

Introduction

Why Do You Need This Book?

Welcome to the **Network Documentation Workbook: A Guide for Small-Medium (SMB) Windows Administrators**. This “Great Little Book” is intended to help you document your network. While it is designed around the latest Windows Server environment, much of this will work with any network, including Novell, Linux, or even Apple!



You might be tempted to say “I don’t need a workbook. I can write down the passwords and print out various configuration pages.” True enough, but do you? And more importantly, do you provide a consistent, reliable, complete documentation of your network? Most administrators do not.

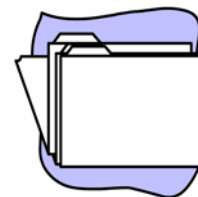
I have been working with technology since 1982. I have been a network administrator since 1992 and a fulltime network consultant for ten years. There are two scenarios we see repeated over and over and over as the years roll along. These are two horrible situations that we stumble onto with new clients time after time. It is no exaggeration that more than 50% of all new clients who come to us have one of these two problems:

1. Their backup is not working (and often they don’t know this).
- or
2. Their last administrator left and he’s the only one who knows anything about the network. In some cases, he’s the only one who knows the administrator password!

If you’re a consultant, I know you’re nodding your head right now and saying “It’s true. It’s true.” This Workbook is intended for two general audiences: Network administrators who don’t want to be cussed out when they leave an organization, and network consultants who manage several companies’ networks. The Workbook is intended to give you a ready-made template for documenting your network—and keeping that documentation up to date.

Organization

The essence of The Workbook is a series of forms that can be used to document various parts of your “domain.” (That was techno-goober humor. For those of you new to the computer biz, you’ll just have to trust me, it’s funny.) As you complete these forms, you will build your Network Binder, the ultimate roadmap of your network.



The Workbook is divided into logical sections, just as your Binder will be. I have a brief introduction to each section noting some “best practices” about networks, machine specifications, software, etc. In addition, each form includes some notes on using the form and keeping it up to date.

If you work through the entire Workbook, you will have a “Great Little Network Binder” as well as a good understanding of the regular procedures you need to maintain your network.