

# Laugh Like a Hyena

BY GUY C. YOST

The most labor-intensive characteristic of managing NT in the enterprise is due to Microsoft's ACL-centric approach to network resource access control. Each resource defined in a domain (printer, directory or file) possesses an access control list (ACL) that determines which users or groups can access that resource. A domain administrator must configure and maintain every ACL, specifying who can access the resource and what permissions apply. Even small networks have hundreds of resources, so the maintenance of every ACL becomes extremely tedious and time consuming.

NT's inherent utilities are generally adequate for managing relatively small and simple networks. However, as larger organizations begin to implement NT-based networks, managing users, groups, files, directories, printers and servers can quickly overwhelm support resources. Administrators have criticized NT for further complicating resource management efforts by having day-to-day administrative functions spread out over a number of utilities. In contrast, NetWare bundles 95 percent of all network management functions into a single utility. I for one can attest to the benefits of using a centralized tool and not having to "ALT+TAB" between open windows of several applications in order to perform a variety of standard administrative functions.

This month, I'll examine Hyena, an NT administration utility from Adkins Resource, Inc., that integrates the functionality of several key utilities while presenting NT domain objects in an organized and more manageable manner. Hyena v1.85 combines the major functionality of Explorer/File Manager, Server Manager, User Manager, and Print Manager into one program and management interface.

Following is a summary of Hyena's functions:

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**Domain management software that takes this approach will be more expensive because it requires engineering opposite of NT's architecture.**

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- ◆ administer users, groups and their properties
- ◆ create new network shares for directory and printer connections
- ◆ manage shared files and directories across servers without drive mappings
- ◆ view system events, shares, open sessions and files on any server
- ◆ stop and start background services and view driver information across network servers and workstations
- ◆ manage share and NTFS file permissions
- ◆ remotely schedule jobs on multiple computers in one operation
- ◆ remotely shutdown and reboot any server
- ◆ view disk space information for multiple computers on one screen
- ◆ create TSV export files containing domain user, group, printer, and computer information for reporting and auditing

Hyena includes a separate utility for exporting functions for users, groups, group memberships, computers and printers. All output files are tab-delimited and can be easily imported into Microsoft Excel or Access for reporting or auditing purposes. In earlier versions, the exporting function was integrated into Hyena's main graphical interface and could not be used in an unattended batch or scheduled mode. However, due to feedback

from Hyena users, versions 1.6 and above moved export functions to a separate utility that could be executed from the command prompt and not require user interaction.

Figure 1 shows how an administrator can easily control all print jobs and shared printers across the network without having to load each computer name individually in print manager.

As shown, all NT domain objects (users, groups, servers and printers) are hierarchically arranged for easy and logical administration. Notice that the network resources are arranged vertically on the left side of the screen while the right window is used to view and manipulate the highlighted resources' properties.

The "Quick Access" parent object is very useful for grouping all your servers, workstations and printers for performing operations across like resources. One disappointment noted when working with printers, however, is that you can't highlight multiple printers and perform an operation such as mass purge at once. However, that is not the case when working with the computer objects. If you click on the parent "Computers" object, all computer names will appear in the right window and you can shift or ctrl click to highlight multiple computers for "single pass" administrative operations.

Figure 2 shows an expanded view of an NT server called Ogre. You can work with the server's NTFS file and directory permissions, shares, local group and user properties, user rights for special operations on that server, and background services. One feature I was impressed with was Hyena's ability to show dependencies for the highlight service, regardless of the service's current state (running or stopped).

As you work with the demo product, you'll soon discover other conveniences

Figure 1: Managing Domain-Wide Printers

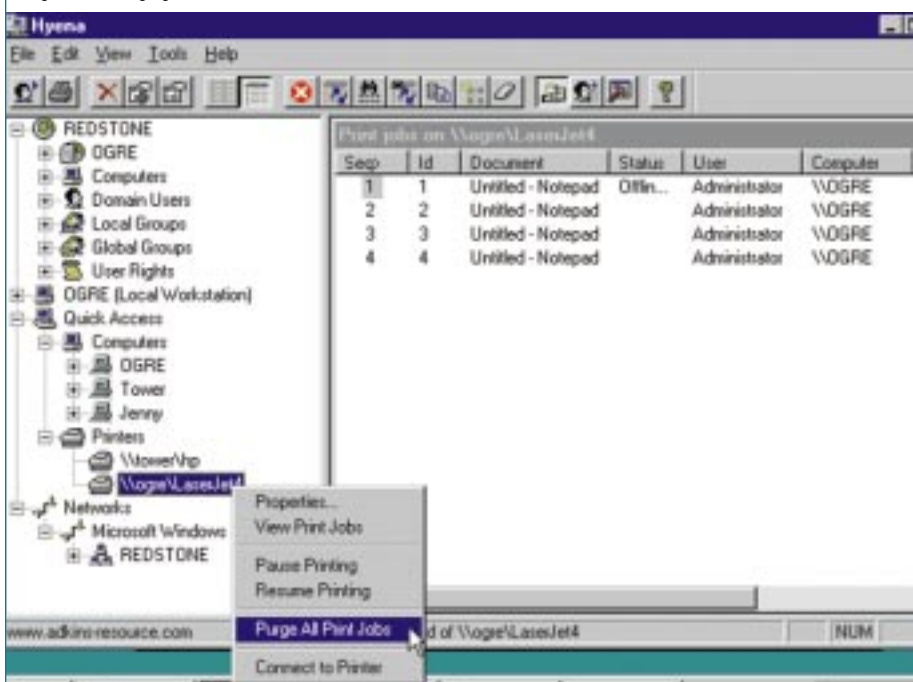
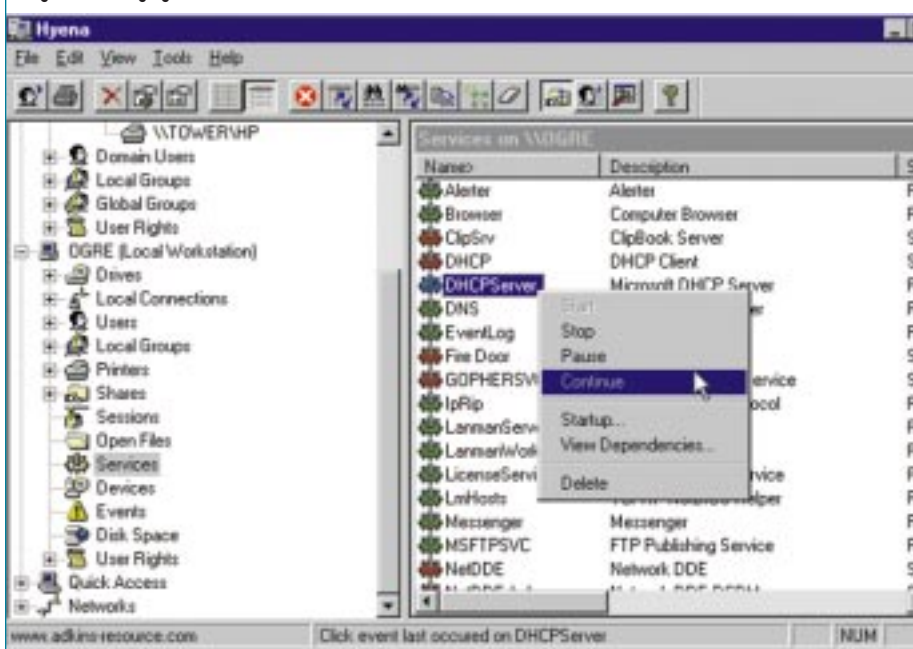


Figure 2: Managing Domain-Wide Server Functions



under the covers such as being able to launch the Event Viewer for any computer and search through all domain objects according to your custom “find and filter” criteria.

### PRICING AND LICENSING


A free 30-day evaluation of Hyena can be downloaded from [www.adkins-resource.com](http://www.adkins-resource.com) or from most popular shareware and NT software sites including [www.shareware.com](http://www.shareware.com), [www.download.com](http://www.download.com), and [www.32bit.com](http://www.32bit.com). Thirty days after installation, the software

requires you register the product according to one of the following price options: Single Administrator \$199; Three-Administrator License Pack \$449; Five-Administrator License Pack \$649; 10-Administrator License Pack \$1,199; 25-Administrator License Pack \$2,799; 50-Administrator License Pack \$4,999; 100-Administrator License Pack \$8,999. Hyena’s licensing options apply only to the administrators actually using Hyena and not the number of users on the network. So

an organization with 500 users and three administrators would only require a three-administrator license pack.

### SUMMARY

From a cost/performance standpoint, Hyena is a great value. Although the product does a good job of organizing and presenting NT domain resources, it would be greatly improved if the developer incorporated group-centric management instead of being bound by the old Microsoft resource-centric ACL approach. Consider a more effective method for managing access to network resources by working directly with user groups rather than resources. For example, NetWare NDS allows management of entire groups or organizational units (OUs) (and their subordinate contents using inheritance rights) that can be assigned access to printers, directories, files and other NDS objects. Because NetWare administrators work directly with groups and OUs rather than maintaining an ACL for every resource on the network, working with fewer objects rather than many saves much time and effort. Domain management software that takes this approach will be more expensive because it requires engineering opposite of NT’s architecture.

Next month, I’ll look at another product that helps streamline management of large NT networks but takes the group/OU centric approach. 



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