

THE MIGRATION EPIC

Migration of users from one domain to another in a SharePoint portal

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SharePoint, IMSS, Happiest Minds



The Overtures

a. The Flashback: About SharePoint

Microsoft SharePoint is a browser-based collaboration and document management platform from Microsoft [1]. It is Microsoft's most sophisticated content management system. It allows groups to set up a centralized, password protected space for document sharing. Documents can be stored, downloaded and edited, then uploaded for continued sharing [2]. It is a web-based intranet that can help improve your organization's effectiveness by streamlining the management of and access to data [3]. It can be configured to host intranet, extranet and internet sites.

Business users and content authors can create and submit content for approval and scheduled deployment to intranet or Internet sites. Managing multilingual content is simplified through new document library templates that are specifically designed to maintain a relationship between the original version and multiple translated versions of a document.

b. The Arena: SharePoint Salient Features [4]

1. Provides a simple, familiar, and consistent user experience.
2. Boosts employee productivity by simplifying everyday business activities.
3. Helps to meet regulatory requirements through comprehensive control over content.
4. Effectively manages and repurposes content to enhance business value.
5. Simplifies access to both structured and unstructured information across disparate systems.
6. Connects people with information and expertise.
7. Accelerates shared business processes across organizational boundaries.
8. Enables sharing of business data without divulging sensitive information.
9. Helps people to make better-informed decisions by presenting business-critical data.
10. Provides a single, integrated platform to manage intranet, extranet, and Internet applications across the enterprise.

c. The Antagonist: SharePoint Pain Areas

Although this software marvel boasts of a plethora of benefits, it has some inherent pain areas. Some of the user management related limitations are listed below:

1. Transfer of user from one domain to another

If a user is to be migrated from one domain to another, the admin must manually traverse across all webs, all sub-sites, all groups and permissions to actuate the change on the portal.

2. Replacing a user with another.

Consider a scenario where an organization's internal portal user with certain permission levels is leaving the organization. The new user who will replace him/her must be given same access levels across all the sub sites, permissions and groups. Presently, in SharePoint, there is no such service available to automate and solve this challenge. This is only possible by manually searching and replacing the user.

Since all the points mentioned above can only be addressed by manually operating on the portal, 100% efficiency in accomplishing the change cannot be promised.

The Story

a. The Plot

There are four active directories attached to the web portal that used SharePoint 2010. A decision was taken to club all existing users across all the four domains under one new domain name, to centralize the whole user base. It is to be noted that SharePoint stores the user along with the domain name that he/she belongs to (e.g.: DOMAIN/Username).

Since the web portal encompassed more than 150 sites, it proved to be a very tedious task to manually browse through each site and its permission level and replace the old user with the new login name of the new domain. Also, it was necessary to give the same permission levels to the new user as its old counterpart. Then it was required to traverse through all the groups and ensure the new user was added in all the groups where the old user existed.

If the admin has to perform this change manually, the efforts and time required to accomplish this task is enormous.

The challenge was proactively accepted by the SharePoint Development Team to solve it using SharePoint Object Model. A console application was created as the solution.

b. The Protagonist

A small but efficient application is developed as a pain killer for the aforementioned shortcoming of SharePoint. The console application was developed using SharePoint Object Model by the SharePoint development team to solve the issue. The application has following features:

Version 1.0 (*Initial release*)

1. The application takes inputs such as:
 - i. List of sites collections URL that must be traversed
 - ii. Login names of the old and new user
 - iii. List of domain names which must be replaced
2. Traverses across all the sites (mentioned in the input text file) & sub sites, permissions of the site, and groups and replaces the old user with the new user.
3. Creates a log file on execution to log the changes made during its runtime.

The Climax

Once all the desirable input data is available in the input text files, the *.exe file is executed. This will open in a command prompt window. The internal migration activity will be displayed on the screen and same is logged in a Log.txt file.

Advantages:

1. Since there is no manual work involved, the migration is 100% efficient
2. Application does not require any monitoring, hence saves the Admin's time and efforts.

The Credits: Bibliography

- 1 Wikipedia
- 2 SAIT Polytechnic Teaching Glossary
- 3 SharePoint HQ
- 4 <http://www.sharepointhq.com/resources/what-is-sharepoint>
- 5 <http://portal.feedingmany.org/mb/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=8>

Behind the scene: About the authors

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