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# Foreword

It's a privilege to write a few words about this book, which I'm sure will become worn with use as it becomes an essential resource for you. Managing a Windows network is a challenging job. Between learning how to manage and administer server applications, configuring Active Directory security, defining group policies, and performing general maintenance, your hands are always full and there's always a fire to put out. As with most activities, efficient management of a Windows network requires a thorough understanding of the tools that are available to you. There are many cases where performing a task or solving a problem can become more difficult or even be impossible without the right tool.

For example, knowing how to leverage command-line tools and support mechanisms can save you both time and effort. For example, if you have to create 100 user accounts you can either create the accounts one by one using the Users and Computers MMC snapin, or you can do the same thing in a fraction of the time with a simple batch file or WMI script. Configuring a network adapter on a system through a user interface requires you to access the system physically or through a remote-access application, but you can use a script to do the same thing with one command from anywhere in your network.

Whether you are a new or veteran Windows administrator, you've almost certainly found that the difficult part of the management recipe is not using the tools, but identifying the best ones to use for various tasks. Some tools ship with Windows, some are provided by Microsoft on the support CD, from the Resource Kit, or from its web site, and yet others are available on the web. In many cases there are several tools or ways to accomplish the same task, but some ways are more efficient than others in certain circumstances.

That's why you need a book like this. Robbie has done a fantastic job identifying common Windows management tasks, investigating the tools available for those tasks, figuring out how to get the most out of them, testing them in real-world environments,

and serving it to you in a no-nonsense reference. This book will save you precious time that will reimburse your investment in it many times over.

—Mark Russinovich  
Austin, TX