

Shutdownertron - Administrator's Guide

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Why Shutdownertron?

Shutdownertron is the best of both shutdown methods: decentralised payloads, but centralised policy control. This simplifies administration, without requiring an operational server to activate the payload. It fits into Active Directory's Group Policy structure and deploys to client workstations using Microsoft Windows Installer format (.msi).

1.2 Requirements

Clients: The .Net framework version 2.0 or higher (required)

Server: Group Policy Management Console (recommended)

1.3 Obtaining Shutdownertron

Each release, GnuPG¹signature, release notes and changelog is available at <http://www.powdarrmonkey.net/software/shutdownertron/>. The GnuPG signature should be signed by the key ID 0xC2EBCE71 (which is in turn signed by the perpetual key 0xDB800B52) and give the date and time of the release.

1.4 Revision history

01/03/2009 - initial release

¹Gnu Privacy Guard. When decoded, the signature gives a reassurance that the files are intact and have not been tampered with during transmission. The software to do this is available from the Gnu project (<http://www.gnupg.org/>).

Chapter 2

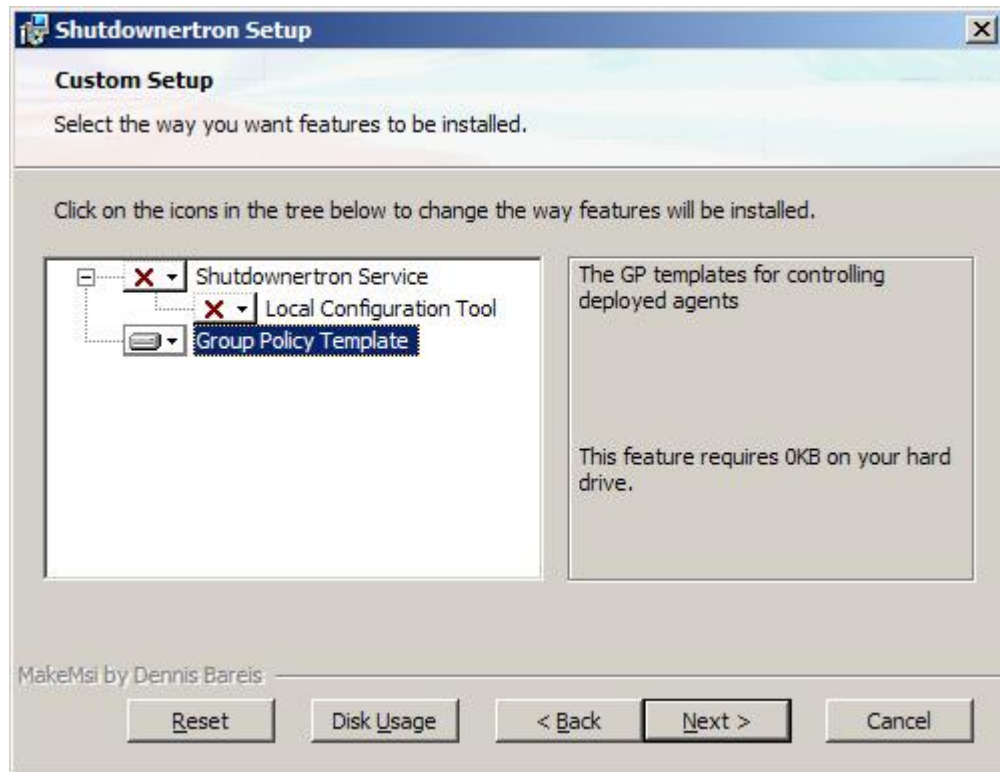
Installation

2.1 Server Installation

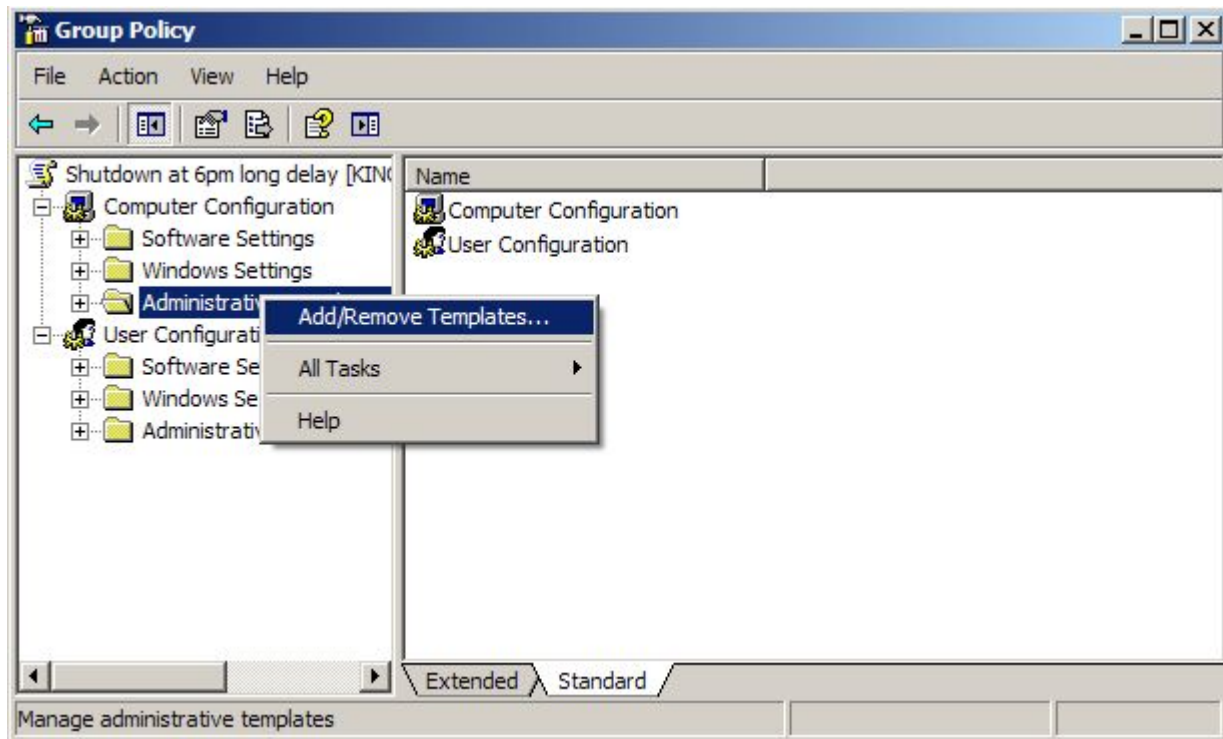
If you have a workstation available with the Group Policy administration tools already installed, it is recommended that you install the policy templates here instead of on your server. The templates will propagate across your Active Directory site in exactly the same way.

In either case, begin the installation by extracting the MSI from the release archive, and run it at the server or workstation console. You will need at least Local Administrator privileges for this (if you are installing to a domain controller, you will need to be a member of the Domain Admins or Server Operators groups).

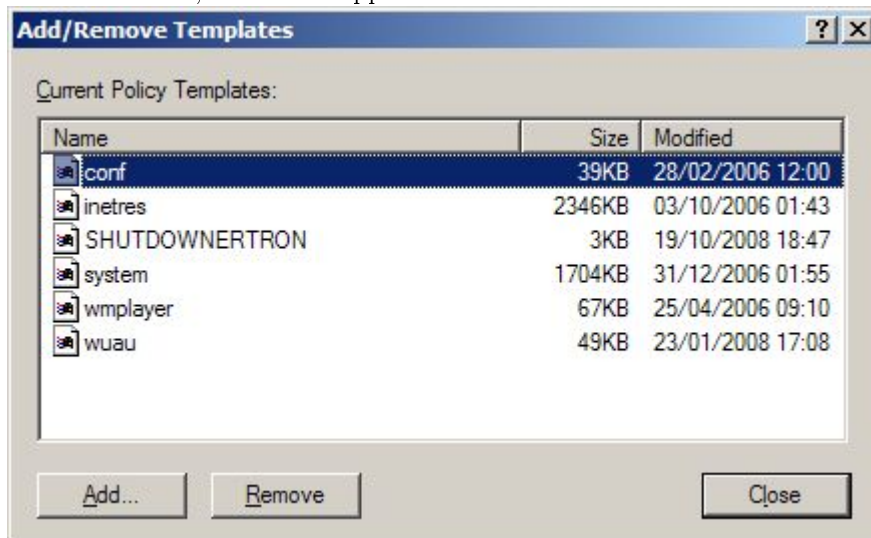
The Windows Installer wizard will guide you through each step of the installation. Choose a Custom Setup, and when asked for the components to install, select only the Group Policy Template option:



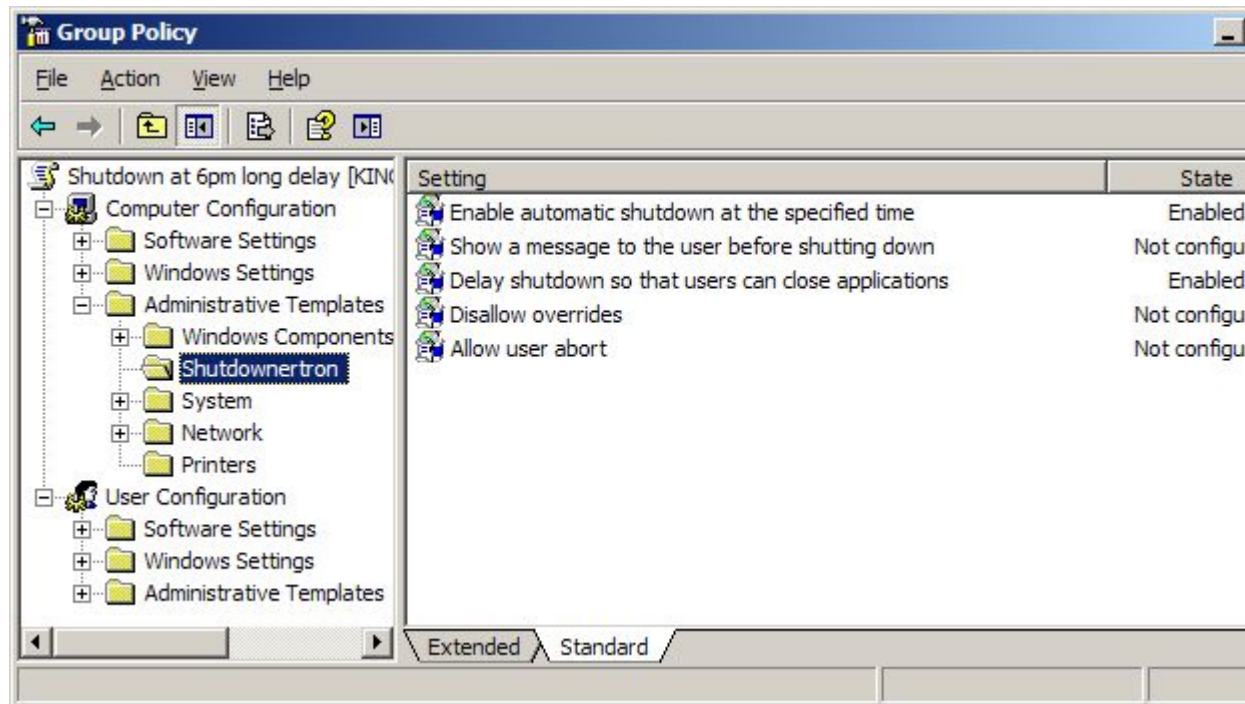
The policy template is installed to the path `%WINDIR%\inf`, the default location for policy templates. Now create and edit a new group policy object, and expand the *Computer Configuration* node. Right-click on the *Administrative Templates* node, and select “Add/Remove Templates”:



Use the *Add* option to select the SHUTDOWNERTRON.adm template from the default location, and it will appear in the list:



The Shutdownertron template now appears under *Administrative Templates*:



Once the template propagates through your Active Directory infrastructure, the server installation is complete.

Note: If you upgrade your server installation with a release in which the template schema has changed, you **MUST** open any group policy object in which the template is loaded for it to be installed into the GPO. Until you do this, clients and other servers will continue to use the old schema, which can result in some very confusing errors. Any release in which the schema has changed will have a note in the changelog to this effect.

2.2 Client Installation

The client portion of the Shutdownertron installer contains two components: the Shutdownertron agent itself, which is required; and an optional local configuration tool (which appears in the *Administrative Tools* section of the control panel). Accepting the default options installs and starts the agent service, and sets the configuration tool to be installed on demand – that is, when you open the tool for the first time, Windows Installer will install it for you automatically. There are two ways to modify this behaviour.

2.2.1 Automatic installation

The default behaviour is *install on demand*. There are two MSI transforms provided in the release archive:

configfromlocal.mst when applied, installs the local configuration tool explicitly during agent installation;

noconfig.mst when applied, does not install the local configuration tool at all.

If you apply both transforms, that with the highest precedence will take effect.

2.2.2 Manual installation

The installation wizard will prompt you to choose a setup type:

Install will follow the default behaviour as above;

Custom will give you a choice of options for the local configuration tool's installation behaviour.

Chapter 3

Configuration

3.1 Group Policy configuration

Each configuration option in the Group Policy template can have several additional parameters. Shutdownertron obeys normal group policy inheritance rules.

Enable automatic shutdown at the specified time

If enabled, you must also set the Hour, Minute and Shutdown Mode parameters. If you disable or do not configure this option, the agent service will start but sleep in the background and you will see an appropriate message in the event log.

Show a message to the user before shutting down

Displays a message to the user in addition to the standard text. If enabled you must also provide a message. The dialog is not shown if Shutdownertron is configured to shut down without a delay (and therefore the user will not see your message regardless). See *Delay shutdown so that users can close applications*.

Delay shutdown so that users can close applications

Displays a countdown timer in hours, minutes and seconds. If enabled you must also provide a time for which to delay, measured in seconds. If you disable this option no warning is given. If you do not configure it, a default time of 5 minutes is used.

Disallow overrides

Shutdownertron can be configured at each workstation to ignore shutdown policies from the server, so that you can stop selected workstations from being interrupted. This option controls whether local overrides are allowed to take effect.

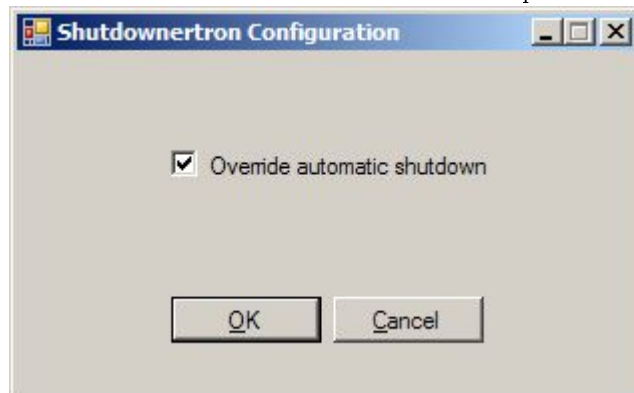
If enabled, local overrides will be ignored and shutdowns will take place on the workstation as normal. If disabled or not configured, the local override setting does take effect.

Allow user abort

Prevent the user from aborting the shutdown process if you delay it. If you enable or do not configure this option, the user can abort the shutdown at any time until the countdown has finished. If the user does not abort within this time, the shutdown proceeds as normal. If you disable this option, the user cannot abort a shutdown.¹ See *Delay shutdown so that users can close applications*.

3.2 Local Configuration tool

The local configuration tool is optionally installed on each workstation, and controls certain Shutdownertron behaviours for that workstation. It is found in the Administrative Tools section of the control panel.



Override automatic shutdown

If Group Policy allows local overrides, this option stops the workstation from ever shutting down. By default it is disabled, meaning shutdowns will take place as dictated by policy.

There is no need to restart the Shutdownertron service after changing this option.²

¹A user who belongs to the Administrators group on the local workstation can still abort, using the `shutdown.exe /a` command. See the `shutdown.exe` help text for other options that can be used, including aborting a shutdown from a remote location.

²In fact, Shutdownertron will refresh all policy and local settings without needing to be restarted, every sixty seconds and immediately before any action takes place. This ensures that you can make a change have it take almost immediate effect.

Chapter 4

Troubleshooting

4.1 Event Viewer

All Shutdownertron's main actions and the user's responses are written to the Application section of the Event Log on each workstation, which is found in the Administrative Tools section of the control panel. This is the first place to look if Shutdownertron is not behaving as you expect.

4.2 Policy entries in the registry

The current policy applied to a workstation is found in:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Shutdownertron
```

If this key does not exist, you will see a message to this effect in the event log. The local settings are stored in:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Shutdownertron
```

If you find that policies take a long time to be applied to Shutdownertron, consider reducing the group policy refresh time in Windows, or use the *gpupdate* tool to force a refresh.

4.3 Obtaining further help

There are two mailing lists available where you can obtain further help:

shutdownertron-announce@powdarrmonkey.net - subscribe to this list for announcements and other news from Shutdownertron's developer;

shutdownertron-users@powdarrmonkey.net: - you can freely post to this list for help and other information.

Shutdownertron support is also available at the EduGeek.net Projects portal.

You are strongly encouraged to subscribe to *shutdownertron-announce*; for details, send a message with the subject line 'help' to the mailing list address.

Please remember that Shutdownertron development and support is all given on a voluntary basis. You can choose to support development in monetary terms at the download page. (And if you do, thank you in advance.)