UNLV.EDU

Moving from nevada.edu to unlv.edu as the default search suffix

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Background

- When you connect to the network your computer asks for information
  - What IP address may I use?
  - Where is the DNS server?
  - What is my default search suffix?
Background Cont’d

- The Network Replies
  - “Use nevada.edu as your default search suffix!”
  - I’m looking for a server called “Domino4” now I can automatically add “nevada.edu” to that search and I’ll have a properly formatted name: domino4.nevada.edu
Why?

- Years ago, domino did not use fully qualified names like domino1.unlv.edu
- We were a smaller campus, many resources were supported by SCS (nevada.edu)
- OIT historically had administrative access to edit the nevada.edu domain through an interface provided by SCS (NSHE)
Who Cares

- Not many things but some new critical ones
  - Windows Vista and Windows 7 license management server
  - Maybe some older applications
Why Fix This?

- Right now we have to run a batch file on every single computer that gets deployed to point to the Windows License Mgr.

- The batch file can only point to one server

- The search suffix could point to multiple servers
Why fix cont’d.

- The organization of IT resources has changed, most services are supported directly by UNLV rather than hosted by SCS. UNLV should reflect this in naming conventions.

- Providing unlv.edu allows any resource to be discovered in the unlv.edu domain.
How to fix it

- At a technical level this is an easy change
- It might take 30 seconds
So…. Just change it

- It is difficult to know what may break, ie. what servers are still looking for a server name and counting on the local host to append “nevada.edu”
Suggestion

- Our first step will be to change the current search suffix from nevada.edu to NeVaDa.EdU
- DNS is not case sensitive but is case preserving
- This will allow us to see which computers are using full nevada.edu names and which are appending the suffix from the settings we provide through DHCP
Suggestions Cont’d

- Once we have a baseline of how many hosts are impacted, we can slowly change each building one at a time
- First change networks with OIT hosts
- Then one building network at a time
- If something breaks, fixes are easy to implement
- Gradually convert the whole campus
Implications

- May see an increase in support calls
- System administrators in OIT may have to be nimble in making some changes to correct some system names
- Communications plans will need to be developed
- Educating desktop support staff and IT Help Desk on field ‘fixes’ will be required