

## A Clean Install in a Dirty World

Posted At : June 22, 2006 10:44 AM | Posted By : Mark Kruger

Related Categories: Hosting and Networking

One of the things I often recommend when upgrading or troubleshooting is a "clean install". What I mean is that all traces of the previous product should be removed and a fresh "from scratch" installation attempted. If possible, this should start with the Operating system. Here's my tip list for a clean install of Windows 2000(3) server with Coldfusion.

### Follow the "Custom" Installation Path

Don't ever do the "default" installation. Go through and select (or usually *de-select* the items you don't want. Your goal is to have a server that is specifically tasked and does not have *anything* running on it that it does not need. Don't install MS Indexing service unless you intend to use it. Are you relaying e-mail? No? Then why is the SMTP service running? How about FTP? Left to it's own devices Win2k installs as "all things to all people". It assumes a multi-purpose role. Don't let it be in charge - take control. You have access to everything! It's not an Apple Dang it!

### After Install Run the Service Packs and *selected* Patches

It amazes me how many people simply install patches without reading the notes. You *do not need* every patch. Why install patches for windows media player if you are not surfing the web with this server? There are a host of patches for "client" type software on your Win2k box. Read and install selectively. My one caveat is to install the patches for Internet Explorer. Microsoft often includes fixes to lower level network protocols in these patches - at least it used to pre-XP.

### Install and Patch the Application Software (CF)

Do your install and patch the software *before* you start tuning and configuring. Make sure it tests out.

### Disable unneeded Services

Even though you did a custom install there will still end up being services you don't need. Here are a couple of examples.

- **Print Spooler** - Unless this is a print server, disable the spooler. Take note, before you stop the service and disable it go to the print folder and click on *File-Server Properties* and *de-select* the logging options. If you do not you will get spooler errors in your event logs (very annoying).
- **Coldfusion ODBC Server** - You didn't think of that one did you. If you are not using ODBC you do not need this service - disable it. How do you know if you are using ODBC? If you are using Access, you will need to keep it. If you have any data sources that connect through the "ODBC socket driver" you will need to keep it. If you typically use an RDBMS and JDBC drivers then you just don't need it. Nor do you need the ODBC Server Agent
- **Computer Browser** - This has nothing to do with your Internet browser. The *browser* service is charged with keeping track of computers on your network so that when you go to *network neighborhood* you can find computers near you. You probably do not need this service on a server.

## Make a list of services and processes.

This is actually new to my check-list but a great idea. The mmc allows you to "export to list" your services. Knowing which services are running on a "clean install" can help you identify changes later on. You can also use PSLIST (see the [PS Tools](#) at sysinternals) to create a list of processes. Thanks to Brian at [Studio Cart](#) for that suggestion.

## Delete Log Files and Defrag the drives

Lot's of copying and deleting is going on during all that install work. There are log files and events on the drive. Take the time to clear the system, application and security event logs. Delete any other logs you might find and defrag the drives. This isn't done for space reasons. It is done for the purpose of getting a suitable baseline. If you know the logs and drives are clean before you configure the ap server and start production then you will know what has changed or been logged since this starting point.

## Collect a Few Counters as a Baseline

I put a text file on the desktop called "stats" that contains the initial stats for processor and memory (and anything else germane the system tasking. This gives me a baseline to work with as I monitor the system load.

Most of this list boils down to being methodical and trying to *single task* the server. If you have tips feel free to share them.