

SAGE

Advice

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This Issue

***16th Annual System Administrator's Conference
Call for Technical Papers and Tutorials***

Remote Control of Vista with Ultra VNC

Regional News

Meet our new members

Coming Events

SAGE-AU

The System Administrators Guild of Australia

<http://www.sage-au.org.au>

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Contact Phil Gerner in the SAGE-AU office (office@sage-au.org.au) and he will arrange a replacement to be mailed to you and for your password to be re-set to the new keyring number.

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Ad space in four or more issues paid in advance attract a 20% discount.

See www.sage-au.org.au/newsletters_advert.html for our publication schedule for 2008.

Information

SAGE Advice is the official newsletter of the System Administrator's Guild of Australia. It is available in PDF format free of charge to members of SAGE-AU via download from the SAGE-AU website. Past copies are available online at www.sage-au.org.au/newsletters_index.html

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Call for Technical Papers and Tutorials

16th Annual System Administrators' Conference (SAGE-AU 2008)

16th Annual System Administrators' Conference (SAGE-AU 2008)
The System Administrators' Guild of Australia
Adelaide, 11-15th August 2008

The SAGE-AU Annual Conference is the premier Systems Administration event in the Asia-Pacific region. The conference offers a premium educational forum for System Administrators of all platforms and levels of experience, and an excellent opportunity to meet, network and learn from acknowledged experts in the field.

This year's conference will start with three days of tutorials followed by the technical program. The technical program will run in two parallel streams covering a wide variety of system administration related talks.

Conference Dates and Location

Early Bird	Friday 18th July 2008
Tutorials	Monday 11th - Wednesday 13th August 2008
Technical Programme	Thursday 14th - Friday 15th August 2008

This year's conference will be held at the Holiday Inn, Adelaide.

65 Hindley Street
 Adelaide, SA 5000

Submission Dates

Call for Presentations Issued	12th February 2008
Proposals Due	31st March 2008
Provisional Notification Issued to Authors	28th April 2008
Draft Materials Due	2nd June 2008
Confirmed Acceptance and Contracts Issued to Authors	16th June 2008
Final Materials Due	14th July 2008

We may not be able to confirm acceptance of papers or tutorials where draft materials have not been submitted.

To submit your paper or tutorial please visit our conference management site (<http://www.sage-au.org.au/Commence/index.php>).

Paper Proposals

SAGE-AU'2007 is hereby calling for papers and topics relevant to the profession of System Administration. Papers should have a technical or managerial System Administration orientation, and should not contain advertising. Possible talks topics include:

- Selling yourself/your team
- Successful negotiation
- Disasters recovered
- Security issues
- Tools, tricks and tips
- Standards

For further inspiration see technical paper abstracts from previous conferences (<http://www.sage-au.org.au/x/TQc>).

We will accept the following types of presentation:

Lightning talks (5 minutes)

You don't need to submit a proposal for a lightning talk. These will be organised from sign-up sheets at the conference. Instructions will be given on the first day. Lightning talks are brief talks that focus on a single example, idea, project or technique. Lightning talks are not expected to cover all aspects of the subject. They're an excellent forum for first-time speakers.

Call for Technical Papers and Tutorials

continued

Standard (30 minutes)

This is the preferred format. 20 minutes for talking and 5 minutes for questions (with 5 minutes spare for set-up and take-down). This is enough time to cover a few issues well and allows us to provide a good selection of talks throughout the day.

Extended (60 minutes)

Extended talks are ideal for experienced speakers who want to cover a large topic. 45 minutes for talking and 10 minutes for questions (with 5 minutes spare for set-up and take-down).

If you choose this longer time slot please include include a justification in your proposal. We reserve the right to ask you to change a long talk proposal to be a standard length instead.

Submitting a Technical Paper for Consideration

If you wish to present a paper, please submit your proposal to our conference management site (<http://www.sage-au.org.au/Commence/index.php>) by the closing date (31st March).

Additional questions and inquiries should be directed to: papers@sage-au.org.au

Paper Submission

All presenters are required to submit all presentation materials by the specified dates. Failure to do so may result in loss of your speaking slot and speaker benefits.

The final paper submission is expected to be a "camera ready" paper for inclusion in the conference proceedings. This final copy must be submitted in an approved format (see "Author Guidelines"). Authors should note that formal papers are required - submissions consisting solely of presentation slides are insufficient.

To assist authors, templates and instructions for use of those templates will be provided in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- HTML

Final Technical Paper submissions must be made using one of these templates. Templates will be made available from the conference website.

Please ensure that your final submission has had its grammar and spelling corrected and that examples work. Your paper allows attendees who attended your talk a chance to refresh their memories about your presentation, and gives attendees who missed your talk a chance to learn from you anyway. Make sure your paper includes - at the very least - a brief introduction to your subject material and a list of further resources.

Speaker Benefits

People presenting a technical paper (a 30 or 60 minute talk) will receive one full discount on the Technical Program (Thursday & Friday only). In the case of more than one author, only a single author will be afforded the discount. Only one discounted attendance is available per person. If a presenter is also presenting a tutorial, this discount is not applicable.

Note that you may lose both your speaker slot and benefits if you do not meet our due dates. If you find that you need more time, please contact the program coordinator to see if an extension is possible.

Practice

The Programme Committee will issue guidelines to assist authors in planning their papers and presentations. We strongly encourage those inexperienced in public speaking to trial their presentations at their local chapter's meetings

Call for Technical Papers and Tutorials

continued

Tutorial Proposals

SAGE-AU'2008 is hereby calling for tutorial presentations on topics relevant to the profession of System Administration. Suggested topics include:

- Management practices for System Administrators
- Disaster recovery and high availability
- Computer and network security
- High performance
- Networking
- Cross platform interoperability

Tutorials should have a technical or management orientation and should not contain advertising.

Submitting a Tutorial Presentation for Consideration

Tutorial sessions will be either 3 hours or 6 hours duration.

People wishing to present tutorials should submit a 1000 word abstract of the material they wish to present, who their intended audience is, and an indication of whether they require a 3 hour or 6 hour timeslot.

Tutorial presenters are required to submit a tutorial draft to allow the committee to provide feedback and assist with the editorial process.

Tutorials should be run in lecture format.

As SAGE-AU Conferences typically receive a large number proposals for Tutorials, authors of tutorial proposals which are not accepted may be invited to submit a revised proposal for a Technical Paper.

If you wish to present a tutorial, please submit your proposal to our conference management site (<http://www.sage-au.org.au/Commence/index.php>) by the closing date (31st March 2007).

Additional questions and inquiries should be directed to: papers@sage-au.org.au

Author Guidelines

The Programme Committee will issue guidelines to assist authors in planning their presentations. We strongly encourage those inexperienced in public speaking to trial their presentations at their local chapter's meetings.

It is traditional that no specific templates are provided to tutorial presenters for their materials, but authors are encouraged to use a standard format for their materials (Powerpoint, OpenOffice Impress, Keynote, PDF).

Tutorial Remuneration

Tutorial presenters will receive an honorarium of AUD\$600 per 3 hour tutorial and AUD\$1200 per 6 hour tutorial.

An additional "bonus" payment of AUD\$75 per 3 hour tutorial and AUD\$150 per 6 hour tutorial will be paid to presenters who submit camera-ready originals of handout material on-time in accordance with the published schedule.

Tutorial Presenter Benefits

People presenting a tutorial will receive free registration for the Technical Program (Thursday & Friday only) including the conference dinner. In the case of more than one presenter, only a single author will be afforded the discount. Only one discounted attendance is available per person.

SAGE-AU will reimburse tutorial presenters reasonable costs of producing handout materials; materials submitted on-time will be printed by SAGE-AU on the presenter's behalf.



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SAGE-AU welcomes our new members

SAGE-AU extends a warm welcome to our newest members. These include:

Queensland

- Ryan Stuart
- Brett Williams from Mercy Health and Aged Care Central Queensland Ltd
- Adrian Jansz from Brisbane Airport Corporation

Western Australia

- Patrick Coleman from Christ Church Grammar School
- Ben Matthews from Telarus Pty Ltd
- Nathan Osinski from M Squared & Associates

New South Wales

- Lloyd Dickerson from BlueFreeway

Victoria

- Carlos Lopez from The Dalton McCaughey Library
- Tarragon Allen from RealEstate.com.au
- Paul Wu from TCM Solutions Pty Ltd
- Denny Varughese from Monash University
- Garth Schwer

Canberra

- Peter Hocking from OfficePCs

Coming Events

AusCERT 2008

18th - 23rd May 2008

Crowne Plaza Royal Pines Resort - Gold Coast

SAGE-VIC - IT Symposium

30th May 2008

Hotel Grand Chancellor - Melbourne

16th Australian System Administrators Conference

11th - 15th August 2008

Holiday Inn - Adelaide

Meet our new members

Most of the time, new members join our ranks silently, and unless they are very active on the mailing lists, regularly attend regional group meetings or speak at our national conference the existing membership doesn't really get the opportunity to find out who they are and what they do. In this section we hope to introduce you to a snapshot of users who've joined in the past few months.

Today we introduce Hamish Taylor and Justin Morris

Name: Hamish Taylor
State: Victoria
Member since: Late 2007

What's your job title/description?

Something with Technical, User, Support, Computer, Network and Engineer in it, or any variation thereof.

What's your business name? (or the sector if you don't want to say)

I have an ABN trading as DevWorldIT.info, but it is dormant as I am not doing any consulting or contracting work at the moment. Generally I have experience in small business network and user support, but am now moving into government/corporate support too.

What do you do in your work?

At the moment, I am doing basic user tech support for the Department of Human Services (Vic Gov). This a part-time job while I complete my Master studies.

Previously I worked in small business network and user support, which meant that we were an SME's "outsourced IT department". The company I worked for had about 90 clients. Supporting them covered everything from "mail merging" questions to diagnosis of Small Business Server, Exchange and Citrix server problems to installation and configuration of modems and firewalls for internet connections.

Basically, if their business needed something and it vaguely resembled anything to do with IT, they called us. It varied each minute and was interesting, if difficult and demanding, work.

How long have you been working in the System Administration field?

I have been messing with computers since my dad gave me his XT PC (8088 based I think). It had a CGA card (all of 16 colours I think) in it, but only a monochrome monitor! In 1991 I started a degree in Communication & Electronic Engineering, but didn't finish it as I had no interest in designing microprocessors.

I switched to CompSci, but I didn't want to program either, so I dropped out of uni. I did a few other jobs, mostly transport related (including working in emergency ambulance transport) but went back to computers in about 1998 when I started a part-time Cert IV (Tech and User Support) TAFE course. In 2000, as I completed this course, I started in a "trainee" role. After 2 years of this role I found out that they should have been paying me a lot more (they were respondent to a Federal Award), but when questioned they sacked me. I never saw any money from them, but I have the satisfaction of knowing that the company owner was pursued by the Union and also by ASIC for non payment of superannuation to any employees. I did land another job which I kept for 5 years. This was in SME support and is described above.

In November 2006, I followed my wife to Kunming in China (she was on the Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development targeted aid programme), and did some support work for ex-pats there, mostly Dutch and Australian companies and backpackers. I returned to Australia in October 2007, and went back to full-time study and part-time work.

Please tell us a story about one of your professional experiences.

The funniest one was probably when upgrading a client's server, they had a lot more data on their system than we expected to see. When we looked at what it was we were a little surprised. When we asked about it, the company owner told us to go right ahead and copy all the prOn over to the new system!

How did you first hear about SAGE-AU?

Through various friends.

Does your business support your SAGE-AU membership?

At them moment I pay for it myself, but if I get consulting or contracting work and get some income on my ABN business, I will claim it on that. I will also be negotiating it into any future contracts that I may get, as I believe it will be a valuable resource in the future.

What do you do for fun?

Trying to work out how Free and Open Source Software can save the world! I have used Linux before (mostly to clean up Windows viruses and malware), but not in a serious way. In China I had a lot of free time, so I took the plunge and installed and began to use it. It is now a rare week where I boot into Windows, although I still have to have WinXP for the RMIT Uni wireless network and I haven't found any FOSS to replace EndNote referencing software, but for everything else I use Linux. Recently I went to linux.conf.au, and was even able to help someone do something, which I was quite happy about! My website advocates that people look at Linux as a real alternative to Windows, and I am still thinking about how to increase SME's knowledge and usage of Linux. Through my Master studies I am trying to approach this from a business perspective rather than a purely technical viewpoint.

In other pursuits, I love watching movies and TV series, especially SF, and am currently getting into Battlestar Galactica. I am also going to get my bike back and get back into cycling. Other interests include bush-walking, good food and beer!

Meet our new members

....continued on Page 12

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Sam Russell - Director



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Wiki Article for the month

Remote Control of Vista with Ultra VNC

This month's article was based on a SAGE-AU Tech discussion which started with a problem proposed by Jim Severino. Thanks to Jim for summarizing this discussion.

Question

I'm looking for the best way to remote control Windows Vista user desktops. On Windows XP, this was simple: Install a VNC server on each desktop. On Vista this is apparently not feasible for several reasons related to the Vista security model. While it is apparently possible to run the VNC server in user mode under Vista, I need it to run as a service (eg so I can wake-on-lan a desktop, then log into it interactively) and not be fiddly.

Basically it appears that free VNC is no longer a viable option under Vista, and I'm looking for alternatives. Free (as in beer|fire)) would be best but I'm not ruling out paying.

Answer

After much discussion and research I have settled on UltraVNC (beta version 1.0.4 RC3) as a usable remote control system for Windows Vista. It's not as easy as VNC deployment under Windows XP, but it meets my needs, and it performs pretty well given the obstacles that Windows Vista presents to VNC-style remote control.

Many people asked me what the specific issues were with running VNC under Vista. Basically, as far as I can tell, VNC has problems running properly because of the security changes from XP to Vista. Mostly it seems to do with Vista's intentional isolation of service processes from user processes. In Windows XP, service processes could interact with the logged-on user's session; in Vista, they can't.

Here's a detailed evaluation of the challenges that VNC needs to overcome in order to operate under Vista - <http://www.uvnc.com/vista/>.

The specific symptom that I encountered was when you install a VNC server under Vista the same way you do under XP (ie by running the installer and accepting the defaults), you cannot connect to the service remotely. Besides the built-in firewall (on which it is easy enough to configure an exception) the service simply won't accept a connection. There's some discussion on the Interwebs about various log files etc that you can chase if you like, but it didn't get me anywhere.

Many people suggested using Windows' built-in Remote Desktop (RDP) or Remote Assistance (RA) features. The main problem with Vista's built-in RDP is that when you use it to connect to a remote machine it locks the remote machine's display so the remote user can't see what's going on. Only one person can see the screen at a time. Since I need to support distant users by remote-controlling their desktop, this doesn't meet my needs. Daniel Brown suggested using the /console switch (ie "mstsc /console") to control the console session, however, my own experience has been that this locks the remote machine's screen (just like it does without the /console switch) when used with a remote machine running Windows Vista.

The built-in RA feature actually allows interactive remote control, but it requires (at least) the user to accept the RA offer. This makes user support a little more complicated than it has to be in that I need to use RDP for one situation and RA for another, and also requires user interaction, which isn't possible in every scenario. I'd rather do without the extra moving parts if I can.

Some suggested a combination of RDP and RA to meet my needs, but my feeling on that is that if things didn't need to be complicated under XP, why should they become more complicated under Vista? Also, I have formed the impression that Microsoft's RDP and RA tools in Vista are built to conform to their licensing model (ie "one user, one screen") rather than to usefulness as a support tool.

In the end I did some testing and took a chance on UltraVNC. I now have it running and am supporting remote users with it. The installation process under Vista involves two packages but they're both fairly frictionless to install, with the exception that I needed to reboot the machines after installation even though the installer didn't ask me to.

So the winners are Gavin Hendrick and Chris Knight for referring me to UltraVNC. Although I had seen it in my research, it wasn't until I drilled into it a bit more that I discovered that it actually works well enough to use as a Windows Vista remote-control solution. I expect that with future releases of UltraVNC it will improve to the point that it's just as easy as VNC under Windows XP (unless of course Vista SP1 changes the ground rules again).

If you have contributions for the journal or ideas and requests for topics please forward them to the editor (editor@sage-au.org.au).

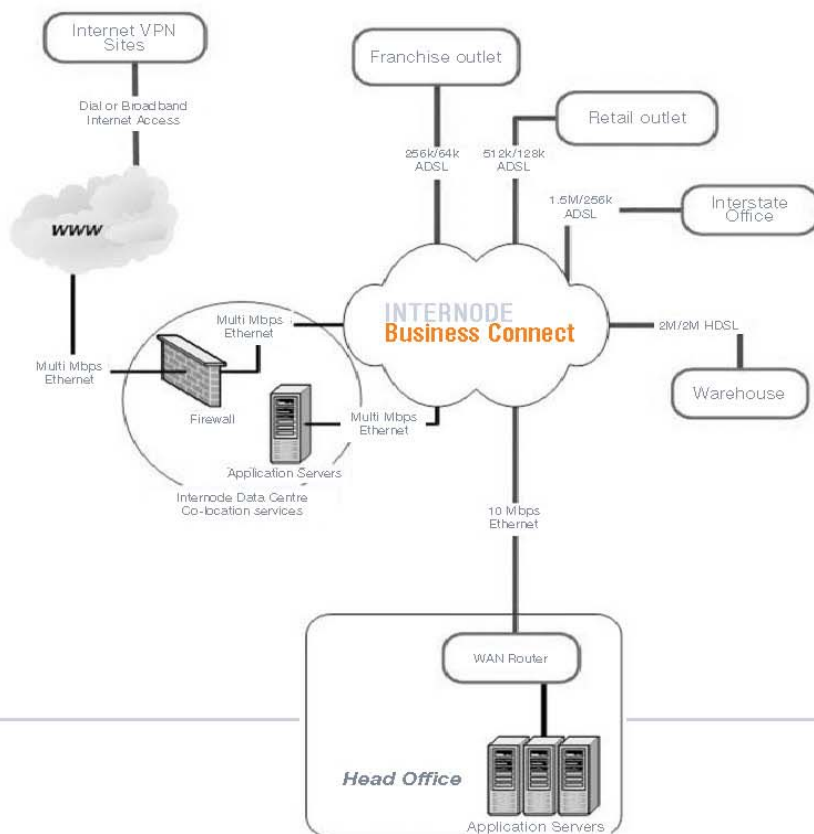
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www.internode.on.net/ibc



Regional News

SAGE-QLD

Brief Report from Jason Andrade (Queensland President)

SAGE-QLD had 2 months off over the break and held our first meeting of the year in February. We did defer this to the third Thursday to avoid the clash with Valentines Day this year.

After covering off discussions on what was happening at the National level and 'new' technology announcements we had our scheduled talk.

Our speaker this month was Simon Price from Tech Arch Solutions with a talk about Virtualization and performance tuning. It was quite an in depth talk looking at VMWare performance tuning, migration strategies and changes in the newest releases.

Also participating via the Access Grid, Rockhampton had 3 members listening on. Request for 'most wanted' talks for the next couple of meetings did not get any specific suggestions.

SAGE-ACT

Brief Report from Mark Suter (ACT President)

The ACT Chapter has reformed, with meetings being held at AFDA on the third Wednesday of each month. In February, we have Paul Fenwick from Perl Training Australia giving a very well received talk, "An Illustrated History of Failure".

As always, we're on the lookout for speakers...

Meet our new members continued

Name: Justin Morris
State: Victoria
Member since: January 2008

What's your job title/description?

Systems Engineer.

What's your business name? (or the sector if you don't want to say).

Thomas Duryea Consulting.

What does your business do?

IT Infrastructure Solutions including virtualisation, storage, systems management and enterprise information systems.

What do you do in your work?

I specialize in Microsoft Exchange 2007 and Active Directory solutions.

How long have you been working in the System Administration field?

4 years.

Please tell us a story about one of your professional experiences.

Traveling to all eastern seaboard capital cities for a large scale acquisition integration and meeting lots of excellent people and helping them work more efficiently.

How did you first hear about SAGE-AU?

Was mentioned on Overclockers Australia.

Does your business support your SAGE-AU membership?

Yes, they encourage professional membership.

What do you do for fun?

I'm a club DJ on the weekends, plus I spend my spare time improving my fitness and developing the performance of my car.

The System Administrator's Guild of Australia thanks our generous Platinum sponsors:



Regional Groups

Full lists of Chapter executive committee members, meeting schedules and up to date Chapter information can be found at <http://www.sage-au.org.au/regional.html>

Victorian Chapter

The Victorian group currently meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm at:

Ground Floor Tutorial Room, Baillieu Library
University of Melbourne, Parkville

President

Chris Burgess
jchris.burgess@member.sage-au.org.au

Vice President

Jason Wood
jason.wood@member.sage-au.org.au

The group mailing list is sage-vic@sage-au.org.au

Queensland Chapter

The Queensland group currently meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7.00pm at:

Room 621
General Purpose South Building (No. 78)
Staffhouse Road
University of Queensland, St Lucia

President

Jason Andrade
jason.andrade@member.sage-au.org.au

Vice President

Iain Robertson
iain.robertson@member.sage-au.org.au

The group mailing list is sage-qld@sage-au.org.au

There is also a **Rockhampton** group - see

www.sage-au.org.au/rgqld.html

South Australian Chapter

The South Australian group currently meets on the last Tuesday of the month at 6.30pm at:

KAZ
182 Fullarton Road, Dulwich 5065

President

Steve Challans
steve.challans@member.sage-au.org.au

Secretary

Mathew Benwell
mathew.benwell@member.sage-au.org.au

Treasurer

Greg Warner
greg.warner@member.sage-au.org.au

The group mailing list is sage-sa@sage-au.org.au

NT Chapter

If you are interested in being involved in getting the NT Chapter up and running again, please contact the Executive Committee (exec@sage-au.org.au).

New South Wales Chapter

The New South Wales group currently meets in Sydney on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm at:

Ernst & Young Building
680 George Street, Sydney
Meet in the Equilibrium Hotel

President

Stephen 'Max' Gillies
stephen.gillies@member.sage-au.org.au

Secretary

Sam Lor
sam.lor@member.sage-au.org.au

The group mailing list is sage-nsw@sage-au.org.au

Tasmanian Chapter

The Tasmanian group currently meets on the second Thursday of every month at:

Bridie O'Reillys
124 Davey Street, Hobart

President

Geoffrey Day
geoffrey.day@member.sage-au.org.au

Secretary

Sim Alam
sim.alam@member.sage-au.org.au

West Australian Chapter

The West Australian group currently meets on the first Tuesday at 6:00pm at:

The Moon and Sixpence Pub
300 Murray Street, Perth

Regional Co-ordinator

Andrew Shugg
andrew.shugg@member.sage-au.org.au

The group mailing list is sage-wa@sage-au.org.au

ACT Chapter

The ACT chapter meets on the third Wednesday each month at:

Staff Training Lab, ICTS - Building 14
Ground Floor, Australian Defence Force Academy
Northcott Drive

Chapter Contact

Tim Carson
tim.carson@member.sage-au.org.au

The group mailing list is sage-act@sage-au.org.au