Windows SteadyState Technical FAQ

General

Can I install Windows® SteadyState™ on a 64-bit computer?

Windows SteadyState is designed to work on 32-bit computers only.

Can Windows SteadyState be installed on a computer running the Microsoft® Windows 2000 operating system?

No. Windows SteadyState can only be installed on computers running the Windows XP operating system or the Windows Vista® operating system.

Do I still need a firewall?

We recommend that you use a firewall, such as the Windows Firewall included in Windows XP with Service Pack 2 (SP2) and Windows Vista. By using a firewall, you can help protect your computers from a network attack.

Can I use the System Preparation Tool with Windows SteadyState?

The System Preparation Tool (Sysprep.exe) can be used to prepare a reference computer with Windows SteadyState for disk imaging. You may then replicate the disk image on multiple computers that have the same or similar hardware configurations.

Note: Windows Disk Protection should not be enabled on the reference computer when you are using the System Preparation Tool. Enable it on the destination computer after replication either manually or by using the **/EnableWDPAndReboot** parameter.

When you run Sysprep.exe on a computer running Windows SteadyState, make sure all user profiles are unlocked before running the tool. Sysprep.exe does not recognize locked or mandatory profiles and will copy a new Ntuser.dat file into the <user> folder. Additionally, Sysprep.exe creates a new user security identifier (SID). After you run Sysprep.exe, existing Windows SteadyState user profiles (Ntuser.man) become invalid as they are no longer linked to the new SIDs.

For more information, see "Installing SteadyState on Multiple Computers" in the *Windows SteadyState Handbook.*

How do I restrict users in a domain environment?

Although Windows SteadyState can be used to restrict local user accounts on a shared computer, Active Directory provides more powerful tools to restrict users and configure the computers on a domain network.

In centrally administered domains, Active Directory® and Group Policy are preferred for managing users, groups, and restrictions across multiple computers. Windows SteadyState includes a Group Policy template for use with Active Directory. This template applies shared computer user settings and restrictions across a domain network.

For more information about how to administer Windows SteadyState in a domain environment, see "Using Windows SteadyState with Active Directory and Network Domains" in the *Windows SteadyState Handbook.*

Can a user bypass Windows SteadyState by starting their computer from a CD-ROM or a USB drive?

Yes. If the computer's basic input/output system (BIOS) settings have been configured incorrectly, any user can start the computer from CD, DVD, or USB media and bypass Windows SteadyState security. It is usually possible to prevent this kind of activity by disabling the ability to start from CD in a computer's BIOS settings and then password protecting the BIOS configuration.

Can a user bypass Windows SteadyState by starting the computer in safe mode?

No. Safe mode requires knowledge of the administrator password to enable the user to log on. Unless the user has the administrator password, there is nothing the user can do to bypass security. Restricted administrators (a specially configured administrator account) are still subject to restrictions when in safe mode. However, Windows Disk Protection is not supported in safe mode and changes that are made to the system will be permanently saved.

How can Windows SteadyState be used to safely test software?

If you are a software tester, or if you frequently install new software to try it out, you may find Windows Disk Protection very useful. When Windows Disk Protection is turned on and left in default mode, Windows SteadyState does not allow permanent changes to the Windows partition. When the computer restarts, changes such as the installation of new programs are cleared.

To try the program for a specified time period, set Windows Disk Protection to **Retain changes temporarily** for multiple computer restarts. You can then decide whether to

remove or save the installation of the application permanently by setting Windows Disk Protection to **Retain all changes permanently**.

For more information about how to install applications together with Windows Disk Protection, see "Windows Disk Protection Levels" in the *Windows SteadyState Handbook.*

General Troubleshooting

I'm experiencing performance issues after I installed Windows SteadyState. What should I do?

Performance issues, such as the computer running slowly, that occur after you install Windows SteadyState are typically the result of one of the following:

- Insufficient memory. Consider upgrading the hardware.

- Malicious software (also called malware), spyware and unwanted software, or a system virus. Consider running a spyware and virus scan.

- Fragmentation of the hard disk drive. Consider defragmenting the hard disk drive. We recommend turning off Windows Disk Protection if you defragment your hard disk drive. For more information, see "Installing and Turning on Windows Disk Protection" in the *Windows SteadyState Handbook.*

If these approaches do not resolve the performance issue, use one of the performance monitoring tools available in Windows XP or Windows Vista to analyze the activity levels on the hard disk drive. To access these tools, click **Start**, click **Control Panel**, click **Administrator Tools**, and then click **Performance**.

Why are the shortcuts I copied to the shared user profile desktop not appearing?

Most likely either Windows Disk Protection was turned on when you made the change, or the profile is locked. You can turn off Windows Disk Protection, or you can select **Retain all changes permanently** in the **Protect the Hard Disk** dialog box to retain changes to a user profile.

Why am I unable to install software for a user profile?

First, make sure that the user profile is unlocked before you install the software. Second, make sure that Windows Disk Protection is not clearing the software installation. Follow these steps:

1. Click **Protect the Hard Disk** in the Windows SteadyState main dialog box.

2. Select **Retain all changes permanently**.

3. Restart the computer.

4. Do not forget to return your Windows Disk Protection settings to **Remove all changes at restart** after the system starts up again.

Why are users unable to customize the toolbar in Windows Internet Explorer or access certain buttons in the toolbar?

You may have set Windows or Feature Restrictions on the user profile. Select the user profile and examine the restrictions you have selected on the **Windows Restrictions** tab and the **Feature Restrictions** tab on the **User Settings** dialog box. Specifically, examine the following tabs for restrictions you may have placed on the user:

- **General Restrictions** on the **Windows Restrictions** tab—some restrictions selected on this tab may prevent access to several Windows Explorer features (such as Search) and may prevent users from customizing toolbars.

- **Internet Explorer Restrictions** on the **Feature Restrictions** tab—some restrictions selected on this tab may prevent access to some Windows Internet Explorer® toolbar buttons (such as Search) and may prevent users from accessing certain toolbar buttons.

For more information about User Settings, see "Configuring the Shared User Profile" in the *Windows SteadyState Handbook.*

Why doesn't the **Prevent Internet access (except Web Sites below)** setting restrict users from all Web sites except those I have listed as acceptable?

The **Prevent Internet Access (except Web Sites below)** setting cannot be used with a proxy server.

Why am I receiving a logon error when I copy temporary Internet files?

Temporary Internet file names may sometimes be too long to copy. This can result in an error message when a profile is loading and trying to copy the files.

To resolve the logon error you must unlock the profile, delete the temporary Internet files, and then lock the profile again. Follow this procedure:

1. Log on as an administrator and open Windows SteadyState.

2. If Windows Disk Protection is turned on, click **Protect the Hard Disk** and select **Retain changes permanently** to make sure that your changes will be saved.

3. Under **User Settings** select the profile you want to unlock. On its **General** settings tab, clear the **Lock Profile** box.

4. Log off as administrator and then log on to the newly unlocked profile. Click **Start**, open **Control Panel**, and then click **Internet Options**. Under Temporary Internet files, click **Delete Files**.

5. Log off the user profile and log back on as administrator. Relock the user profile by checking the **Lock Profile** box again.

6. Do not forget to return your Windows Disk Protection settings to **Remove all changes at restart** if necessary.

You can then log off as the user and log on as administrator to relock the profile.

Why do users of my shared computer sometimes see the following error message? "Your Account is disabled. Please see your system administrator."

The software updates that you scheduled in Windows SteadyState lock all the accounts temporarily until all updates are completed. Consider scheduling updates to occur when the computer is not being used.

Why am I unable to run a specific program or a game with a shared user account?

Some programs that were not designed to run on Windows XP will not run correctly on a typical shared user account. Common examples include network-based multiplayer games and older educational programs. If necessary, a restricted shared administrative account can be created for operating such software. A restricted shared administrative account is an unlocked user profile in which most restrictions have been removed.

For more information, see "Creating a Restricted Shared Administrative Account" in the *Windows SteadyState Handbook.*

Why can't I save files to a USB flash drive from a shared user profile?

If the shared user profile has high restrictions selected on the **Windows Restrictions** tab under **User Settings**, access to the USB device may not be available.

To allow a restricted user to save files to a USB device:

1. Log on to the shared computer as administrator and start Windows SteadyState.

2. Click **Protect the Hard Disk**, verify that Windows Disk Protection is turned on and that the **Retain all changes permanently** option is selected, and then click **OK**.

3. Under **User Settings**, click the user profile that has limited access to the USB device.

4. In the **User Settings** dialog box, turn off the **Prevent access to Windows Explorer features: Folder Options, Customize Toolbar,** and the **My Documents folder** restriction under **General Restrictions** on the **Windows Restrictions** tab.

5. Restart the computer for Windows Disk Protection to save changes.

The computer logs off after only five minutes of inactivity. Why isn't the idle session timer working?

The Windows XP or Windows Vista screen saver setting used when configuring the user profile will override the Windows SteadyState idle timer setting in the **User Settings** dialog box. If you turn off the Windows screen saver, you can then configure the idle timer under **Session Timers** for that profile.

Why do users receive an error that a file name or extension is too long?

On computers running Windows XP, if a file name or extension in the user profile is over 256 characters, the following error message will display:

"Windows cannot copy file %systemdrive%:\Documents and Settings\user.org\localsettings\temporary internet files\content IE5\2WCEFELY.Detail – the file name or extension is too long."

To remove files that have long names or extensions:

1. Log on to the shared computer as the Administrator and start Windows SteadyState.

2. Locate the %systemdrive%:\Documents and Settings\user.org folder.

3. Delete all files that have names or extensions over 256 characters long.

To prevent this problem in the future, clear all temporary Internet files before locking a user profile.

What support options are available for Windows SteadyState?

Support information for Windows SteadyState is available through the following resources:

- The Windows SteadyState Web site

- The list of known issues available in the Readme on the Windows SteadyState download page.

- The *Windows SteadyState Handbook*

- The Windows SteadyState Community Site

- Customer Support Services (CSS) can be contacted for paid support, or if you already have a support agreement. Use the following Windows SteadyState product ID when contacting CSS: 77695-100-0001260-04309.

Antivirus

Do I still need an antivirus program?

Yes, we recommend that you use antivirus and spyware prevention programs in addition to the protections provided by Windows SteadyState.

Which antivirus programs does Windows SteadyState support?

Windows SteadyState can automatically detect and let you update the following antivirus programs:

- Computer Associates eTrust 7.0

- McAfee VirusScan

- TrendMicro OfficeScan 6.5

- TrendMicro OfficeScan 7.0

- TrendMicro OfficeScan 7.3

If you use a different antivirus or spyware prevention program, you can schedule updates for your program by using a custom script. For more information, see "Custom Updates" in the *Windows SteadyState Handbook*.

Why doesn't Windows SteadyState detect my antivirus program for scheduled critical updates?

Windows SteadyState detects antivirus programs installed on your computer and schedules to update them automatically, but not all antivirus programs can be detected. Windows SteadyState may detect and update the following antivirus programs automatically:

- Computer Associates eTrust 7.0

- McAfee VirusScan 2005

- McAfee VirusScan Enterprise 8.0

- TrendMicro OfficeScan 6.5

- TrendMicro OfficeScan 7.0

- TrendMicro OfficeScan 7.3

When you turn on Windows Disk Protection and schedule software updates, Windows SteadyState may indicate that no antivirus program is detected on your computer.

If you receive this message, you can schedule updates for your antivirus program by using a custom script. For more information, see "Custom Updates" in the *Windows SteadyState Handbook.*

Why am I unable to use my TrendMicro product?

The following TrendMicro products can be used with Windows SteadyState:

- OfficeScan 6.5

- OfficeScan 7.0

- OfficeScan 7.3

To use the TrendMicro products here with Windows SteadyState, download and install the TrendMicro ClientUpdateNow.exe tool. For more information, visit the following support link on the TrendMicro Web site.

Windows Disk Protection

What's the difference between Windows Disk Protection and Windows System Restore?

There are two main differences:

- Windows Disk Protection caches changes that are made to any files on the Windows system partition. System Restore only monitors changes to a core set of system and program files. Unlike Windows SteadyState, System Restore does not restore the condition of personal user data such as files that are located in Favorites, History, My Documents, and so on.

- With System Restore, an administrator must manually return the computer to a restore point if there is tampering or a problem. By default, Windows Disk Protection clears changes to the hard disk at each restart. The administrator must manually save any disk changes they want to keep.

Warning: Using Windows System Restore while Windows Disk Protection is turned on is not supported and may cause damage to the file system structure.

How much hard disk space will the Windows Disk Protection cache use on my shared computer?

Windows Disk Protection needs at least 4 gigabytes (GB) of unallocated space on your Windows system partition to create its minimum 2-GB cache. The default amount of hard disk space that Windows Disk Protection uses is 50 percent of free hard disk space, not to exceed 40 GB.

You can resize the cache file if necessary. For more information, see "Resizing the Cache File" in the *Windows SteadyState Handbook.*

Can I protect more than one hard disk by using Windows Disk Protection?

No. Windows Disk Protection only protects the Windows system partition. You may want to consider restricting users' access to other drives on the system.

Can I enable and disable Windows Disk Protection at a command prompt?

Windows SteadyState provides two command-line parameters: **/EnableWDPAndReboot** and **/DisableWDPAndReboot**.

For more information, see "Using Windows Disk Protection API" in the *Windows SteadyState Handbook.*

How do I save event logs for a shared computer that is running Windows Disk Protection?

You can modify the Windows Registry with Registry Editor to save event logs to either a separate partition on the shared computer or a non-system drive, such as a network drive or a USB flash drive.

Caution: If you incorrectly edit your Windows Registry, the system may be severely damaged. Before you change the registry, you should back up the registry and any valued data on your computer.

To save event logs to a protected partition on the shared computer or to a non-system drive:

1. Click **Start**, click **Run**, type **regedit** and then click **OK**.

2. Locate and select the following registry key: HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\Eventlog

3. Click the subkey that represents the event log that you want to move (for example, click **System**).

4. In the right side pane, double-click **File**.

5. In the **Edit String** box, type the full path of the new location (including the log file name) in the Value data box, and then click **OK**.

For example, if you want to save the Application log (Appevent.evt) to the Eventlogs folder on drive E, type **E:\eventlogs\appevent.evt**.

6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 for each log file that you want to save to a new location.

7. On the **File** menu, click **Exit**.

8. Restart the computer to save changes that you made to the registry file.

Why do I have to reinstall some programs every time that the shared computer is restarted?

After Windows Disk Protection is turned on and set to either **Remove all changes at restart** or **Retain changes temporarily**, all programs installed later are removed when Windows Disk Protection removes changes.

Make sure that you install and configure all the programs that you want to keep permanently on the computer before turning on Windows Disk Protection. If you have already turned on Windows Disk Protection, switch to **Retain all changes permanently** mode, and then install the new program(s).

For more information, see "Protecting the Hard Disk" in the *Windows SteadyState Handbook.*