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Task force to tackle Group Policy standards

 By Margie Semilof, Senior News Writer
 22 Jun 2004 | [SearchWinIT.com](#)
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A number of management software vendors have formed a task force to create a uniform way to leverage Microsoft's [Group Policy](#) change and configuration tools.

The new organization, called the Group Policy Task Force, will develop standards that will eventually be publicly posted to the [GPTF.org](#) Web site, according to Jeremy Moskowitz, a consultant and Group Policy expert based in Wilmington, Del.

The value of the organization for IT administrators will be in their future purchase of products that work to extend Group Policy, which specifies settings for users and groups of users. Some settings include registry-based policy settings, security settings, software installation, scripts, startup and shutdown and folder redirection.

"If [administrators] decide they want to buy multiple products from more than one vendor, there will be an increased likelihood that the products will cooperate," Moskowitz said.

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There are 10 forum members: Quest Software Inc., AutoProf Inc., FullArmor Corp., GPanswers.com, InstallShield Software Corp. (recently acquired by Macrovision Corp.), Special Operations Software, Microsoft, NetIQ Corp., ScriptLogic Corp. and Vintela Inc.

One customer hailed the group's efforts to create standards for Group Policy.

"Group Policy is not uniform," said Jay Leal, a systems architect at First National Bank, Edinburg, Texas. Leal's company uses AutoProf's Policy Maker Pro, a desktop manager that adds some patch management features to Group Policy.

With Policy Maker, there is an agent that is installed on each computer with specific policy settings that interface with Group Policy. Each vendor has its own way of adding settings to enhance Group Policy.



"It may let you run more than one vendor's product or more easily switch to another vendor's product if you want to," Leal said.

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