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**Introduction to Desired
Configuration Management in
Configuration Manager 2007**

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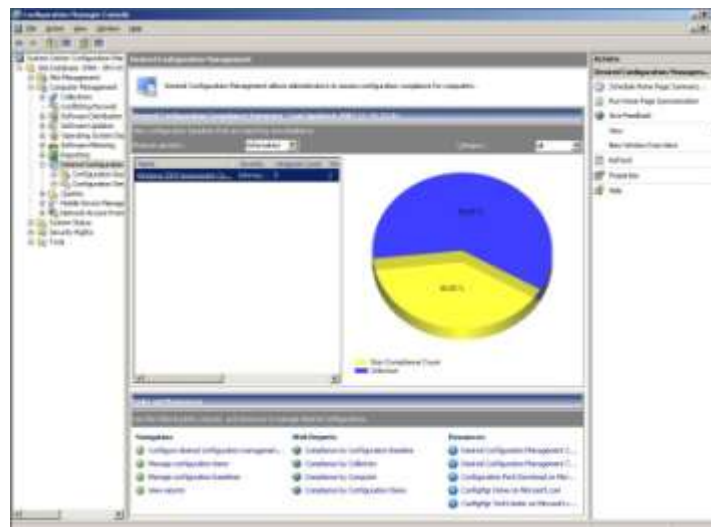
Introduction to Desired Configuration Management in Configuration Manager 2007

Introduction

Desired Configuration Management was first introduced in SMS 2003 as a Feature Pack and now it is a native component in Configuration Manager 2007.

Desired Configuration Management is shortened DCM! DCM is a feature to assess configuration and also some compliance in your environment. Many organizations get more and more demands from regulations and laws that they need to follow. Examples of regulations to follow are [HIPAA \(Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act\)](#), [SOX \(Sarbanes Oxley Act\)](#), [EUDPD \(European Union Data Protection Directive\)](#). There will be a lot of new Guidelines provided by Microsoft or and 3d party vendors, there is a lot of work going on to develop these guidelines for DCM. This is an excellent way of assessing your environment on how you meet different configurations external or internal.

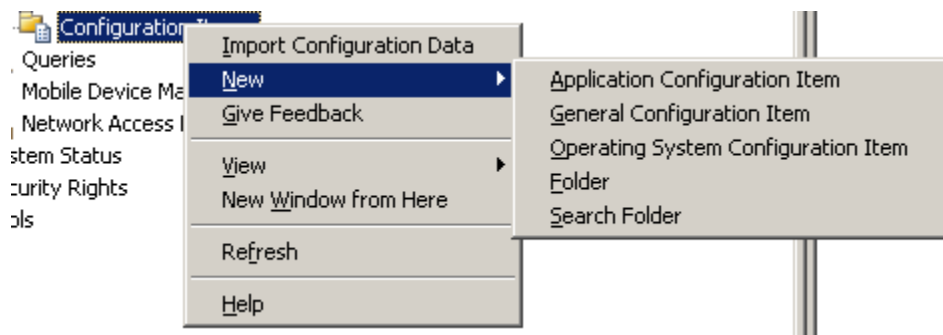
This article will contain the basics of Desired Configuration Management. If you want to dive deeper into the features and get under the hood I suggest that you go to the Documentation as it is excellent in many areas.



DESIRED CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT HOMEPAGE

Configuration Items

Configuration items are the building blocks in DCM, there are four types of Configuration Items. It's possible to build your own or use predefined items that are available on the [Configuration Manager Configuration Pack Catalog](#).



CONFIGURATION ITEMS

Operating system configuration item

These items are used to determine Operating system version, Windows 2003 -R2, SP1, SP2, Windows XP SP1, SP2 etc.

Application configuration item

Here you can configure items to determine how a certain application is configured or even if it's installed or not. For example the log files for IIS should be placed at a certain place etc.

General configuration item

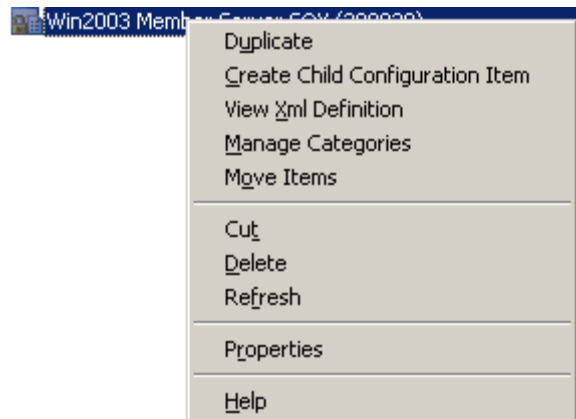
A general item is not depending on Operating System, application or software update items.

Software Update configuration item

These items you need to configure directly in your baseline, as there are no special items for this, these items integrate with the software update feature and it's up to you to update the list of updates that is necessary to meet your baseline.

Duplicate and Child Configuration Item

A duplicate item is an exact copy of another item where it's possible to change all settings. A child item is a copy of another item that continues to inherit the settings of the parent item, inherited settings cannot be changed but it's possible to add more settings.



DUPLICATE AND CHILD ITEMS

Uninterpreted Configuration Item

This is an imported item that the console might not be able to understand, it will only display the values that it can interpret.

Configuration Baselines

A configuration baseline is a group of configuration items that together defines the baseline for your selected computer. A baseline needs to be targeted to a collection in Configuration Manager to get evaluated.

Dependent Configuration Baseline

Baselines can also be dependent to another baseline. A scenario could be where you have your regulation that you need to follow and you want to put your own company configuration baseline on top of that.

Duplicate Configuration Baseline

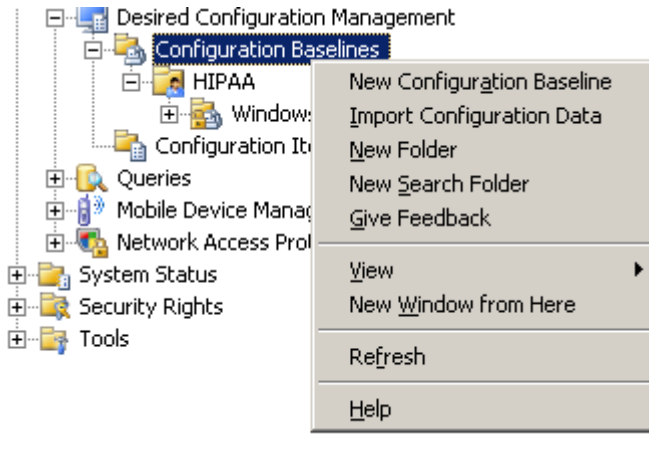
You can duplicate baselines if you want to reuse a baseline as a template. Duplicates don't have any relationships like the child items

Working with DCM

Importing Configuration Packs

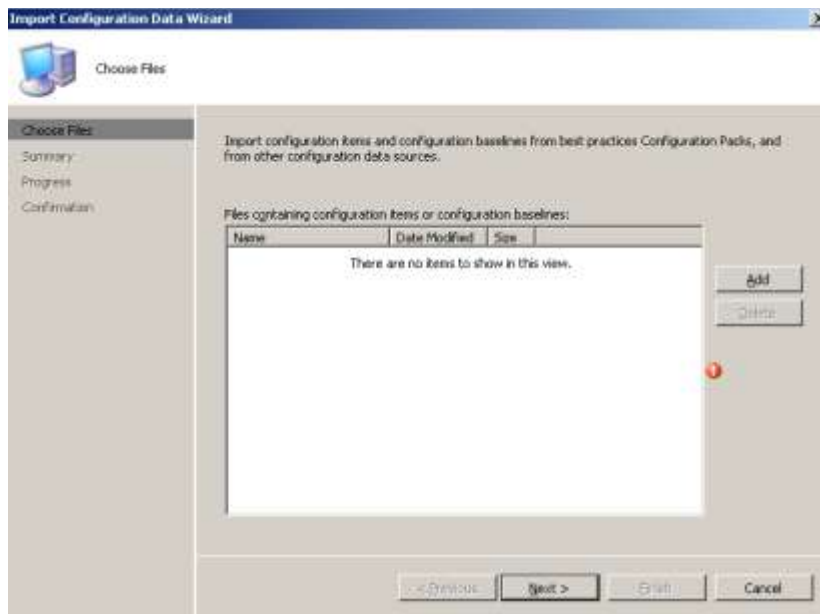
To import a Configuration Pack you need to go to the Desired Configuration Management menu and down to configuration Baselines or Configuration Items.

Right Click and choose "Import Configuration Data"



BASELINE MENU

The Import wizard will start and you need to press add to import one or several Configuration Packs.



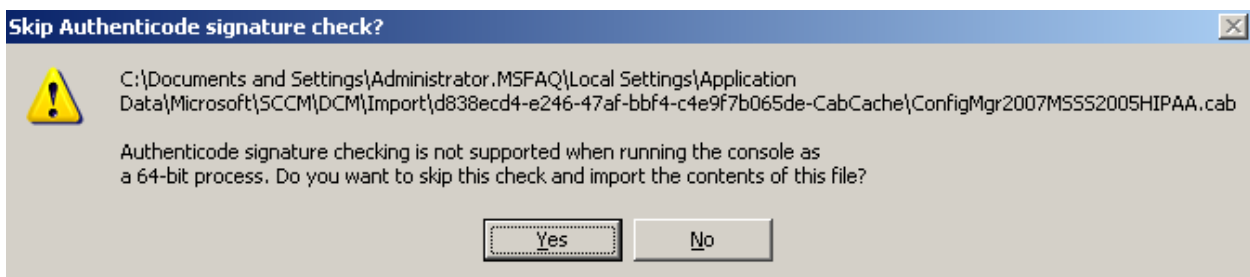
IMPORT WIZARD

When you press add you need to browse to the installed pack location and choose the cab file for the corresponding configuration pack.



IMPORT WIZARD - ADDING CONFIGURATION PACK

If you are using the x64 bit platform when running your console the Authenticode signature checking is not supported so you will be faced with this prompt. Choose if you want to continue or not.



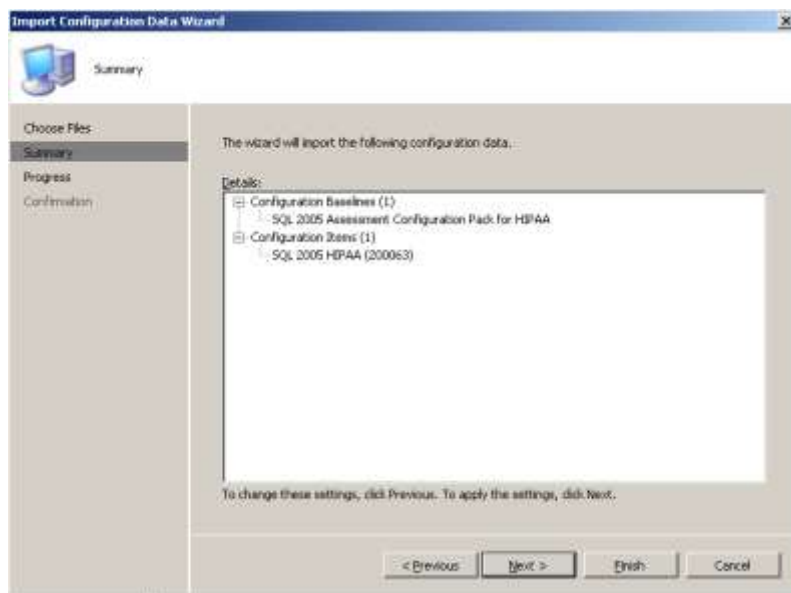
IMPORT WIZARD - X64 WARNING MESSAGE

If you want to you can add more than one pack at this time. Press next after you added your configuration packs.



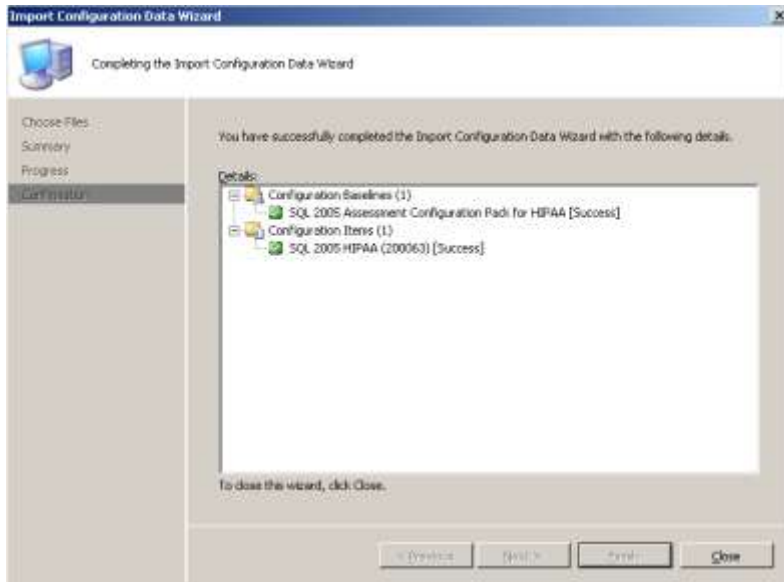
IMPORT WIZARD –ADD CONFIGURATION PACKS

When you press next you will be shown a summary of what will be imported. In this case the SQL 2005 Configuration Pack for HIPAA, 1 baseline and 1 Configuration Item. Press next or Finish if you want to close the wizard.



IMPORT WIZARD –SUMMARY PAGE

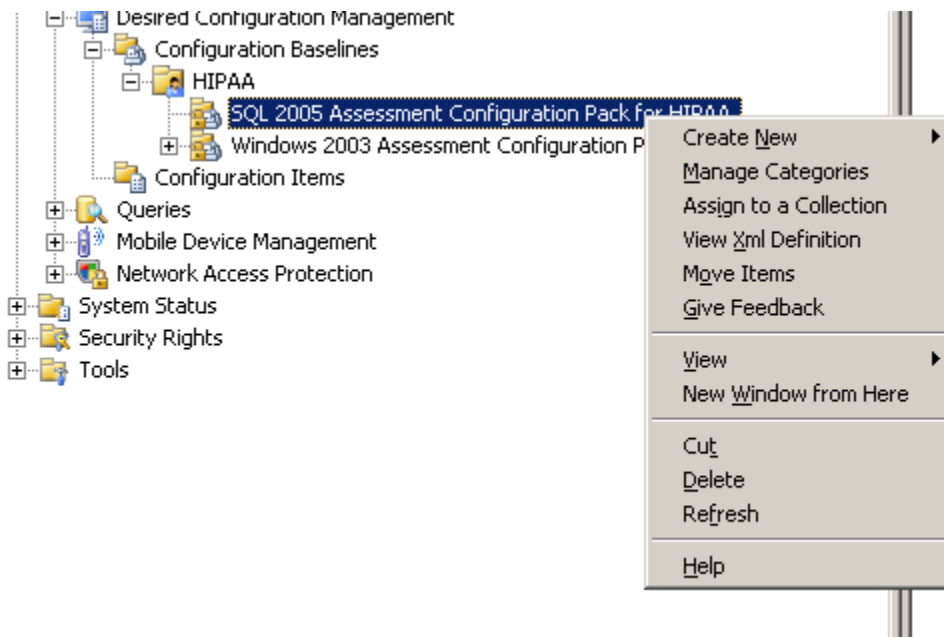
If you press next you will get to this page, now you have successfully imported the configuration pack. Press close



IMPORT WIZARD - RESULT PAGE

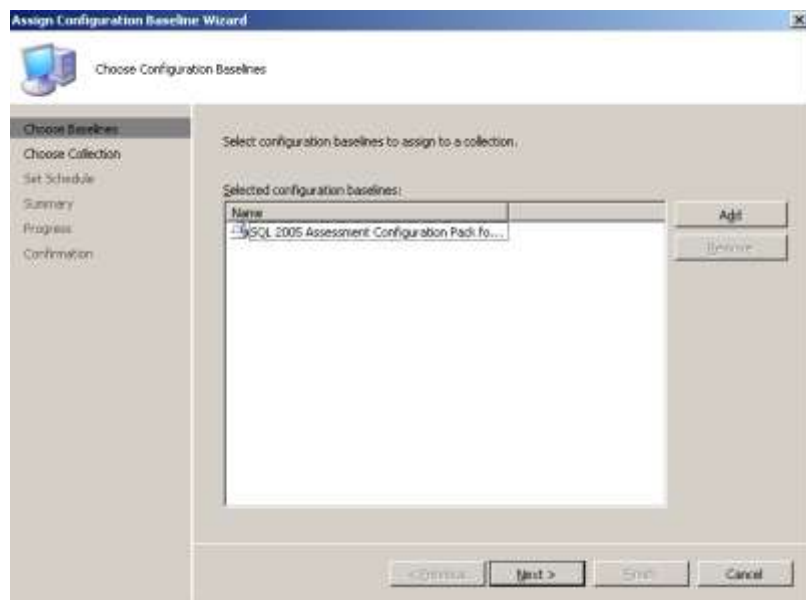
How to assign a baseline

To start using a baseline you need to assign it to a collection. Right click the baseline and choose assign to collection.



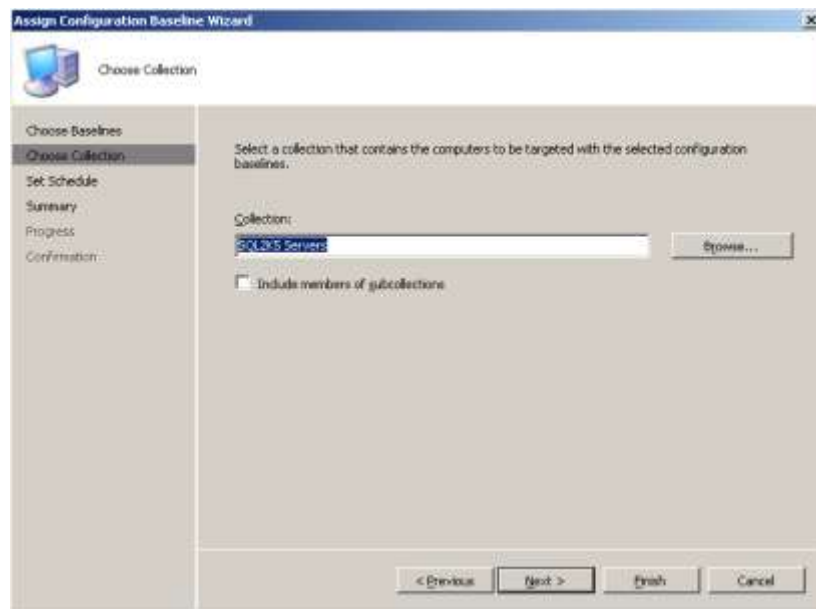
BASELINE ASSIGNMENT

If you want to assign more than one baseline to a collection you can add more baselines now. Press next when you have all baselines you want to assign.



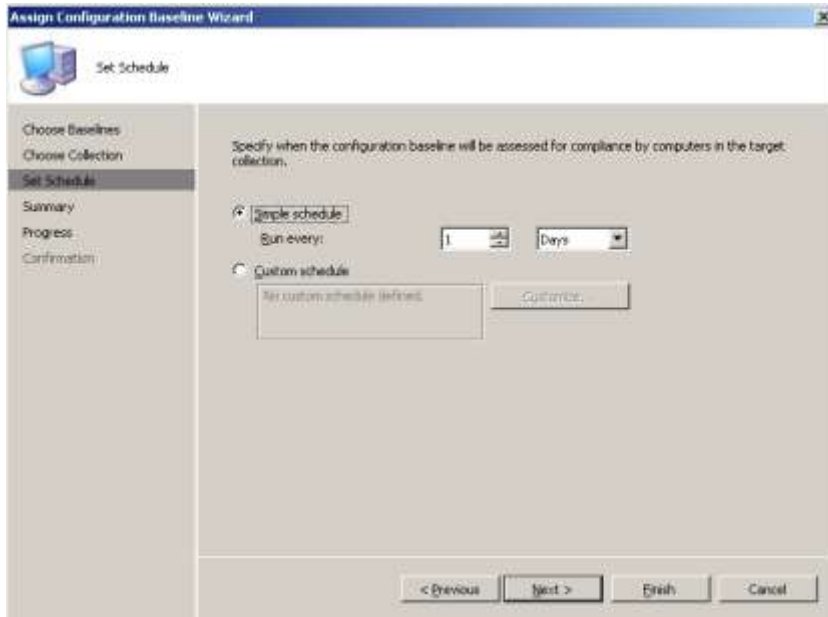
ASSIGNMENT WIZARD - BASELINES

Press the browse button and select a collection from the list. Press Next.



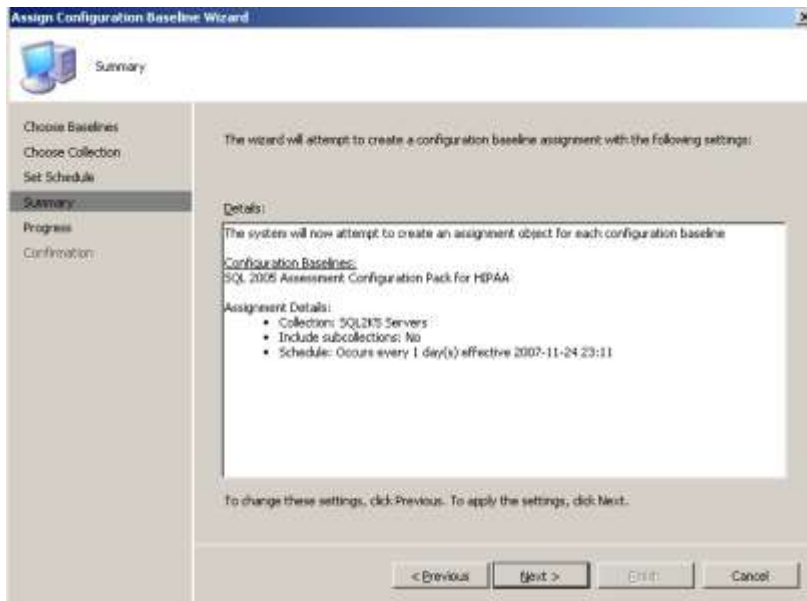
ASSIGNMENT WIZARD - COLLECTION

Now you need to set the schedule you want to run the baseline with. You may want to decrease this value in a lab environment. Press Next.



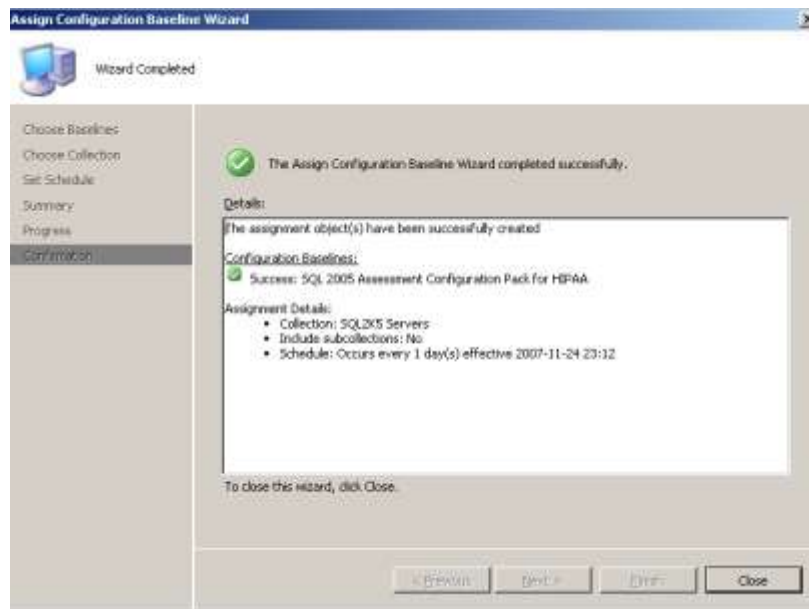
ASSIGNMENT WIZARD – SCHEDULE

Summary, press next



ASSIGNMENT WIZARD - SUMMARY

Results press close.



ASSIGNMENT WIZARD – RESULTS

When the baseline has been evaluated you can now look for brief statuses on the Desired Configuration Management Homepage and from there go to the reporting point to see how your environment meets your baselines.

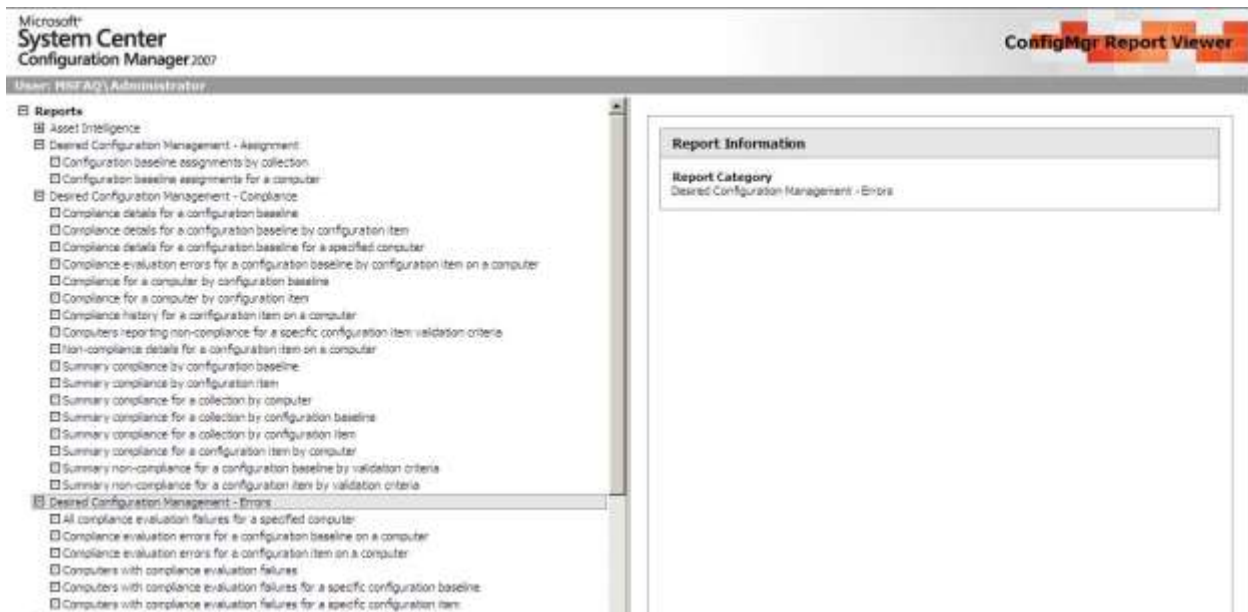
DCM Reporting

DCM reports are run through the ordinary Reporting Point in Configuration Manager. There are a number of pre built reports for DCM. My personal opinion is that this is the weakest part of DCM, let's say that I am administrator and want to get help on how to solve my compliance issues it will take quite some time for me to get an understanding of all things I need to reconfigure in my environment. I know that I am not compliant but don't know how to solve it.

I am for an example not sure if all administrators will understand the following content from a report.

```
SRV-SCCM-01 Win2003 Member Server HIPAA (200027) 38 Info bypass
traverse checking Script bypass traverse checking Rule (@xsi:nil =
'true' or ((mssmlfn:stringCompare(.,'Authenticated Users',true()) = 0)))
Source = Script, Location = ., Property = 1 Not Defined 2007-11-25
11:39:40 SVT/ci_41eab9d5-e396-40bd-80f9-8c185c90bcaf
```

So what I am missing is some guidelines to solve compliance issues.



REPORTING

Resources

Configuration Manager 2007 Toolkit

The configuration Manager 2007 toolkit contains the following tools for DCM

- DCM Model Verification - A tool used by desired configuration management content administrators for the validation and testing of configuration items and baselines authored externally from the Configuration Manager console.
- DCM Digest Conversion - A tool used by desired configuration management content administrators to convert existing SMS 2003 Desired Configuration Management Solution templates to Desired Configuration Management 2007 configuration items.
- DCM Substitution Variables - A tool used by desired configuration management content administrators for authoring desired configuration management configuration items that use chained setting and object discovery.

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=948e477e-fd3b-4a09-9015-141683c7ad5f&DisplayLang=en>

Web resources

Configuration Manager Configuration Pack Catalog

<https://www.microsoft.com/technet/prodtechnol/scp/configmgr07.aspx>

Technical Reference for Desired Configuration Management

<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/bb680894.aspx>

Configuration Pack Authoring Guide

<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/bb680894.aspx>

Configuration Manager Documentation Library

<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-au/library/bb680651.aspx>

Configuring Desired Configuration Management

<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-au/library/bb680669.aspx>

Desired Configuration Management on TechNet Forums

<http://forums.microsoft.com/TechNet/ShowForum.aspx?ForumID=1817&SiteID=17>

Comments

You are welcome to send comments and feedback to stefan@msfaq.se