A McAfee Total Virus Defense Technology Brief

Anti-Virus Software Distribution

Managing the Distribution of Anti-Virus Upgrades and Updates Across the Enterprise

Introduction

Maintaining an effective defense against virus and hostile code threats today involves far more than the ability to produce perfect detection rates at a given point of time. With an average of nearly 300 new viruses discovered each month, the actual detection rate of your anti-virus software can decline rapidly if not kept current.

To ensure continued protection, an enterprise-class anti-virus solution must be able to offer timely and efficient upgrades and updates across all client and server platforms, regardless of geographical location or mobile status.

The objective of this paper is to provide a brief overview of the anti-virus software distribution solutions offered by Network Associates, Inc. (NAI).

Timely Anti-Virus Updates in Three Easy Steps

Enterprise-wide software distribution must, by definition, be flexible enough to interoperate with a broad range of network infrastructures, corporate policies, and existing network management systems. Network Associates' objective is to provide customers with a comprehensive solution that delivers proactive end-to-end distribution, yet provides the flexibility to fit a wide variety of specific customer requirements.

For most organizations, getting timely upgrades and updates from their anti-virus software vendor to their desktops and servers involves three essential components.

STEP 1: VENDOR TO ADMINISTRATOR

The anti-virus vendor must proactively notify network administrators the moment new upgrades/updates are available, then provide a reliable automated method for delivery to the administrator.

Network Associates solution: *Enterprise SecureCast*

STEP 2: ADMINISTRATOR TO PROTECTED WORKSTATIONS/SERVERS

The network administrator must have the tools to quickly distribute upgrades/updates across the enterprise to all protected workstations and servers, regardless of platform. This process should be simple without sacrificing the control and flexibility required for enterprise-wide software distributions.

Network Associates Solution: *Net Tools Distribution Console*

STEP 3: AUTOMATED CLIENT PULL UPDATES

Once the initial anti-virus software installation has occurred, protected machines should be able to keep themselves updated automatically by polling designated distribution sites on a scheduled basis, pulling down necessary upgrades/updates, and automatically executing required upgrades.

Network Associates Solution: *AutoUpdate*

## STEP 1: Enterprise SecureCast   (Network Associates to Administrator)

Most anti-virus vendors require you to keep a watchful eye out for new product updates, then spend time actively searching for, retrieving, or downloading the upgrades manually. A few even rely on the postal service to deliver floppy disks or CDs by mail.

Network Associates has changed the way network administrators think about anti-virus software updates with its innovative *Enterprise SecureCast* technology. Enterprise SecureCast is a free service available to any NAI corporate customer. Unlike web update options provided by other anti-virus vendors, Enterprise SecureCast was designed exclusively for corporate IT administrators responsible for ensuring that their networks remain virus-free at all times.

How Enterprise SecureCast Works

Enterprise SecureCast uses a proven and unobtrusive push technology pioneered by BackWeb Technologies. Every time new virus signature files or product upgrades are released, Network Associates automatically pushes a SecureCast notice, or InfoPak, directly to all network administrators on our subscription list. These InfoPaks can also include Virus Alerts – informative bulletins notifying administrators of a particularly dangerous new virus or hostile Java/ActiveX threat. *SecureCast is never used to distribute marketing hype.* It's sole purpose is to deliver timely updates and security information when you need it.

InfoPaks download in the background when you are connected to the Internet. Because SecureCast waits until all other activity has stopped, it is essentially transparent. As soon as the InfoPak has downloaded completely, an icon appears on your desktop notifying you that a virus update or alert has arrived. Double-clicking this SecureCast icon allows you to save the upgrade/update for enterprise-wide distribution, install the upgrade/update, or simply delete it. You maintain full control over the process without putting a moment's effort into scheduling, downloading, or waiting for updates.
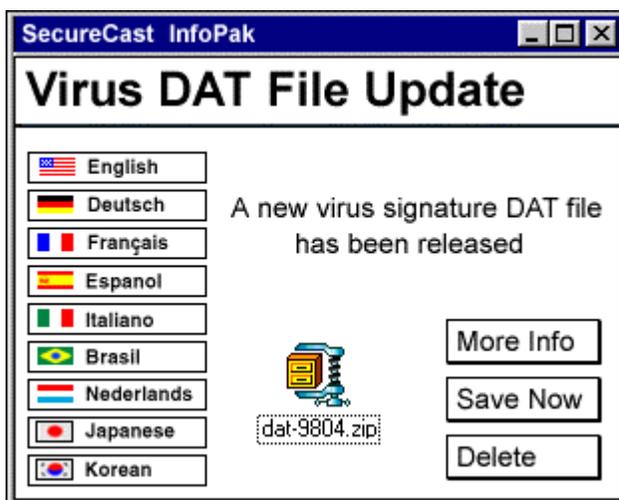
Enterprise SecureCast automatically delivers new upgrades, updates, and virus alerts directly to the administrator's desktop in unobtrusive InfoPaks, which may be viewed, saved, or deleted.

Because Enterprise SecureCast offers fully customizable support of both HTTP and UDP file transfers, you are assured of secure and reliable service through your corporate firewall. You can also choose any supported language or platform, making SecureCast ideal for multi-national enterprise networks.

When it comes to moving anti-virus upgrades/updates across a distributed network environment, there is no such thing as a "one-size-fits-all" solution. Network Associates provides a distribution strategy that is both comprehensive and open. Regardless of your requirements, we make it easy to distribute software upgrades to all end users and protected servers through our *Net Tools Distribution Console*, included with all Network Associates anti-virus suites.

Support for Existing Software Distribution Products

If your organization has already implemented a corporate software distribution solution, you may feel you have all the necessary tools to distribute our anti-virus products across your network. If so, Network Associates wants to make that process as effortless as possible. We begin by partnering with leading software distribution providers to ensure that our anti-virus products can be distributed by your preferred method. We are active members, for instance, of vendor partner programs like *Tivoli's 10/Plus Association Foundation* and *Microsoft's Certified Solution Provider* program. Our anti-virus products even ship with pre-built Microsoft SMS Package Definition Files (PDFs) and instructions to make distribution via SMS easy.

Net Tools Distribution Does It All

For most organizations, our Net Tools Distribution Console provides the perfect solution for fast, secure and reliable distribution across an entire enterprise. Unlike the one-dimensional distribution tools offered by other anti-virus vendors, the Net Tools Distribution system is capable of managing enterprise-wide roll outs of any software package, even multi-faceted operating system upgrades. And because it ships with pre-built default scripts ready-to-go, initiating an anti-virus software roll out requires virtually no advance configuration.

The Net Tools Distribution server runs on NetWare or Windows NT servers and can be easily configured from its Windows 95/NT Explorer-like management console.
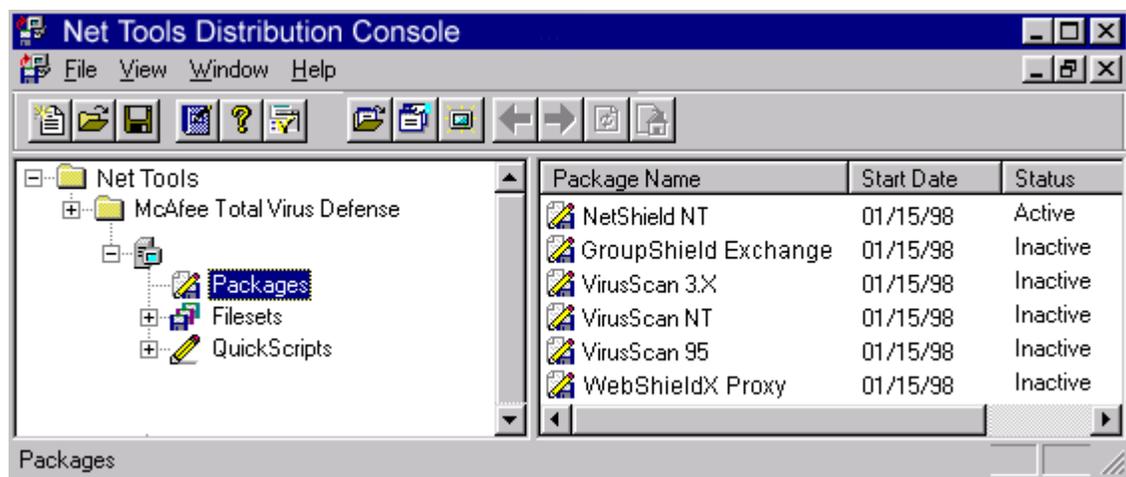

The Net Tools Distribution Console is included with all Network Associates anti-virus suites.
It offers the most secure, robust method for distributing software of any virus protection solution on the market.

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Net Tools Distribution features include:

- Automatically distributes files to servers and workstations on NetWare, Windows NT, Windows 95, Window 3.1x and DOS over IP and IPX.

- Supports 16 and 32-bit installations and makes necessary registry updates.

- Includes pre-defined installation scripts for all Network Associates anti-virus products allowing quick push-button rollout.

- Builds efficient compressed file sets to minimize bandwidth usage.

- Automatically senses client operating system for easy updating, taking the guesswork out of which application versions to install on each client.

- Can schedule a distribution package to be dependent upon the successful delivery and installation of a prerequisite distribution package.

- Supports automatic delivery to other distribution servers to enable waterfall distribution of software from a central location to the entire enterprise.

- Wide variety of administrator-defined policies define exactly what automatic procedures to follow should a distribution package fail for any reason.

- Alerts administrator to definable events that may occur during or following a distribution job. These alerts can be sent via standard protocols such as SNMP or SMTP, allowing for direct integration into the IT help desk or other corporate applications.

- Auto-creates install scripts with "before" and "after" snapshots of a system for reliable and effortless script creation.

- Supports extremely flexible and precise software configuration for total control over corporate policies.

- Windows NT impersonation technology allows for secure and reliable distribution to Windows NT Workstations, even if end users do not have the administrator privileges that would normally be required to complete such an install.

- Optional anti-virus migration feature automatically detects and removes any existing anti-virus products as part of the rollout process. This feature can be quite useful when standardizing on a single anti-virus solution for the first time or migrating from one solution to another.

- Robust Net Tools distribution system can also be licensed to deploy any software, including complex operating system upgrades.

- Includes pre-built Microsoft SMS Package Definition Files (PDFs) and instructions to make distribution via SMS easy.

## STEP 3: **AutoUpdate** (Automated Client Pull Updates)

While the Net Tools Distribution system can be used for all installs, upgrades, and updates, some customers prefer to use a more streamlined method of maintaining routine software updates once the initial install has been completed. To satisfy this requirement, Network Associates has integrated a technology called *AutoUpdate* directly into all of our primary anti-virus products.
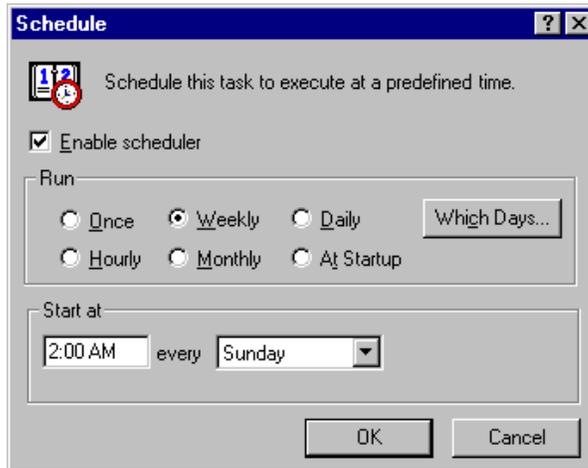
AutoUpdate allows you to pre-configure all workstations and servers to automatically schedule routine upgrades and updates.

On some platforms, most notably Windows NT and Microsoft Exchange, Network Associates also features a built-in, simplified push installation method for initial rollout.

The primary role of AutoUpdate is to automate the process of routine upgrades/updates with as little administrator intervention as possible. The process is quite simple. All protected workstations and servers are pre-configured to poll a given network server or ftp server on a scheduled basis to search for new upgrades/updates. If a newer version is found, the upgrade/update is performed automatically. All the administrator is required to do is drop new upgrades/updates into the designated network server directory when they are received via Enterprise SecureCast.
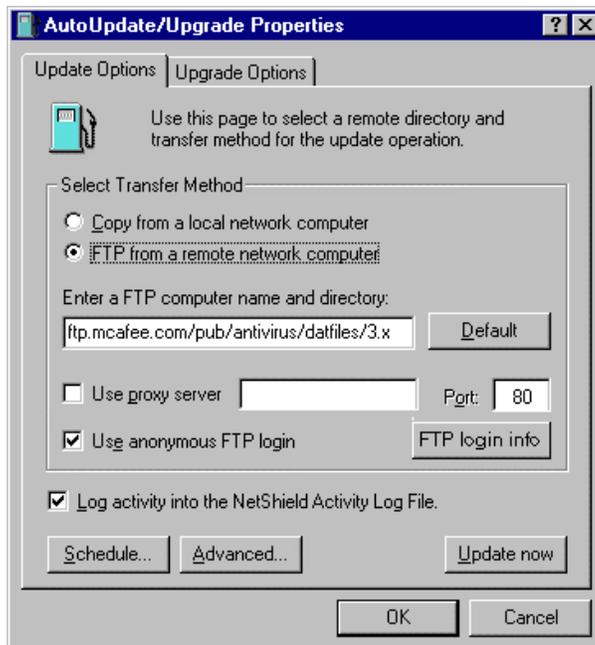
AutoUpdate empowers protected workstations and servers to poll a given network server or ftp server on a scheduled basis to look for new updates.

If a new update/upgrade is found, it is performed automatically, without unnecessary intervention by the administrator.

Conclusion

With nearly 300 new viruses being discovered each month, it is becoming increasingly important to maintain up-to-date anti-virus protection. Network Associates provides customers with a comprehensive 1-2-3 solution that makes up the most sophisticated anti-virus distribution system on the market today.

"Automated rollout is something administrators plead for, and Network Associates' McAfee Total Virus Defense hears those pleas. In tests, deployment was easy using the included Net Tools Distribution capability – both for setting up nodes initially and for distributing updates. We simply placed an updated file into the distribution package, which then cascaded to other distribution servers, then to client nodes.

"The flexible, hands-free nature of this facility, when coupled with Network Associates' Enterprise SecureCast for pushing updates to each enterprise, forms the most feature-rich deployment system of any anti-virus product we've seen."

- PC WEEK, Oct 97