

Planned License Server Changes

Over the past few years it has become increasingly apparent that the Security Key, or "dongle", mechanism that we use to protect the keys within the License Server for our Windows platform based products, while being very successful at protecting the licenses, creates other problems. These problems include, but are not limited to:

- Failure of file backups to restore correctly
- Tardy response to customer problems because we need to physically ship them a new dongle to resolve the problem.
- Lengthy diagnosis cycles to trace the problem in the License Server.
- Server machines are now being built without the parallel ports needed for the dongles.
- Some large customers refuse to use software with dongles attached.
- Our Additional Cost of Goods.

Micro Focus has decided, therefore, to remove the dongle from the License Server and implement a new way to protect the licenses.

Implementation.

The code that utilizes the dongle within the License Server module has been removed, and replaced with a hardware fingerprint mechanism similar to that used in the protection client used with the individual (versus Server) installation of our Windows platform products.

The License Server will now lock a license file to the machine on which the software is running using hardware metrics.

If the fingerprint fails, for whatever reason, the server will go into a "warning" mode for 5 calendar days, during which time it will still issue licenses. The warning mode will display a warning on each screen within the License Server, as well as issuing the warning to each client machine that requests a license. The warning states that the license file needs some attention by the administrator, and displays the number of days remaining during which the license server will issue licenses.

After the 5 day period has expired, the License Server will enter a "no issue" mode. This mode prevents any new license requests from being granted (it will accept revoke keys however).

To rectify the fault, the administrator will need to go to the License Server administration page, and generate a License Server Reset Request Key, which would then be sent our license response team, at URK@microfocus.com, who will generate a matching Response Key. The administrator then puts the Response Key into the License Server and, if it matches, the license file is re-locked to the machine, and the License Server is put into the standard mode.

Release Schedule

The change will be introduced in the LSF05LS4 FixPack, and is scheduled for release during the first two weeks of December, 2003.

Update process

Once the FixPack is applied, the license software will ignore the dongle (if it is still installed), and will automatically lock the license file to the machine. The process has been designed to be transparent to the user. They should notice no difference to the actual workings of the License Server, save for the fingerprint failure process outlined above, should it ever be encountered.

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New users

New users will need to install the License Server software as they do currently and will then need to apply the Isf05Is4 FixPack. They will then follow the current procedure to load keys into the server. They will not need a dongle.

Packaging refresh

As and when each product CD is re-mastered, the FixPack will be installed automatically as part of the License Server install process. Until the refresh occurs, the License Server will need to be installed first and then the FixPack applied.

An additional advantage of removing the dongle.

Besides addressing the problems listed at the beginning of this document, it will now will be relatively painless to move a License Server installation from one machine to another. All that is required on the new machine is to follow the request - response mechanism outlined in the update process above within the 5 day time period.