

Introduction to Performance Analysis of Logs (PAL) Tool

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Session Objectives

- Purpose of PAL
- Features
- Installation Requirements
- Usage (demo)
- Interpreting the PAL Report (demo)
- How to create or modify threshold files (demo)
- Where to download and learn more

Purpose of PAL

- Analyzes perfmon logs to assist with performance analysis – not a replacement for traditional performance analysis
- Helps identify common performance bottlenecks
- Inspired by the Vital Signs Workshop
- Intended for use by Microsoft consultants and network administrators

Features

- **Easy to use interface:** Point it to a perfmon log and get a report.
- **Thresholds are actual code:** Allowing for thresholds to change based on the environment.
- **Thresholds are Provided:** Many tools only provide a framework. Based on Vital Signs.
- **Question Variables:** PAL asks questions from the user to be used in thresholds.
- **Public:** The tool is public, open source, and free. **Not an official Microsoft Product.**

Features

- **Product Specific Thresholds:** Threshold files exist for Microsoft Windows, MOSS/Microsoft SharePoint, Microsoft BizTalk, and Microsoft Exchange.

Installation Requirements

- Runs on Windows XP, Windows Server 2003, and Windows Vista
- Requires Microsoft Log Parser v2.2 (free)
- Requires Microsoft Office Web Components 11 (OWC11) (free)
- The UI portion of the tool requires .NET Framework v2.0. (free)
- The PAL tool and all requirements are free.
- Only runs on 32-bit operating systems due to the OWC11 requirement.

Usage

1. Gather a perfmon log (*.blg, *.csv).
2. Move the log to your workstation.
3. Run PAL.
4. Choose a threshold file (analysis collection).
5. Execute an Analysis: Processing is resource intensive and can take several minutes.
6. An HTML based report will automatically show.

Interpreting the Report

- Table of Contents items show the number of alerts thrown for each analysis
- Each analysis has a chart of the perf counter analyzed, description, references, and alerts thrown.
- Chronological view shows alerts that occurred at the same time – good for correlating symptoms

How it works

- Microsoft Relog.exe filters the perfmon log.
- Breaks down the log into small “chunks”. Each chunk is analyzed for min, max, avg, and thrend values.
- Answers to questions are used as variables in the thresholds – a lot of power here.
- Thresholds execute and throw alerts when broken.
- Each analysis may contain zero or more thresholds
- PAL threshold files may contain large numbers of analyses

Demo: Common Usage

Demo: Editing Threshold Files

Key Takaways

- PAL can reduce the time needed to effectively analyze performance monitor logs
- Raises awareness of common performance issues

References

- PAL Web Site
 - <http://www.codeplex.com/PAL>
- Microsoft Vital Signs Workshop
 - How to identify performance bottlenecks using Performance Monitor.
 - Contact your Technical Account Manager (TAM)
- Microsoft Log Parser v2.2
 - <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=890cd06b-abf8-4c25-91b2-f8d975cf8c07&DisplayLang=en>

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Questions?