrative scripts that are spelled out so nicely in the text, is mitigated by the Web site dedicated to this book (<http://www.kouti.com/>) that Mr. Kouti maintains. The Web site contains a nice set of features including the Index, Scripts, Tables, Feedback, and, especially helpful when questions arise, Errata.

After the first read through, this book should find a prominent place on the reference shelves of Windows 2000 system administrators at all levels of experience. It's recommended for systems departments running Windows 2000-based networks and other production environments.

Aaron W. Dobbs (<http://dubber.org/> (<http://dubber.org/>)) is Network Services Librarian, Felix G. Woodward Library, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, Tennessee.

Copyright © 2002 by Aaron W. Dobbs. This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for noncommercial, educational, or scientific purposes, provided that the preceding copyright statement and source are clearly acknowledged. All other rights are reserved. For permission to reproduce or adapt this document or any part of it for commercial distribution, address requests to the author at copyright@dubber.org (<mailto:copyright@dubber.org>)

REVIEW OF: Diane K. Kovacs. (2002). Genealogical Research on the Web. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers.

by Maureen Hammer

This book was written for librarians assisting genealogical researchers, but it is also appropriate for anyone interested in conducting his or her own research. The author has been providing training on this subject since 1996 after several years of assisting researchers as a university reference librarian. She provides a good high-level overview of what genealogical research is and how to get started.

The book is divided into four sections. Part one is an introduction to genealogy and how the Internet has enhanced its research. The enhancements identified by the author are increased access to research materials like indexes, and documentation such as scanned images of death certificates. It also provides assistance in communicating with other researchers, family members, and organizations and institutions such as libraries, cemeteries and museums. In addition, the Internet has made it easy to complete travel arrangements for when the researcher needs to visit distant locations to verify or collect information. The types of sources, primary, secondary and tertiary, are defined and examples are given. The author emphasizes the need to document, evaluate, and verify these sources.

Part two covers what the author considers the top 10 "best" sites in the order she anticipates they would be used. These 10 sites could make up a core genealogy reference e-library. One site listed here and referred to several times throughout the book is the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Genealogy Web page (<http://www.nara.gov/genealogy/>) (<http://www.nara.gov/genealogy/>) (<http://www.nara.gov/genealogy/>)). Screen prints and an explanation of what each site offers and how to use it are provided. Limitations and strengths of each site are also documented. Additional sources that compliment the ten discussed are also given at the end of the section.

Section three discusses how to network with family members and other researchers, along with providing guidelines for publishing genealogical Web pages, as written by the National Genealogical Society (<http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/>) (<http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/>) (<http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/>)). There is coverage of organizations, libraries, museums, full-text books, local government archives, cemeteries, and travel resources. One resource cited frequently in this section is Cyndi's List (<http://www.cyndislist.com/>) (<http://www.cyndislist.com/>) (<http://www.cyndislist.com/>)). Included is a short section on adoptee and birth-parent searches.

The fourth section focuses on the researching of international, African American, and Native American ancestors. Cyndi's List and the World Genealogy Project (<http://www.rootsweb.com/>) at <http://www.rootsweb.com/> (<http://www.rootsweb.com/>) are cited as excellent starting points for these challenging areas of research -- challenging because of the lack of records, the need to translate or understand multiple languages, and the varied history.

Each section is followed by Web-based exercises to reinforce what was discussed. The exercises are also available on-line after registering on the author's Web site at <http://www.kovacs.com/genbook/genbook.html> (<http://www.kovacs.com/genbook/genbook.html>). Instructions for registering are included in the book. When I registered, the response from the author was timely and clear. Online exercises are updated as site addresses change, which was the case in the first exercise in the book. The last update as of this writing was April 2002. Answers may be submitted to the author for review and feedback. Researchers may also contact the author directly.

The appendix provides links to all sites mentioned in the book, more readings about genealogical research on the Internet, an annotated bibliography, and a glossary of genealogical and Internet terms. Kovacs has also provided a list of selected fiction in which genealogical research plays a role. The table of contents and index are clear and provide easy entry into the book.

This book is a well-written and organized high-level overview of genealogical research. At times, the author seems to be having a conversation with the reader when relating stories to emphasize the research process. This personalization serves to encourage the reader and to demonstrate an understanding of the complications involved in researching genealogy. In addition, sidebars of examples are liberally sprinkled through the book. It is an appropriate resource for beginning researchers and for the librarians who assist them. The book and exercises could also be a resource for local workshops. I was especially satisfied with the exercises in the book. If completed, they do provide increased understanding and familiarity with the genealogical research process.

Maureen Hammer (mhammer@vrs.state.va.us (mailto:mhammer@vrs.state.va.us)) is the Knowledge Management Services Administrator for the Virginia Retirement System.

Copyright ©2002 by Maureen Hammer. This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for noncommercial, educational, or scientific purposes, provided that the preceding copyright statement and source are clearly acknowledged. All other rights are reserved. For permission to reproduce or adapt this document or any part of it for commercial distribution, address requests to the author at mhammer@vrs.state.va.us. (<mailto:mhammer@vrs.state.va.us>.)

REVIEW OF: Michael Stutz. (2001). The Linux Cookbook: Tips and Techniques for Everyday Use. San Francisco, CA: No Starch Press, Inc.

by Brian K. Yost

People decide to install Linux on their computers for many reasons. In my experience, these reasons usually fall into two main categories. There are those who install it for specific server functionality, such as a Web or database server, and there are those who install it on a desktop machine to experiment and learn more about the Linux platform. Documentation is usually not a problem for those who install Linux to perform specific server tasks, as there are numerous books on Linux administration, Apache, PHP, and MySQL, etc. However, the desktop Linux experimenter often falls into the "what now?" syndrome. The user

has successfully installed Linux and tried a few commands at the prompt or started a few programs in the X Window System, but is then left wondering "what can I really do with Linux?" or "how do I perform the same tasks in Linux that I do in Windows or Mac OS?" *The Linux Cookbook* fills the documentation void for these Linux explorers very well.

The Linux Cookbook consists of hundreds of directions for performing various tasks in Linux. The recipes explain how to perform the tasks necessary to be productive in a Linux desktop environment. The main categories of recipes are: Working with Linux, Files, Text, Images, Sound, Productivity, and Networking. Different users will find different recipes most useful, and the book is arranged with a detailed table of contents that makes locating a particular recipe very easy. The recipes also are arranged in a logical order that makes a sequential reading of the text possible as well. While some of the recipes are tasks that could be found in nearly any Linux book (e.g., basic command line navigation), others are more unique and often not included in Linux books (e.g., the recipes for working with fonts and sound files). I do wish the author would have included recipes for using Palm devices with Linux.

The focus of *The Linux Cookbook* is on using Linux as an end-user desktop operating system rather than on configuration or administration of Linux. In the book's preface, Stutz states: "This is a user manual; no computer programming activities, such as program compilation, are discussed. Topics related to system administration are also omitted..." (p. 3). This is a rather artificial distinction because the user of this book will likely also be the administrator of his or her computer and responsible for configuring and installing or compiling the programs described in the book. Stutz does recognize this issue: "If you are running Linux on your home computer as a single-user system, you are also the administrator of this system, and are the responsible party for ensuring that any administrative tasks be completed..." (p. 3). To rectify this problem, Stutz does include a brief Administrative Issues appendix with instructions for installing software (but not compiling programs), administering users, and displaying system information. These are brief, however, and users will need to turn to a book such as the classic *Running Linux* (Welsh, M., Dalheimer, M.K., & Kaufman, L., 1999, 3rd ed.) for more information.

The recipes in *The Linux Cookbook* are based on the Debian distribution of Linux. I found that I was able to use nearly all the recipes I tried with Red Hat Linux 7.2. However, there are some instructions and procedures that are specific to Debian distributions of Linux. In addition to the print edition of the book, the full text is available at <http://www.dsl.org/cookbook/> (<http://www.dsl.org/cookbook/>). The online version is very useful as a reference; however, I prefer the print version for going through the recipes sequentially.

Overall, *The Linux Cookbook* fulfills its intended purpose very well. Users who are exploring Linux as a desktop operating system will find this title very useful. In addition, nearly any Linux user will find *The Linux Cookbook* helpful as a reference when brief and concise instructions for performing a task are needed.

Brian K. Yost (yostb@hope.edu (mailto:yostb@hope.edu)) is Systems Librarian and Associate Professor at Hope College in Holland, Michigan.

Copyright © 2002 by Brian K. Yost. This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for noncommercial, educational, or scientific purposes, provided that the preceding copyright statement and source are clearly acknowledged. All other rights are reserved. For permission to reproduce or adapt this document or any part of it for commercial distribution, address requests to the author at yostb@hope.edu (<mailto:yostb@hope.edu>)

About TER

