



What to Look For in a User State Migration Solution

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Preparing for a mass project like a Windows® 7 migration takes a lot of “pre-planning” leading up to the actual migration itself. Additionally, with any PC change initiative at your organization, ranging from a basic machine swap to that mass PC replacement project, there are numerous things to consider. One of the most important yet overlooked aspects of any migration is the impact on user productivity.

Having the goal of zero-impact on the end-user during any migration is pretty ambitious, however with the proper tools in place, it’s definitely doable. An important step in a Windows 7 migration or any PC change initiative is migrating user personalities from one PC to the next. This should be tackled after all OS’s have been deployed and applications have been moved.

This technical brief will highlight the impact of user state migration on employee productivity. Additionally, it will detail the importance of having a standard, time-saving solution that goes above and beyond the “free” tools available from the large enterprise software vendors without eating into your budget.

Defining User Personality Migration...

User state or user personality represents everything that makes a computer personal and productive for an end user. Application and OS settings, data files, web browser settings, cookies, favorites, even signatures created in Microsoft® Outlook are all unique to each individual PC user. In order to ensure a successful OS migration project or ease the administration associated with a PC refresh initiative, transferring user “personalities” from one machine to the next is an important, yet often forgotten step. And having an automated way to eliminate time spent configuring settings on a new machine is a production booster for both IT AND the end user.

Finding a solution for User Personality Migration...

Investigating user personality migration solutions can be confusing for someone who has never felt the impact of a PC change initiative or received post-migration calls from an end-user looking for their “My Pictures” folder. And often, the most well known tools available on the market today are really just that—tools, and not solutions.

One of those well-known tools for user personality transfers on the market today is the User State Migration Tool (USMT) from Microsoft®. This utility, though popular in use, is entirely a command line driven and xml configuration file solution which involves complex configurations and

highly skilled technical staff to administer. Primarily used and built for larger enterprises, the smaller to mid-size organizations often perceive the tool as cumbersome, and extremely difficult to use.

Alternative solutions are available on the market to help ease the burden of user personality moves, but when considering a user personality migration solution, you need to take into consideration the following elements:

- **Operating System Settings:** This includes the user’s desktop background, Windows Explorer settings, task bar and start menu settings, control panel settings, etc.
- **Application Settings:** This includes email and web browser settings, cookies, favorites, etc. Additionally, custom application settings are also supported.
- **Documents and Data Files:** This includes all files, folders and documents, not only in the user’s profile folders (like My Documents or My Pictures) but from any location on the machine.

Numara® FootPrints® Migration Manager allows administrators to simplify the capture and transfer of all user data and personalities including desktop layout, metadata, drive mappings, customized settings, and file/folder structure with a GUI-based, automated solution that helps maintain productivity levels and reduce support costs.

With FootPrints MigrationManager IT administrators are able to preserve their end users’ unique personalities and keep them intact on the newly created/upgraded Windows PCs without manual intervention. By preserving PC user states including data files/structure, customized layout, web favorites, application settings, drive mappings, wallpaper, email signatures and more, your end-users productivity is unaffected by any PC change. FootPrints MigrationManager ensures a smooth, repeatable process that can be used to migrate a single user’s machine as easily as a thousand machines. Furthermore, IT administrators can easily accomplish these projects with the added benefit of a GUI-based, automated solution that allows them to avoid complex command-line tools.

With FootPrints MigrationManager, you can avoid post-migration support calls and complaints about lost productivity because your customers lost their personalized wallpaper or customized MS Word dictionary. And since FootPrints MigrationManager performs cross-version application data and setting moves, application upgrades are easier and more efficient.

Below is a comparison of Numara FootPrints Migration Manager vs. USMT.

Feature	Numara FootPrints Migration Manager	Microsoft User State Migration Tool
Architecture	Single installer, mature, intuitive and greatly improves user state migration over USMT	Part of the WAIK (Windows Automated Installation Kit) which is 1.7 G which means you have to first install WAIK and then extract the USMT folder which has disparate programs for each operation scanstate.exe and loadstate.exe.
Usability	Has a GUI allowing you to “point and click” for extractions and injections. This greatly improves the stability, speed and cost of any mass migration effort. For PC refreshes/replacement it's a simple few clicks to extract from old machine and inject into new machine.	It's a command-line, has no GUI, and in order to customize migrations, you would have to edit XML files.
Application Support	Supports Microsoft but also supports Adobe Acrobat, Lotus Notes, Microsoft Internet Explorer and Microsoft Office. Limited support of Office 2010 migration. File and Registry Rules make it easy to customize migrations and include settings and data from customer-specific applications. Migration Manager Content Builder makes it possible to easily build additional application support	USMT only supports about 20 applications out of the box (and those are Microsoft ONLY). To create custom applications for migration, a time consuming process of editing XML files is required. This will include manually entering file locations, registry, etc
Debugging/Troubleshooting	Verbose Log files for extraction and injection	Verbose Log files for extraction and injection
Reports	No reporting engine.	No reporting engine.
Integration with Desktop Management	Limited integration with SCCM and FootPrints (Deeper integration in Fall 2011 for FootPrints Asset Management Technology)	Limited integration with SCCM 2007
Technical Support	Fully supported with regular updates and enhancement roadmap.	Because it is free the extent of support is user groups which are time consuming and provide little step by step guidance when you need it the most.
Security/Compliance	Supports Migration using SSL	No Encryption
Documentation/Training	Step by step guides and easy to comprehend administration manual. Hands on training available.	Documentation limited and highly technical in nature. No training course offered by Microsoft.

Using a “free” tool like Microsoft’s USMT could be helpful if you had NO solution, but if you are looking to truly improve process, increase

productivity of your users and reduce the administrative time spent on user state migrations, you need FootPrints Migration Manager.

Who are we?

Numara Software is a leading provider of integrated IT management solutions for Desktop Management, PC Lifecycle Management, Security & Compliance, Help Desk and Service Desk. Designed to optimize IT management, Numara FootPrints and Numara Track-It! collectively support more than 50,000 customer sites and nearly 20 million IT assets worldwide.



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to simply choose
the right solution for you