

Customizing and Managing Internet Explorer

Internet Explorer Administration Kit

You can build a browser for your company with the Internet Explorer Administration Kit (IEAK). The IEAK enables organizations to create and distribute a Web browser that reflects the specific needs of their organizations and end users. A simple wizard guides corporate administrators or ICP/ISP distributors through the steps necessary to create self-installing versions of Internet Explorer that automatically configure a complete Internet solution. For corporate environments, this includes configuration of proxy, Internet e-mail and news, custom start pages, search pages, Favorites folders, and much more.

This cross-platform solution supports the creation of master network installation files, floppy disk, and CD-ROM versions of Internet Explorer 2.0 for Windows 95, Windows NT® Workstation, and Windows 3.1. Future releases will also support Internet Explorer 3.0 for Windows 95 and the Apple® Macintosh® platform. The CD-ROM version also includes the popular Microsoft Office Viewers and Internet Assistants for Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint®, and the Microsoft Virtual Reality (VRML) add-in.

As a corporate administrator, you can specify the following options for your Internet Explorer installation:

- **Target language.** Specify the language version of Internet Explorer. You must run the IEAK wizard once for each language you want to create.
- **Internet Explorer Add-ons.** Specify which Internet Explorer add-ons you want, including Internet Mail and News, NetMeeting, ActiveMovie, and HTML Layout Control. For Internet Mail and News, you can specify user or group settings for POP3 and SMTP protocols and server domain, specify Internet News server and whether the server requires the user to log on. Plus, you can include a newsreader signature files to attach to all messages that users post to Internet newsgroups. For example, you could create a standard disclaimer that the opinions expressed are the user's own and not representative of a corporate position.
- **Other installation programs.** You can include up to two other self-extracting utilities or programs in the Internet Explorer installation package, and give users the option to install them at the same time as Internet Explorer.
- **Internet Explorer Start and Search pages.** Specify Start and Search pages to internal Web sites. For example, the Start page could point to a departmental page, and the Search page could point to an internal search tool.
- **Preloaded Favorites list.** Preload links and folders according to project, department, division, job category, and so on.
- **CD Autorun application customization.** Create a CD-ROM/Network Autorun program that could be used in the deployment of your product.
- **Internet Explorer Title bar.** Specify the text that you want to appear in the title bar of Internet Explorer. For example, this could be your company name or a division or department name.
- **Custom logo.** Replace the static Internet Explorer logo with your company or product logo.
- **Proxy settings.** Specify addresses, ports, and exceptions that will enable your customers to connect to the Internet via a proxy server.
- **Installation directory settings for hands-free installation.** Select the folder in which you want the Internet Explorer installation program to save the files. For example, you can specify your own folder or you can install into the Windows or Program Files (Windows® 95 only) folder.
- **Per-user custom deployment options.** Further customize user or group settings during deployment or update them later.
- **Restrictions for Options dialog box.** Control which options the user can change in the Options dialog box.

- **Custom command folder.** Roll out any internal programs or custom command scripts at the same time that you install Internet Explorer. If you chose to add other self-extracting programs to the package, you can specify the command line to extract them. Or you can run simple maintenance commands, such as setting the user's clock or running virus-checking programs.

The IEAK is available at no cost to organizations who have a fully executed Microsoft Internet Explorer distribution agreement and comply with the Microsoft Internet Explorer usage guidelines. For more information, or to download the IEAK, see <http://www.microsoft.com/ie>.

Creating customized versions of Internet Explorer

Creating customized versions of Internet Explorer is easy as running the IEAK wizard. You specify the options you want and the wizard creates a hands-free Internet Explorer installation program that your customers can run to install Internet Explorer. You can create floppy disk, CD-ROM, and/or download installations of Internet Explorer for Microsoft Windows version 3.1, Windows 95 and Windows NT® version 4.0.

Before running the IEAK wizard, make sure you have the following available:

- A wizard "key," which is included the information Microsoft provides.
- Two 256-color bitmap images (one 51 by 51 and the other 26 by 26 pixels) which you can use to brand the Internet Explorer browser with your logo. Sample bitmaps are located in the \Server\Eng\ISP_FILE\Bitmaps directory. For information about these bitmaps, see the Readme.txt document in the Client directory.
- The name of your incoming mail (POP3) server, outgoing mail (SMTP) server, and domain name, if you choose to install Internet Mail.
- The name of your Internet news server, if you choose to install Internet News.
- Proxy server settings and exceptions, if used by your organization.
- Customized configuration (.ins) files for every user or group of users, if you want them.
- Custom materials you can place in the client system, if you want.
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Internet Explorer Deployment

The IEAK also enables you to create a generic installation that contains the same settings company-wide, or provide user-specific options which individual users can update when they install the customized package. For example, you might specify generic proxy-server information, but allow individuals to set Favorites, custom commands, and Start and Search pages.

To allow user-specific options, select the appropriate option in the wizard and choose the location of the network folder you want to contain the user-specific settings files (.ins). You can then create .ins files for each user and for each group that has common settings. The name of the .ins file for individual settings should be the same as the user logon name. For example, if a user's logon name is PatD, the .ins file name for this user will be Patd.ins. If Pat belongs to the Finance group, you can also create a Finance.ins file that can contain group settings, which will then be nested inside the Patd.ins file. You can nest up to five files.

You do not have to create individual .ins files for each user. If a user logs on but there is no individual .ins file for that user, Internet Explorer uses the settings in the Default.ins file. You should create a Default.ins file to cover this situation and specify the most common settings for Internet Explorer.

Internet Explorer Maintenance and Administration

After installation, you can update user settings by adding the Inschk program to the user's network logon script. Inschk is an MS-DOS-based utility that automatically determines whether updates need to be applied to the Internet settings for user or group .ins files, and then applies the new settings. The command is as follows:

Inschk [logical path or UNC path, if supported]

For example, if the .ins files are stored in the F:\IE folder, the logon script command for Pat's .ins file would be as follows:

Inschk f:\ie\pat.ins

Note that most network operating systems allow parameter substitutions within the network logon scripting language. Refer to your network administration documentation for specifics.