

AdminStudio FAQ



What is the difference between AdminStudio Enterprise, Professional, and Standard editions?

All AdminStudio editions include advanced MSI repackaging technology, MSI customization capabilities, and package distribution support.

In addition, AdminStudio Professional includes powerful and robust ConflictSolver technology to detect and resolve application conflicts before you deploy MSIs to your environment. ConflictSolver leverages the Application Catalog, a database of all the applications and operating systems in your environment. Also, AdminStudio Professional contains QualityMonitor, a QA testing solution that automatically validates and tests your MSI installations before deployment, as well as predeployment testing for building test packages that imitate the behavior of a package and report the results back to a central location.

AdminStudio Enterprise has all the tools in Professional, but also includes Web-based tools to manage packaging efforts across multiple team members. These capabilities include building reports from the Application Catalog, scheduling automated tasks to be run, managing roles and permissions (optionally using LDAP), and managing multiple package versions. It also simplifies patch testing by automatically identifying the applications in your environment that a patch will impact.

Plus, AdminStudio includes support for today's popular virtualization technologies. With the AdminStudio Virtualization Pack, you have the power to prevent DLL conflicts by creating virtual software packages in multiple virtualization formats.

Check out the AdminStudio Features pages for more information.

Can AdminStudio turn MSIs and EXEs into virtual software packages?

Yes. AdminStudio includes application virtualization support for converting MSI and EXE setups into Thininstall® and Citrix® virtual packages. It's the only

packaging solution that lets you choose from multiple virtualization formats, so you can pick the format that best fits different situations.

AdminStudio comes with Thininstall and Citrix Assistants that save you time and effort by walking you through either virtualization process in minutes, including the customizing of virtual packages.

Why does AdminStudio have the best, fastest, and most reliable repackager?

We understand Windows Installer (MSI). We've taken this knowledge and encapsulated it in the AdminStudio Repackager. As a result, AdminStudio MSI packages have fewer validation errors or warnings than with any other Windows Installer repackager.

AdminStudio also includes revolutionary InstallMonitor technology, which monitors and captures only the files, shortcuts, and registry entries that are added, modified, or removed by the installation. The repackaging process is the fastest because it takes only as long as the setup time. Furthermore, with the simplified AdminStudio repackaging IDE, you only need to capture the data once. If you discover days, weeks, or months later that changes need to be made, there is no need to re-repackage. You can simply open the repackaging project, make the changes, and recreate the package.

Is AdminStudio suited to both large enterprises and small companies?

Yes. AdminStudio's intuitive wizard-driven approach and scalable Application Catalog with Web-based tools is well suited to both large enterprises and smaller organizations. AdminStudio operates very well in a standalone mode, enabling single packages to be highly productive. AdminStudio also provides powerful tools for large packaging teams, enabling collaboration, data management, centralized reporting, and process standardization. In addition, Macrovision's Workflow Manager (sold separately) product provides additional process control and management capabilities for medium to large sized organizations.

How easy it is for new users to learn to use this software?

AdminStudio is easy to learn. AdminStudio provides an intuitive Process Assistant to guide users through all major tasks in the software packaging process. A second Assistant, focused on the conflict detection and resolution step, walks users through key pieces of that process. The Start Page also provides links to key resources, including solution-oriented tutorials providing detailed explanations of how to perform each task.

How is AdminStudio licensed?

AdminStudio is often licensed to be used by one system administrator on one administrator system. Any number of installations can be repackaged or created by that system administrator and distributed as broadly as required. For additional information, please review the License Agreement documents available in the "Downloads" section of the web site.

AdminStudio can also be licensed for use in organizations with a certain number of workstations, so any number of system administrators in the company can use the product on their behalf. Please contact Macrovision Sales for more information on this option.

Why use a repackager to convert application packages to MSI?

By repackaging legacy setups, such as script-based Setup.exe files, into Windows Installer (MSI) packages, you can better leverage Microsoft-standard technology and take advantage of important Windows Installer features such as application auto-repair, elevated privileges, rollback during an interrupted installation, and advertising.

To repackage a legacy setup, AdminStudio includes the Repackager, a simple-to-use tool that assists you in quickly generating reliable Windows Installer packages from your existing setups.

When do I need to use transforms? Why they are useful?

If you have an MSI created by a software vendor, use the transform creation capability (rather than direct MSI editing) in AdminStudio's Editor tool to customize the installation. This avoids altering the original package, and follows Microsoft's guidelines for customizing Windows Installer packages. Customizations such as removing or relocating shortcuts, changing registry settings, adding files, pre-configuring ODBC databases, or creating a response file are all easily made through Editor's clean interface that removes most of the complexity of working with a typical setup.

When do I need to use the Editor (InstallShield) tool found in AdminStudio?

You can use Editor (InstallShield) to edit package contents, or add custom installation functionality. It is essentially the same installation development environment used by software vendors worldwide to create bulletproof installations, with interface enhancements designed to make systems administrator tasks more accessible. Editor allows you to build packages that work across multiple Windows platforms, and support multiple languages.

What is conflict management, and why do I need it?

Often the source of mysterious operating system instabilities and application crashes can be traced back to application conflicts. AdminStudio's ConflictSolver module allows you to catalog your applications and check them against each other and your base operating systems to search for a broad range of conflicts before you deploy the applications.

What types of conflicts does AdminStudio detect?

AdminStudio has over 25 predefined rules to detect conflicts involving: components, files, registry entries, shortcuts, INI files, ODBC resources, services, file extensions, and product codes. With the Rules Wizard, you can easily create additional corporate validation rules that run against every package to ensure your guidelines are always followed -- and no programming is needed. And because AdminStudio enables you to import every single table contained in your MSI package into the Application Catalog, it gives you the most thorough conflict-solving functionality available.

I have an older Application Catalog database. Can I easily migrate to AdminStudio 8.6?

Yes. AdminStudio 8.6 includes an Upgrade Wizard that will automatically, and with full logging, upgrade your AdminStudio 5.x or 6.x Application Catalog database to the Application Catalog of AdminStudio 8.6. The first time you connect to an existing database, AdminStudio 8.6 will start the Upgrade Wizard and walk you through the process of upgrading.

What is QualityMonitor™?

QualityMonitor automatically verifies that all installation components -- such as registered file extensions and shortcuts -- are configured correctly, and it also makes sure that no potential installation problems exist by scanning the installed package, before you deploy it. Additionally, QualityMonitor performs live security checks on file system and registry entries before the MSI is deployed to make sure that the application will have sufficient access rights to operate in a locked down environment.

What runtime languages does AdminStudio support?

AdminStudio Professional and higher includes end-user resources for 33 different languages. Any one or more of these languages can be included in a single installation. To add support for even more languages or to modify an existing option, the string table can be exported from the project, modified and reimported very easily.

What information is stored in the Application Catalog?

AdminStudio Professional enables the storage of all the MSI data as well as extended attributes. AdminStudio Enterprise extends the Application Catalog to include additional information about the binary files associated with the applications. It can also maintain multiple versions of a package, including check-out and check-in capability.

How closely can I control access to functions in AdminStudio?

AdminStudio Enterprise includes a Security Console that allows for tight control of AdminStudio utilization. Individuals or



groups can be assigned access to various tools and capabilities. Typically, users will be assigned to Roles, and those Roles are granted access. The Security Console is unique in that it is Web-based, allowing user management to occur from anywhere. Additionally, it integrates with LDAP servers, i.e., Microsoft's Active Directory and Novell's eDirectory, so that enterprise accounts can be managed in a single location.

What is the relationship between AdminStudio, Workflow Manager, and process standards such as ITIL or Microsoft MOF and BDD?

AdminStudio and Workflow Manager share the same Application Catalog, so package-related data in AdminStudio and packaging process management data in Workflow Manager are linked and accessible via AdminStudio's ReportCenter and can feed into your CMDB. It provides a foundation for Definitive Software Library (DSL) support in your ITIL or Microsoft MOF and BDD implementations. Plus, Workflow Manager's workflow templates are so easy to customize, making it well suited to implement process standards. A Microsoft BDD workflow template is available for download and use by Workflow Manager customers.

I'm migrating to Windows Vista. How can AdminStudio simplify this critical project?

AdminStudio eases your migration pains with full support for Vista. It has the tools to properly prepare software for deployment to machines running Windows Vista. AdminStudio can convert any software package to a reliable MSI that is 100% compliant with the Microsoft Vista Quality Program. You can also use AdminStudio to customize and test MSIs to ensure they'll deploy smoothly and run properly on Vista machines. AdminStudio itself runs on Vista, so you can follow best practices by performing MSI repackaging and testing on machines running the same Vista OS as your target environment.



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