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Richard
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RunAs Radio is a weekly Internet Audio Talk Show for IT Professionals working with Microsoft products. The full range of IT topics is covered from a Microsoft-centric viewpoint.



Greg
Hughes

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Rhonda Layfield Deploys Everything!
December 23, 2009



[Music]

Brandon Wenn: From runasradio.com, you're listening to RunAs Radio, the Internet audio talk show for IT professionals with Richard Campbell and Greg Hughes. This is Brandon Wenn, announcing show #140, with guest Rhonda Layfield, recorded Thursday, December 17, 2009. RunAs Radio is produced each week by PWOP Productions, providing professional media and podcasting services online at pwop.com. You can follow the boys on Twitter at twitter.com/runasradio.

Richard Campbell: Thank you, Brandon. This is Richard Campbell. You're listening to RunAs Radio. With me as always, my co-host and much less hangover than me, Greg Hughes.

Greg Hughes: Hey, how is it going? Merry freaking Christmas, man.

Richard Campbell: Merry Christmas, my friend.

Rhonda Layfield: Christmas party?

Richard Campbell: Why yes, it was a Christmas party actually.

Rhonda Layfield: Aha. Nothing wrong with that.

Richard Campbell: So I woke up 45 minutes ago in a strange bed naked with my dog sleeping beside me.

Greg Hughes: And then he sends me a text message and says, "But my underwear is wet."

Richard Campbell: Yeah, and as I sort of slide out of bed going "What the fuck time is it? What am I going to do," I find my soaking wet underwear beside me on the floor.

Rhonda Layfield: I'm going to guess you swam.

Richard Campbell: Hot tub.

Rhonda Layfield: Hot tub.

Richard Campbell: Yeah.

Rhonda Layfield: There you go. That was a good night.

Richard Campbell: Obviously because I can't see my clothes anywhere, I obviously walked home from the neighbor's place in my soaking wet underwear and I'm going to bet that...

Rhonda Layfield: I'll give you a thousand dollars for that picture.

Richard Campbell: I'm going to bet that my wife intercepted me at the front door and stuck me in the

guest room like "I am not sleeping with you tonight," and the only reason I know that for sure is at that moment where I sort of stand up naked standing on my soaking wet underwear I see my robe over at the end of the bed which is her kindness to me, it's just "Yes, you're naked and you have teenage daughters so for Christ's sake put something on."

Rhonda Layfield: I think she gets the gold star for letting you in the house.

Richard Campbell: Yeah. Well, and just stuffing me in the guest room and obviously the dog loves me more so the dog was sleeping beside me, but she's gone like literally I woke up to an empty house and it just started...

Greg Hughes: Hopefully it was your wife and not your teenage daughters that had to escort you in the front door.

Rhonda Layfield: Oh yeah, that would be interesting.

Richard Campbell: And they've done that. You know, this is the thing. My children however have no illusions about me. The younger one who is actually very, very good at that is the one who shepherd me across Cuzco, Peru back to the room when I discovered the Pisco Sour, which I know through 11,000 feet is very potent. But over this whole thing with Greg where I said "You know, everybody has experienced the fact that if you're on the conference circuit, when you meet me you will realize that I'm a good drinker, I go to a lot of bars and I could be out all night and I'm generally the guy who'll carry people home and I understand why I have that skill, it is my neighbors'. I had been in training for years. My neighbors are the worst influence you can imagine.

Greg Hughes: It's all relative.

Rhonda Layfield: So they didn't sell like orange.

Richard Campbell: Yeah. The fact that I went to the next door, it was the place of this Christmas party, ended up drinking all night and ending up in another neighbor's hot tub, but God knows maybe 4:00 a.m., I'm guessing because I obviously did not look at the clock but I'm that pretty sure I didn't get out of one neighbor's place until 2:00 last night.

Greg Hughes: You know, I don't know if they still do what Playboy used to do, an annual ranking of the top like 25 party colleges, party schools. In Missouri, which is where I went to college, it always used to be at the top but then back in like '86 or '87 or so they came out with the ranking and Missouri wasn't even on there, but then in fine print down at the bottom with a little asterisk, it says "Sorry Missouri, we no longer rank professionals."



Richard Campbell: Right.

Greg Hughes: I think professional, that might be a term that could apply to you.

Richard Campbell: Yes, I think because I have a professional drinking neighborhood. These people are past bad influence into you are a fool to go to this party if you do not expect to be hangover the next day.

Greg Hughes: Right.

Richard Campbell: And the sad part of course is that I just tipped out of bed at 8:30 and knew what to do, hopped through a shower, big glass of water, a couple of aspirin, tea, like I'm ready to go. Let's do this.

Greg Hughes: On with life.

Rhonda Layfield: Well, you sound great, you don't sound hangover.

Richard Campbell: Yeah. I've come to appreciate that my hangover voice is the perfect radio voice.

Greg Hughes: He doesn't sound hangover because every time you'll ever talk to him he was hangover.

Richard Campbell: Yeah, maybe that's it, that's what it is.

Rhonda Layfield: Oh, that makes sense.

Greg Hughes: Like we say it's all relative.

Richard Campbell: Nobody could tell if you're hangover if you always hangover.

Greg Hughes: All right, let's do a show.

Richard Campbell: You know what, Brandon? You can leave that in actually. Let's do the intro around that because this is the Christmas show, why shouldn't it be in there?

Greg Hughes: Thank God for Christmas parties.

Richard Campbell: There you go.

Greg Hughes: Yeah.

Richard Campbell: The Christmas party show.

Greg Hughes: Right.

Richard Campbell: All right, enough of me. Let's get to our guest. Yes, it's Rhonda Layfield. Our friend, Rhonda Layfield.

Greg Hughes: Good old Rhonda.

Rhonda Layfield: Good morning, guys.

Richard Campbell: Great talking to you again, Rhonda. I've read your bio before. You've spent time in the US Navy, top secret clearance, and then somehow you ended up in the world of Microsoft technology which, I don't know, I think the Navy lost out on that deal actually.

Rhonda Layfield: Well, it's funny because I actually worked with Microsoft technologies when I was in the Navy.

Richard Campbell: Right, right of course.

Rhonda Layfield: That's where I kind of got my feet wet.

Richard Campbell: Yeah.

Rhonda Layfield: Liked it so much I decided to stick with it.

Richard Campbell: To stay in and you just stayed with it ever since. I can't remember where we met. It was in one of the conferences.

Rhonda Layfield: I wouldn't say it was Connections but I'm not 100% certain.

Richard Campbell: Connections or TechEd, one or the other.

Rhonda Layfield: It might have been TechEd when I did Speaker Idol.

Richard Campbell: Yeah, right. Well, I think I'd already met you at that point when you did Speaker Idol in the US, one, and then you did Speaker Idol in Europe the same year because the rules only say you can't have ever spoken at TechEd. At that point you hadn't spoken at TechEd even though you've won the US TechEd and you won Europe as well which is unprecedented of course.

Rhonda Layfield: And they were both fantastic.

Greg Hughes: And I think the first time I met you was at TechEd in the US, that was the first time.

Rhonda Layfield: Great shows.

Richard Campbell: Wasn't this year the year that you spoke at TechEd US, TechEd Europe with your sort of wining ticket?

Rhonda Layfield: I did; and I was so excited and so nervous I somehow ended up in a hospital the week before TechEd US and had to demand to be let



out. I practically discharge myself with the doctor saying, "No, wait. You can't go." I'm like "Give me drugs and I'll go."

Richard Campbell: I'm going, yeah.

Rhonda Layfield: I just needed some painkillers there and so yeah, I actually did my talks on Vicodin. It was fun. I couldn't tell you what I said but they went over pretty well, the evaluations were very good and then it was better in Europe when I wasn't on anything. One of my talks actually ranked 31 out of I guess 400 or so that they had so its much better when you're not drugged I've learned.

Greg Hughes: Yeah.

Richard Campbell: Speaking at TechEd is always a challenge and an adventure, no two ways about that. It's such a big show.

Greg Hughes: It's definitely a high pressure situation for a speaker especially if you haven't spoken there before.

Rhonda Layfield: It's very exciting.

Richard Campbell: So what are we talking about today?

Rhonda Layfield: I love talking about deployment. Deployment is one of my favorite topics, the Microsoft Deployment Tools actually.

Richard Campbell: And you're working on a new book.

Rhonda Layfield: I am. I'm working on a new book. I wanted a book where people could get everything they needed to learn about deployment. So what actually start that talking about hardware and Microsoft Assessment and Planning Tool to find out if your hardware meets the requirements and then it goes into application compatibility and then dives into the tools. We get into Wake, MDT, WDS, USMT. I wanted it to be a book where you could just pick it up and it would be kind of everything you need to know about deployment in one place.

Richard Campbell: Microsoft is bad for this. They make so many things, you don't know which one to use.

Rhonda Layfield: And everything is so different because you've got all these different teams working on different technologies and they use different terminologies and so when you pick a documentation you think okay, I understand the terms now, and then you pick up documentation for the next tool and it's all different and you're like okay, this is hard.

Richard Campbell: Rhonda, maybe we should start at the top. You know, let's go through all these different products and their role in deployment.

Rhonda Layfield: Well, my favorite one is the Windows Automated Installation Kit or the WAKE and there's a new version out, the WAKE for Windows 7.0. It's also referred to as WAKE 2.0. So right there is a little confusion as to what the name of the tool is, but this tool is the nuts and bolts for how the Microsoft deployment toolkit does everything. So if you understand the WAKE and how you can manually create an image and put drivers inside that image and then deploy the image and patch it, then you understand what the MDT is doing under the hood which is critical if you're ever going to troubleshoot something. So starting with the WAKE and doing everything manually it might take a little bit more time but you really, really understand those tools along with additional tools that are built on those. So I love the WAKE.

Richard Campbell: And this is not just about deploying out workstations either, right. I certainly, in the web farm world, have been always emphasizing you want to do this image-based install for web farms because you need completely consistent machines.

Rhonda Layfield: That's a great point. Last year I did some consulting at a very large federal agency, not to mention any names.

Richard Campbell: Yeah.

Rhonda Layfield: And we were deploying 50,000 Vista machines and then we also did some servers. I was helping them with their servers and we ended up using ImageX which is one of the tools inside the WAKE. We had a fat server image with all kinds of applications, hardware tools and everything already installed in it I could lay it down in seven minutes.

Richard Campbell: No kidding.

Rhonda Layfield: The first time I did it I thought, oops, something went wrong. That can't be right.

Richard Campbell: I definitely had that experience with some of these technologies where when it's done you're like there's no way that happened that fast.

Rhonda Layfield: Yeah, yeah.

Richard Campbell: Like that can't be true.

Rhonda Layfield: The neat thing is the tools have been out for quite a while now. It used to be just enterprise clients that can use them or software insurance clients. But now that they've been release to the general public, Microsoft has really stepped up



to the plate and given us great user interfaces, the tools are much more streamlined and reliable.

Richard Campbell: Right.

Rhonda Layfield: In the past, there were times when I had to remove the MDT or the BDD back in those days and re-install it and start from scratch again because it would get to a point where it just wouldn't do anything at all.

Richard Campbell: Interesting.

Rhonda Layfield: Yeah.

Richard Campbell: I mean the corporality of this is that Microsoft gives all these tools away.

Rhonda Layfield: Yes.

Richard Campbell: Freely downloadable deployment tools.

Rhonda Layfield: Yup, they're free.

Richard Campbell: One of the things I argue is that one of the reasons people don't know about this is they're free, you know. If you at least were paying for this, it was Microsoft installation server, then I think people would pay more attention to it. It's neglected because it's free.

Greg Hughes: Yeah. If you go to cdw.com, there's not a skew there for buying or acquiring Microsoft installation tools I guess.

Richard Campbell: Yeah.

Greg Hughes: That's a good point.

Rhonda Layfield: And I think that's why they're doing so many talks at MMS. I was there last year and going to be there again this coming spring in TechEd US and Europe, but there are lots and lots of talks on these tools and if you get to the right level of talks from where you are, you can get any information you want. You can go to a beginner level talk, 100 to 200 level. You can go to a 300 level or even 400 when it comes to troubleshooting and network traces which is one of my favorites to troubleshoot as I love Netmon.

Richard Campbell: These products actually get that complex. You can be a real pro in them.

Rhonda Layfield: Oh, absolutely. There's actually a certification for the Microsoft deployment tools. It's called the Desktop Deployment Product Specialist or DDPS. The cool thing about that is you take one test, I think it might be two now but when I took it it was just one exam and when you pass the exam you can take the DDPS certification, you can go

on to Microsoft site, become a Microsoft partner, put your DDPS, and then enterprise and essay clients can look at that list and choose from that list for someone to come out and help them do some consulting and help them to learn the tools and Microsoft pays the bill.

Greg Hughes: Got you. Ha, interesting.

Rhonda Layfield: It can't be bad.

Greg Hughes: Rhonda, you're a pro in this area. You're writing in a book on this topic.

Rhonda Layfield: Yeah.

Greg Hughes: Can we step outside of just the Microsoft tools for a few minutes because there are an awful lot of third parties that have built -- think about the big picture. There are a lot of commercial tools out there that you can buy in addition to the free Microsoft tools. If somebody is just the average IT person trying to figure out how to get started on this, what is the landscape? I mean, if there's stuff that's worth paying for and then there's the free Microsoft stuff, how am I suppose to evaluate all the stuff against each other and understand what I can do and what I need?

Rhonda Layfield: That's a really difficult thing for people to do because unless they know the pros and the cons about the paid for applications versus the Microsoft applications they all got good things and bad things. They all have bugs, nothing is perfect, they're all written by human beings...

Richard Campbell: Right.

Rhonda Layfield: But when it comes down to it, a lot of tools -- I've worked with Altiris in the past, I've worked with Ghost in the past and back when I was working with the tools, those were the only ones that existed. There are a ton of them out there now but you need to look at what needs to happen in your environment, exactly what do you need to do, what do you need to deploy, do you need to be able to deploy applications after the operating system has been installed so six weeks later you just find, oh, now I want to deploy this application. The newest version of the MDT actually let's you do that.

Richard Campbell: Really?

Rhonda Layfield: Yeah.

Richard Campbell: So it's more of push down model that I can go push, change this down.

Rhonda Layfield: Yeah. It's really cool. You can do registry changes, you can run anything you want.



Richard Campbell: But this is not about deploying patches. I mean we've got Windows Update Services for that.

Rhonda Layfield: Well, we have Windows Update Services for that but you can patch your image so you could actually add your patches to the MDT and then when it deploys the OS it automatically patches it at the same time.

Richard Campbell: But that's only for deployment. I couldn't actually put a patch into my image and then push that. It might choke everybody.

Rhonda Layfield: I haven't tried to do that yet so I can't say yes or no to that. Now you've got me to do a to-do list here.

Richard Campbell: There you go, yeah.

Rhonda Layfield: I'll definitely have to go try that.

Richard Campbell: It feels a little gratuitous to do that, but that would be some kind of overkill on this.

Greg Hughes: I mean Windows Software Update Services is for stuff that's already deployed and making sure that stays up-to-date in a controlled manner but what if I deploy an image, the time between the time an image is deployed and the time that it actually gets updated by WSS, that could be -- depending on if there's a vulnerability, that could be a critical period from a security standpoint.

Rhonda Layfield: Exactly.

Greg Hughes: Or if there's a hot fix or a patch you use to go in for a functionality change that's necessary for a business, then maybe it is good to try that to push that into the image and deploy it right upfront.

Richard Campbell: You know, I think when larger things here is just coping with all of the images that a large installation needs for different platforms, you know you've got all these different chunks of software based on your user but don't you all have to manage different sets of drivers?

Rhonda Layfield: You know, that's one of the most beautiful things about the MDT now. I know I want to talk about the other tools as well but they've done such a cool job with the MDT and that's the MDT 2010. The other ones don't do it and I'm about to tell you. It's when you dump your drivers in, you can now create folders. So when you're looking at the user interface, you can create a folder under the driver's folder that says Lenovo. Underneath that you can create one that says T61p and then you can just dump all your drivers for that one model into that folder which is really cool because in the past you've dumped all your drivers into one great big container

and good luck trying to find anything. It was a real confusing nightmare to look at that.

Greg Hughes: That just impact it from an organizational standpoint? Is that just for the person who has to look at it or is that actually segregating the drivers that will get deployed to any specific model of laptop or computer that you're deploying to?

Rhonda Layfield: That specific feature just helps the person who's looking at it but there's something else called Selection Profiles that allows you to actually control which drivers get put in to which image and what's really cool is you could tell it, okay, create a selection profile and I want all my drivers from every single folder I have.

Greg Hughes: Okay.

Rhonda Layfield: And then if you want to add just certain NIC drivers to your Windows pre-installation environment, the WinPE that actually boots the machine and gets it up and running and connected to the network, you could tell that in the MDT with one checkmark, okay, so look at all these drivers, just grab the NIC drivers. That's it. They've done something, fantastic things that make this product really flexible now.

Richard Campbell: It's awesome really. I'm very impressed with where we are right at the moment. So what do you see folks doing in the field in terms of what you put into this deployment? Is it literally all the operating system and all of the apps as pre-install?

Rhonda Layfield: Exactly. But the nice thing about if you're doing it with the MDT, it's kind of like you plug in your applications and then when you create something called the Task Sequence, that's when you say take that one operating system, Windows 7.0 enterprise, take those four applications out of the 60 I've added, take that driver group for the Lenovo T61p and then deploy that. So your task sequence is actually what goes and grabs just the exact things you want for that one little deployment so you don't have to have a whole bunch of images. You could have just one Install.Win sitting there that deploys Windows 7.0 enterprise or ultimate and then based on the task sequence, it's kind of like a puzzle, you just take the different pieces and plug them in and then you're good to go.

Richard Campbell: Awesome. Yeah, it's exactly the way you want to think about this going forward.

Rhonda Layfield: Yeah, because it's nice. You know, when you have to come back and change something later, if you have that fat image so everything is inside that one Win file, it's really difficult to take things out.



Richard Campbell: Yeah.

Rhonda Layfield: You have to mount it and remove things and hope you didn't break anything, and then unmount it and then possibly turn it into an ISO again which MDT does all these for you. You don't have to know how to do that.

Richard Campbell: The biggest thing I found with folks is their images get stale that you need new drivers, you need new versions of the applications and so forth and the work to start over. It's just not worth it.

Greg Hughes: Yeah, updating your existing, as long as it's healthy, saves a lot of time.

Rhonda Layfield: That used to be such a nightmare. They have to deploy the image to a machine, make their changes, and then pretty much create a brand new image. You're talking a whole day, if not two sometimes, of troubleshooting a new application, it didn't work properly. It was just a nightmare. Now there's no deploy the image, fix it and create a new one. There's no reason to do all that.

Richard Campbell: Can you build images where I already have the operating system to deploy them on the machine, I just want to deploy the apps?

Rhonda Layfield: Absolutely you can now and that's with MDT. In the past you can only do that with Config Manager.

Richard Campbell: Okay.

Rhonda Layfield: Which, of course, we all know you've got to pay for that guy.

Richard Campbell: Right. In fact, where Microsoft actually sells.

Greg Hughes: That's just System Center Configuration Manager.

Rhonda Layfield: Yes. I've keep telling them I want to come up with a new acronym for it. I think conman would be a good one but they wont...

Greg Hughes: Occasionally you get a line that shows that the person we're talking to doesn't actually work for Microsoft.

Richard Campbell: Yeah. Oh man.

Rhonda Layfield: That's why I can tell the truth about the products and they're fantastic.

Greg Hughes: Absolutely.

Rhonda Layfield: When I say tell the truth, I can tell you some little things that happen in them. I've got a website up and running, www.deploymentdr.com, and I'm putting kind of crib notes out there so that people don't waste days and days worth of troubleshooting time like I did. If they just go to that website, look at how do you install the MDT, how do you configure it, what happens if I did this versus that. Oh, it's right here on that page.

Greg Hughes: Cool.

Rhonda Layfield: Sometimes to share my *faux pas* and all the crazy things I've done that have taken me days and days to figure out so other people don't have to bang their heads against the wall like I did.

Greg Hughes: Yeah. Those of us who has spent out time having to learn from our own mistakes even though somebody else has learned from theirs, there are people out there that will learn from our mistakes so that's cool that you're making a resource like that.

Richard Campbell: Is this just a summary of all of your knowledge around those sorts of mistakes?

Rhonda Layfield: It's not really going to be a summary. I'm trying to make it so -- ideally, what I'd like to do is have two kind of companion sites. One for if you're brand new to the tool, go to this page and here's the step-by-step by picture. Lots of screenshots in there so they can look and say okay, I'm in the right place. Now on this screen I'm supposed to do this, and look I've got this screen. Then I wanted to do another site, which I haven't started yet, but I want that for people who already know how to do it and it's not going to be picture-driven. It's going to be the bottom line boom, boom, boom, this is how you do it, these are the problems you can run into, here's how to fix them.

Richard Campbell: Awesome.

Rhonda Layfield: I'm hoping to get on that pretty soon.

Richard Campbell: Is that site up and running now?

Rhonda Layfield: The deploymentdr.com is but it's not completely done. I've just got a couple of people who have offered to help with that. I've been spending all my time writing the book. So spending time writing the book hasn't given me a lot of time leftover to get everything on the website the way I want them, but I do have a couple of pages that do have information on them. Installing MDT is there. I almost have the configuration and deploying your first image finished. That should be up by next Friday.



Greg Hughes: Cool, very cool. So Rhonda, just to be clear, that's D-E-P-L-O-Y-M-E-N-T-D-R-dot-com, right?

Rhonda Layfield: Yes, it is.

Greg Hughes: Yeah, cool. Very cool. Great new resource and that will be fun to watch.

Richard Campbell: So going a bit beyond all of these so far, are there other tools that folks have to deal with for doing deployment around the Microsoft technologies?

Rhonda Layfield: There's Windows Deployment Service and that ships right in the box with Server 2008r2.

Richard Campbell: Really?

Rhonda Layfield: Oh, yeah. It can't get any easier now. You just add it as a role.

Greg Hughes: Windows Deployment Service, the other one was a deployment toolkit, so what's the difference?

Rhonda Layfield: The difference is how the images are actually created and added to the tool and then how they're deployed. Windows Deployment Service, WDS, can do multicasting of an image. So if you have a whole bunch of machines that need to receive the exact same image, WDS is the way I would go. But you can also, and this is where it gets confusing, you can hook MDT to WDS so that when you deploy an image from MDT it actually hands it to the WDS server and then the WDS server can multicast it to other clients.

Greg Hughes: So I might use the MDT to create my images and maintain them but use WDS to actually do the multicast deployment, is that what you're saying?

Rhonda Layfield: Yes.

Greg Hughes: Well, that's kind of cool.

Rhonda Layfield: And also to use WDS, what happens is the MDT creates a custom Windows pre-installation environment that has all the MDTs scripts embedded in it. So you could take that WinPE, add it to your WDS Server, then when you go to your client all you have to do is a network boot, S12.machine, it connects to the WDS Server, it downloads boot to MDTs WinPE and in that it knows who the MDT deployment server is and begins downloading the image. The big difference between the two I think right now is VHDs are brand new, the virtual hard disk.

Greg Hughes: Yeah.

Richard Campbell: Right.

Rhonda Layfield: You can create an image now a VHD extension instead of a Win extension.

Richard Campbell: Nice.

Rhonda Layfield: One of the things I like about that is if you have multiple partitions or volume, then an image in a Win can only be one partition.

Richard Campbell: Right.

Rhonda Layfield: So you have to have multiple partitions to deploy for using Win. You know, Windows 7.0 has a hundred meg partition upfront. It has Win Orion, it's a recovery environment.

Richard Campbell: Right.

Greg Hughes: Right.

Rhonda Layfield: And a couple of other tools. So just out of the gate, you have to have two images there. With the VHD files, you just take pretty much a snapshot of the entire hard drive all partitions and you end up with a VHD that contains multiple partitions that you just need to deploy the VHD file. What's different between MDT and WDS, MDT doesn't know what a VHD file is. You can only deploy Wins. So if you wanted to go with VHD files, then you're going to have to deploy those using Windows Deployment Service.

Richard Campbell: Okay. So it's really there's a few different features here as to how you want to do things.

Rhonda Layfield: Most people have the issue of which tool do I use, because a lot of times I'll do a talk and I have someone come up and say okay, I understand I need to install the WAKE, MDT, WDS and SCCM. Is there anything else I need? I'm like, whoa, if you've got SCCM in, you've got it all. You don't need to add anything to SCCM, and where with WDS and MDT you can integrate the two for certain reasons which we've already talked about.

Richard Campbell: Yeah.

Rhonda Layfield: Or you can just go straight MDT or straight WDS.

Greg Hughes: So if I go straight to WDS but I'm not using MDT, am I missing anything from a capability feature functionality standpoint? I mean, am I leaving something behind?

Rhonda Layfield: Maintenance of your images is much more difficult. Adding an application or moving an application, that kind of stuff is much more difficult



with WDS. With WDS, you actually have to X put the image out of WDS, manually patch it, put your drivers in, do whatever it is you choose. You can use the dynamic driver provisioning if you choose, which is a function of WDS, but the actual management of the images later is a lot more difficult in WDS than it is in MDT.

Greg Hughes: So if I manage my images with MDT and deploy them with WDS, actually ship them to machines, that's sort of that integrated or hybrid approach that you're talking about.

Rhonda Layfield: Exactly.

Richard Campbell: One of the strengths of WDS is this VHD option. I mean I like the idea that I could just mount one of these images and work with it.

Rhonda Layfield: Right. You could mount a VHD exactly the same way you would mount a Win file. So for people who are hearing, oh wait, what's this VHD thing? You would treat a VHD exactly as you would a Win file.

Richard Campbell: Now, isn't this image sort of specialized in the sense that it doesn't have a computer ID profile? No feed or anything in it?

Rhonda Layfield: Well, none of your images should actually contain a feed.

Richard Campbell: Right.

Rhonda Layfield: They should be fed up so that after you deploy the operating system, then the machine joins the domain.

Richard Campbell: Right.

Rhonda Layfield: So it's kind of a step after the OS is deployed. It's not deploying an OS that's already joined to the domain.

Greg Hughes: That's part of the first activity thing.

Rhonda Layfield: Right.

Richard Campbell: Are there other first activities that you need to make sure you do besides joining the domain?

Rhonda Layfield: Well, I think a lot of companies are interested in patching right upfront which we've already talked about quite a bit.

Richard Campbell: Right.

Rhonda Layfield: Sometimes it might be a while before a machine is actually joined to a domain in large environments.

Richard Campbell: Yeah.

Rhonda Layfield: They might have a technician who wants to come out and manually perform that step. I've seen that a lot with the federal government. So there's a certain creed of time where the group policies from the domain are not applied and patches aren't applied until the machine is joined to the domain.

Richard Campbell: Right.

Rhonda Layfield: So in those situations I always suggest having the same group policies created in the local machine that you're going to get from your domain controllers once you join the domain and then always your patches, it's that scenario where there's going to be a period of time where they might not be secure as you need for them to be.

Richard Campbell: Well, I kind of think it's advantageous for you to update these images with the patches rather than have them go and get their additional patches on their own when you deploy them.

Rhonda Layfield: Well, and that's the nice thing with MDT. In MDT, you can just add the patches. They call them packages which I couldn't understand. Why would you call them packages?

Richard Campbell: Right.

Rhonda Layfield: I've never called them packages, and I asked the MDT team and they told me, oh, that's because the Windows team refers to them as packages and we were trying to be consistent.

Greg Hughes: Yeah.

Rhonda Layfield: So here we've been yelling be consistent, be consistent, and then they're consistent and we're like why did you name it that?

Richard Campbell: Nice.

Greg Hughes: Well, and even when they're consistent they still come up with some pretty amazing names sometimes, don't they?

Rhonda Layfield: They do. You never know what they're going to come up with next.

Richard Campbell: No.

Greg Hughes: But I guess if you needed to deliver a package, whatever is in that package you could think of it as a package, you know, if it's a bunch of patches that are in there, or if it's a feature,



or if it's group policy settings or whatever it is you're putting in there so as to be shipped in the destination.

Richard Campbell: Sure.

Rhonda Layfield: Right.

Richard Campbell: So the ultimate manifestation of all this is the System Center Deployment Configuration Management?

Rhonda Layfield: Absolutely. If you own SCCM, then you kind of have the big daddy. That's what I always tell people. That got everything in it.

Richard Campbell: This is the product that you actually pay for.

Rhonda Layfield: Oh yeah, yeah. But it's worth it. I mean, you can do tons of stuff in SCCM and the reporting capabilities are fantastic. The controls that you have, finding out exactly at what point a machine failed if it did fail. How many machines were successful. SCCM is really, really a product that is worth paying for. They've done a fantastic job with it from the old SMS 1.1A days when I used to teach it. It has come a long way.

Richard Campbell: Sure. What's the title of the book you're working on?

Rhonda Layfield: We haven't actually come up with the title yet. I like "Microsoft Deployment Tools: Choose your Weapon Wisely."

Greg Hughes: I like "Richard and Greg and Rhonda think this is a real cool book so you should read it."

Richard Campbell: Nice.

Rhonda Layfield: I'm sure they'll go for that. I have to tell you I've got some of the coolest tech editors on the planet. I don't know if you've ever heard of Johan Arwidmarks?

Richard Campbell: No.

Rhonda Layfield: He's from Sweden and he is like the deployment god. He knows everything there is to know about the MDT and he has been gracious enough to be a technical editor for me on the MDT and the SCCM chapter.

Richard Campbell: Okay.

Rhonda Layfield: On the zero touch installation. So it's going to be fantastic to have him along and I believe Michael Nystrom, one of his partners over at the True Sec in Sweden is going to be doing TechEd at it too so they're going to catch me if I don't get everything exactly right. I guarantee that.

Richard Campbell: What's up with the Swedish editing core you've got here?

Rhonda Layfield: You know, there are other deployment and set-up MVPs that I've met over the years and they're just very active and Microsoft actually hired Johan to come in and consult on the new version of MDT to make sure that everything was being done properly and as well as possible.

Richard Campbell: Wow.

Rhonda Layfield: I mean Johan knows his stuff inside and out. He's just fantastic.

Richard Campbell: So we don't have a name for this book, but who's the publisher?

Rhonda Layfield: The publisher is Cybex.

Richard Campbell: Cybex, okay.

Greg Hughes: Good, cool. And do you have - I mean, granted it is never done until it's done and the Lord knows book writing can have its own schedule, but do you have a ballpark for when it might be available?

Rhonda Layfield: We're looking at June, July of next year. I'm trying to push that up. Trying, I've spent last week a day-and-a-half on one paragraph which blew me away. I'm like how can this be so hard?

Greg Hughes: Yeah, exactly.

Rhonda Layfield: But I kept reading the paragraph over and over and it's like okay, I'm talking in circles, it just didn't make any sense and it really took me a day-and-a-half on that one silly paragraph so I would like for it to be available possibly April but I'm not sure if we're going to make that mark. I really want to get that out because people need the deployment information now. Now is when they're going to be looking at it and it really needs to get on the market.

Richard Campbell: Yeah and all the OS's are out for a while so now is the time to get that book out there.

Rhonda Layfield: Exactly now.

Greg Hughes: Especially with all the changes that have taken place and all the different tools where I think there's a need for a bible to be able to go to learn about that.

Richard Campbell: Without a doubt.

Rhonda Layfield: Right, yeah.



Richard Campbell: So with being the Christmas show here, Rhonda, and I know we're just about out of time, any stories you can tell us about you and that troublemaker guy you hang around with?

Rhonda Layfield: Stories. I'm not sure, if I'm allowed to tell any stories.

Richard Campbell: I'm looking at the stories you're not allowed to tell, that would be the one I want to put in.

Rhonda Layfield: No, I don't think I have any of those right now. This year is going to be a really quiet year. Mark has been traveling a lot.

Richard Campbell: Oh yeah.

Rhonda Layfield: There have been times -- you know, I've been out there traveling with him a bit and then I've got my own gigs I've been doing as well. I'm not sure how much we're going to participate in Christmas this year. Isn't that sad?

Richard Campbell: Just from a pure just needing to relax sort of perspective.

Rhonda Layfield: Absolutely. He's been on the road for about six weeks straight.

Richard Campbell: No kidding.

Rhonda Layfield: Yeah. So we're just going to get to the beach house, sit there, watch the ocean, look at the dolphins in the morning over breakfast and kind of relax and just be free for a while.

Richard Campbell: Unload a little bit. Well, I last saw Mark, it was in DevConnections and that was the same week as TechEd Europe and you were still at TechEd and he came over. He was a bit of a mess, he was a little jetlagged.

Rhonda Layfield: A little jetlagged? He had to have been horribly jetlagged. I mean, he flew all day, part of the night, got there, slept two hours, did four presentations in one day...

Richard Campbell: A keynote.

Rhonda Layfield: I think an interview with you.

Richard Campbell: Yeah.

Rhonda Layfield: I don't think he has any idea what he said in any of them. He just stood there and his mind spat words out of his mouth.

Richard Campbell: Well, yeah. He got to me in the end. He was definitely in a state. It was hilarious.

Rhonda Layfield: He thought he met his best.

Richard Campbell: Yeah. But yeah, apparently he knocked out a great keynote speech. The audience loved it.

Rhonda Layfield: Oh, wonderful. They love him. The Connections is one of his favorite to do. They sure do like him there. A lot of our forum members go to Connections so we get to talk to them all year long.

Richard Campbell: Well, I'm hoping that one of these days you guys will do a session together because this would just be this powerhouse match-up. I think both of you are so deeply embedded in the Windows IT stack and it would be awesome to see you work together.

Rhonda Layfield: I think that would be fun. We have to pitch something.

Richard Campbell: Yeah, you bet. Well Rhonda, I think we're about out of time. Any final words, things that folks should be looking at besides your book and deploymentdr.com?

Rhonda Layfield: Well, I want to mention one thing. If you have looked at the deployment tools in the past and one, it didn't work for you, two, it's too hard to figure out, or three, the documentation was wrong, it's worth another look.

Richard Campbell: It's time to go back.

Rhonda Layfield: Take one more peek on this tool rack and there are lots of other websites out there. deployvista.com is another fantastic website, that's Johan's. There are all kinds of great tips in there and he tweaks things to do all kinds of crazy stuff that Microsoft won't support but Johan get it to work so if there's any crazy thing you want to do to a WinPE or do twin image of it just step-by-step, you're all ready on Johan's site. There are lots of additional places to go look for information now. It's all over and it's pretty good information.

Richard Campbell: Awesome. When you said deployvista.com, I thought it was the web page that said don't do it.

Rhonda Layfield: Oh, he should change it to Windows 7.0, shouldn't he?

Greg Hughes: Just that it won't stop.

Rhonda Layfield: Yeah, yeah. Who deployed Vista? I run it and had no problems. I've been running a 64-bit Vista for a few years.

Richard Campbell: Apparently you and Mark are the only ones.



Rhonda Layfield: I've had no problems at all.

Richard Campbell: Yeah, there you go.

Greg Hughes: But I like Windows 7.0 a lot.

Richard Campbell: The 64-bit version of Windows 7.0 is a lovely, lovely thing.

Rhonda Layfield: It really is. You have to jump list on my favorite things. I know it's a dumb thing to say but I love the jump list. When I first saw that my recent document was gone, I panicked. I'm like how did they take away my— I live by my recent documents. And then when I got used to the jump list, when I could just right click and see everything I'd open in Word, or the last 10 to 15 items I'd open in Word, man, I love that. It's so much nicer.

Richard Campbell: Yeah, it's a great step forward.

Greg Hughes: I know several people that have installed Windows 7.0 in their primary machines in the last few months, the last couple of months or so since it came out several weeks ago, and universally all these people who are just huge critiques of Vista and complained about Windows XP all the time are just loving Windows 7.0.

Richard Campbell: Yeah.

Greg Hughes: So that's got to mean something.

Rhonda Layfield: Yeah. I think if they'd give it a shot, they're going to love it.

Greg Hughes: Thanks, Rhonda.

Rhonda Layfield: Well, thank you guys. Have a Merry Christmas.

Richard Campbell: You too. And we'll talk to you next week on RunAs Radio.