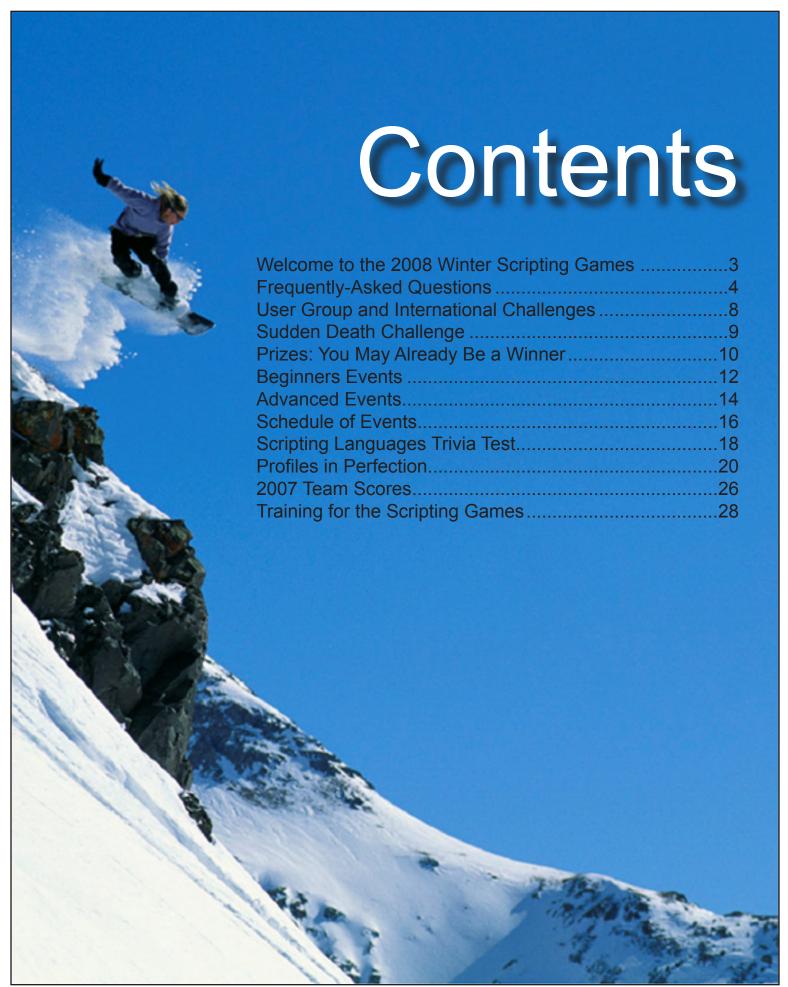


The 2008 Winter Scripting Games Official Program



## Welcome to the 2008 Winter Scripting Games!

Three years ago, when the Scripting Guys announced the very first Winter Scripting Games, everyone looked at them and said, "You guys are crazy!" Of course, that had nothing to do with Winter Scripting Games; everyone thought that was a pretty good idea. They just truly believed that the Scripting Guys were—and still are—crazy.

And, to be honest, they just might be right. When we held the inaugural Scripting Games in February 2006 we had no idea what to expect. It was only on Day 1 of the Games, when we received over 300 scripts in the first few hours, scripts we had agreed to test and score, that the Scripting Guys looked at each other and said, "Uh-oh."

You'd be surprised how often the term "Uh-oh" gets uttered around here.

Or maybe you wouldn't be so surprised.

At any rate, the Scripting Games are back for their third go-round, and the 2008 Games promises to be even bigger—and better—than ever. For one thing, we've added a whole new division: entrants can now compete in the Perl division along with the VBScript and Windows PowerShell divisions. In addition, we also have a separate set of "mini-events" (the Scripting Games Sudden Death Challenge) aimed at those of you who finish all 10 of the regular events on the first day of the competition. (And yes, believe it or not, there are people who managed to complete all 10 events on Day 1. We weren't happy with those people, either.)

Oh, and that's not all: we also have other competitions-within-the-competition: the User Group Challenge and the International Challenge. For more information, just keep reading this program.

Let's see, is there anything we're forgetting ... oh, right: prizes. This year we have a ton of cool prizes, beginning with 250 all-new Dr. Scripto bobblehead dolls (the Scripting Games version). We've got 50 copies of Vista Ultimate to give away; we've got Windows PowerShell and VBScript script editors to give away; we've got scripting books to give away; we've even got a copy of SpecOps Command to give away. And, just like last year, everyone who scores at least 60 points in any one division will receive a Certificate of Excellence signed by

the Scripting Guys. Those certificates alone have to be worth at least ... well .... money isn't everything, right?

At any rate, yes, we have prizes. See the Prizes page in this program for details.

But you know what? All contests have prizes. However, only the Scripting Games give you the opportunity to write scripts, and in VBScript, Windows PowerShell, and/or Perl, to boot. *That's* what makes the Scripting Games unique.

Well, OK, maybe the Publishers Clearinghouse Sweepstakes lets you write scripts, too; we'll have to check on that. We do know, however, that the Scripting Games are way more fun than other contests. For example, in the Publishers Clearinghouse Sweepstakes you fill in some form and then sit around waiting for them to send you your \$10 million. How much fun is that?

Well, true, now that we think about it, the part about the \$10 million *would* be nice. Of course, you don't get to write any Perl scripts in the Sweepstakes. But, then again ....

You know what? We're going to go see if we still have the Publishers Clearinghouse entry form lying around. In the meantime, enjoy the Scripting Games!

Jean and Greg
The Microsoft Scripting Guys



# Frequently-Asked Questions

Any time you stage a world-wide event like the 2008 Winter Scripting Games a whole bunch of questions are bound to arise. Here are the answers to the most frequently-asked questions. If you don't find the answer to your question here, then send an email to scripter@microsoft.com and we'll try to answer it there. But act now: once the Games actually begin (February 15th) it will be very difficult for us to respond to individual questions. (Actually, it will be *impossible* for us to respond to individual questions. But that sounds so harsh, doesn't it?)



### How Do I Participate in the 2008 Winter Scripting Games?

From the Scripting Games home page just click on the division and then on the event of interest. That takes you to a page that: 1) describes the event and what is required to complete it; 2) provides a link to any external resources required to complete the event (such as a particular text file or database file); and, 3) provides a link for submitting your entry.

This year we have six separate competitions, with different submission links for VBScript (Beginners and Advanced); Windows PowerShell (Beginners and Advanced); and Perl (Beginners and Advanced). If you click the wrong link your entry will be submitted using the wrong Subject line. Most likely one of the Scripting Guys will catch the mistake and route your script to the correct category. On the other hand, there are just two Scripting Guys who are charged with testing, and scoring, thousands and thousands of scripts. Because of that, we can't guarantee that we'll be able to catch entries submitted using the wrong Subject line. The best way to avoid that problem? Make sure you click the correct link each time you submit a script.

### How Do I Submit an Entry?

Entries must submitted via email. For each entry you must submit the script and indicate whether or not you'd like to have your name or nickname published in the Script Center. You'll also have a chance to specify which country (if any) you'd like to represent in the Games, and indicate whether or not you belong to a user group

It's highly recommended that you submit your entries through the links supplied at the Script Center. Also, make sure you paste your script into the body of the email message itself. *Don't send the script as an attachment!* Our email server will strip off any script file sent as an attachment, which means that your entry will never be received. In other words, paste your script into the body of the email message.



### Can I Enter in More Than One Division?

Yes, you can, and we actually encourage you to try your hand at multiple divisions. (Last year four competitors—Frank Fattizzi, Jakub Niedźwiedź, Jerzy Prusinski, and Russ Pitcher—received perfect scores in all 4 divisions.) We especially encourage long-time VBScript and Perl users to try their hand in the Windows PowerShell Beginners division. PowerShell is definitely the wave of the scripting future, and the Scripting Games provide a fun and easy introduction to this new scripting technology.

In addition to trying different languages you can also enter both the Advanced and Beginners competitions. Needless to say, however, the Advanced events might be a little too, well, advanced for beginning scripters. (Although you never know till you try.) This year, however, the Beginners events are a little more challenging than last year; consequently even the more experienced scripters might get a kick out of trying them.



## What If You Make a Mistake When Scoring One of My Events?

Would you believe that in the two previous Scripting Games we never made a single mistake in scoring events?

That's OK; we didn't think you'd believe us in the first place. If you suspect that we made a mistake on one of your events send email to scripter@microsoft.com. We will get back to you, but keep in mind that it might take several days. There are only two of us available to score thousands of scripts, which means we have very little time to read and respond to email. In other words, bear with us. And be patient.



### **How Do I Earn Points in an Event?**

In general, points are earned by submitting a script that — without requiring any modification whatsoever — successfully completes the assigned task. The Scripting Guys will run each script and keep track of the ones that work and the ones that don't. Note that we don't have the time to figure out *why* a particular script doesn't work. That's why it's very important to follow the event instructions exactly as written. If the instructions say that a text file must be placed in C:\Scripts, then make sure your script uses C:\Scripts as the path to that file. If you don't follow the instructions exactly, well ....

In general, if your script works then you will get all the points for that event; if your script doesn't work then you won't get any points for that event. In some ways that might be a little unfair (no partial credit), but with thousands of scripts to test that's the best we can do.

Please note, too that we can't send you an individual "report card" of any kind. Instead, the only way to know if your script earned points is to check the Standings pages that will be updated every morning. (At the very least; often-times the Standings are updated several times during the day.) A score of 0 points for an event means that the script failed; a blank score means that we either did not receive an entry for that event or that we haven't had time to test your entry. That latter point is important: with the expected number of entrants in the 2008 Scripting Games we cannot promise to test your script on the same day it is received. Here's something you're likely to hear a lot over the course of the Games: bear with us. And be patient.

### Can I Enter the Events in Any Order?

Sure. Keep in mind, however, that different events have different deadlines. For example, events 1 and 2 in all divisions must be submitted by 8:00 AM Pacific Standard Time on Wednesday, February 20, 2008; by contrast, events 3 and 4 don't have to be submitted until that Friday (February 22nd). The deadline for each event is posted at the top of each event page.

And yes, you can re-submit entries as well, provided that those resubmissions are received before the event deadlines. What about resubmitting after the deadline? The official answer is: no. Unofficially, well, we'll see. But try not to let it happen, OK?

### **Are You Giving Away Prizes This Year?**

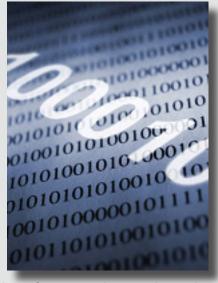
You bet we are; in fact, we're giving away 250 Dr. Scripto bobblehead dolls! (The special Scripting Games edition bobblehead.) In addition, we're also awarding Certificates of Excellence to entrants who score at least 60 points in any one of the six competitions (VBScript Beginners/Advanced; Windows PowerShell Beginners/Advanced; and Perl Beginners/Advanced).

And that's just for starters. See the Prizes page for details.



## What Software Do I Need?

Nothing special; instead, you just need to make sure that any scripts you submit will run—and run correctly—on the Scripting Games Test Platform. All of the VBScript scripts will be tested using Windows Script Host 5.6. All of the Windows PowerShell scripts will be tested using Windows PowerShell version 1.0. All of the Perl scripts will be tested using ActivePerl 5.8.8. Again, you don't



have to use these versions of the software; you just need to make sure that your scripts will run correctly under these versions.

### Why Do I Have to Tell You Which Country I Represent?

Actually, you don't *have* to tell us which country you're representing; we just think it's fun to add a little bit of international flavor to the competition. And by "representing" we simply mean, "Which country would you like to play for?" Needless to say, we aren't going to demand proof-of-citizenship in order for you to represent a particular country. Pick the country you live in, pick the country you were born in, pick a country that has a cool national anthem or one that makes really good chocolate. It's up to you.

And yes, make-believe countries are perfectly fine, although they aren't eligible for the International Challenge (see page 8). In fact, if you look at the Team Scores page in this program, you'll see all sorts of make-believe countries that were represented in the 2007 Scripting Games.

### Where Can I Get More Information About the Games?

Why, the same place you get all your other scripting information, of course: The TechNet Script Center. The home page for the 2008 Winter Scripting Games is located here: http://www.microsoft.com/technet/scriptcenter/funzone/games/default.mspx.





## Do We Get to See Any of the Scripts Created By Our Fellow Competitors?

We sure hope so. Last year, about midway through the Games, we decided it would be interesting to feature some of the more innovative solutions in a "Scripting Games Spotlight." Unfortunately, though, by the time we reached that decision it was too late: we hadn't done a good job of flagging those innovative scripts, and we didn't have time to go back through the thousands of submissions and track them down. Therefore, we put the Scripting Games Spotlight in the category "Things we'll be sure to do next year."

Well, next year is here, and we fully intend to spotlight some of the submissions. We'll contact the script authors before publishing each script; that will give you an opportunity to either decline the offer or—we hope—to chip in with some comments about the approach you took, and why you took that approach. We're also going to give you a great opportunity to view even *more* solutions; see the question below for details.



### PowerShell is Such a New Technology It Would be Great to See More PowerShell Examples. Any Chance of That?

As a matter of fact, there's a very good chance of that. For the Windows PowerShell Advanced division we've recruited 10 PowerShell gurus who've each agreed to complete one of the events and then write up a short article explaining how they went about solving the problem. Those 10 experts include:

- Arnaud Petijean, MVP, co-founder of the French PowerShell Community, and author of a new PowerShell book.
- Ben Pearce, creator of the blog Benp's Guide to Stuff.
- Don Jones, book author and founder of both ScriptingAnswers.com and PowerShellCommunity.org.
- Ed Wilson, trainer, consultant, book author.
- Kirk Munro, Microsoft MVP and author of the blog Poshoholic.
- Marco Shaw, Microsoft MVP and moderator on PowerShellCommunity.org.
- /\\oV\, aka The PowerShell Guy, and creator of the PowerTab add-in.
- Richard Siddaway, noted blogger and founder/president of the UK PowerShell User Group.
- Scott Hanselman, owner of the Web site Scott Hanselman's ComputerZen.com.
- Thomas Lee, blogger and prolific contributor to the Community Content on MSDN.

For more information about these experts see the Scripting Games home page: http://www.microsoft.com/technet/scriptcenter/funzone/games/default.mspx.



# The User Group Challenge

You know, nothing in life brings people together the way the Scripting Games do. The Games have long been known for—what's that? How do we know that the Scripting Games brings people together? Well, to be truthful, we don't. But we're about to find out.

That's because, for the 2008 Games, the Scripting Guys are teaming with *TechNet Magazine* to bring you the User Group Challenge, an opportunity for user groups to come together as one. (And, not coincidentally, win some prizes and kick some butt along the way.)

What we're looking for is the user group that, on a percentage basis, gets the most members to enter the Scripting Games. What does that mean? Well, suppose two users groups (User Group A and User Group B) take part in the Challenge. User Group A has 20 members, and 6 of them (30 percent) enter the Scripting Games; User Group B has 100 members and 27 of them (27 percent) enter the Scripting Games. Who wins the 2008 Winter Scripting Games User Group Challenge? You got it: User Group A, 30 percent to 27 percent.

When the Games are over we'll tally up the results and award the grand prize: the winning user group will get a trophy and a write-up in the Script Center, and each member of the group who takes part in the Games will receive an individual award (of a to-be-determined nature). Best of all, you don't have to do anything special to enter (or to win). Just enter the Games as your normally would, making sure to include the name of your user group when submitting your entries. Oh, and encouraging fellow members of your user group to enter the Games might help as well. That's up to you.

But what if you'd like to work together as a group on your Scripting Games entries? To tell you the truth, we think that would be great. If you want to get together as a group and tackle the events in the Scripting Games, well, that's perfectly fine with us; in fact, we encourage people to get together and work as a group on the Games. Just remember that we aren't set up to accept group submissions; instead, each group member must submit a separate entry. (That is, if three of you work together on an event, each of you must submit a separate—albeit identical—entry.) Separate entries are the only way we can track numbers for the Challenge, and the only way to ensure that everyone has a chance to win a Dr. Scripto bobblehead doll, a copy of Windows Vista, or any of our other prizes.

# The International Challenge

In Scripting Games 1 and 2 we gave everyone the opportunity to represent a country of their choice while competing in the Games. And while we *did* keep track of the so-called Team Scores, that's about all we did with this appeal to national pride. That will definitely *not* be the case with the 2008 Winter Scripting Games.

With the 2008 Games we're introducing the International Challenge. Using a formula to be published before the Games begin, we're going to determine which country had the best participation in the Games, on a per-capita basis. (In other words, which country had more entrants than you'd expect them to have.)

And then what? Well, when the Games are over, we'll send everyone in the winning country a checkfor \$1 million!

OK, maybe our budget doesn't quite allow for that. (And, apparently, the Scripting Editor won't let us say it anyway.) However, during the month of April, 2008 we will dedicate the Script Center to the winning nation, doing whatever we can (folklore, recipes, songs, facts and figures, etc.) to recognize this country and its people. Admittedly, it's not quite the same as \$1 million. But it is the next-best thing.

Sort of.





### Schedule

### Event 1

Posted: 2/18/2008 Due: 2/19/2008 3:00 PM PST

### Event 2

Posted: 2/19/2008 Due: 2/20/2008 3:00 PM PST

### Event 3

Posted: 2/20/2008 Due: 2/21/2008 3:00 PM PST

### Event 4

Posted: 2/21/2008 Due: 2/22/2008 3:00 PM PST

### Event 5

Posted: 2/22/2008 Due: 2/25/2008 3:00 PM PST

### Event 6

Posted: 2/25/2008 Due: 2/26/2008 3:00 PM PST

### Event 7

Posted: 2/26/2008 Due: 2/27/2008 3:00 PM PST

### Event 8

Posted: 2/27/2008 Due: 2/28/2008 3:00 PM PST

### Event 9

Posted: 2/28/2008 Due: 2/29/2008 3:00 PM PST

### Event 10

Posted: 2/29/2008 Due: 3/3/2008 3:00 PM PST

# The Scripting Games Sudden Death Challenge

One interesting fact about the Scripting Games is that we attract a very diverse audience, an audience that includes everyone from beginners just hoping to complete in an event or two to experienced scripters who manage to run through all 10 events in a single day. (And yes, as we noted earlier, in the 2007 Scripting Games we had a couple of people who completed all 10 events in a division on the opening day of the Games.)

In part, it was our desire to find something to keep these "super scripters" occupied that led to the creation of the Sudden Death Challenge. The Sudden Death Challenge is a series of 10 "bonus" events which will be scored, and tracked, separately from the events that make up the heart of the Scripting Games. These bonus events differ in several ways from the standard Scripting Games events. For one thing, they can be solved using any of the official Scripting Games languages (VBScript, Windows PowerShell, or Perl); there are no separate divisions. Besides, you might not even *need* to write a script in order to complete the event; instead, you might be asked to solve a puzzle or simply provide some facts about system administration scripting. Needless to say, that's another difference between the bonus events and the regular Scripting Games events.

Perhaps most important, these events will not all be posted on the same day; instead, the Sudden Death Challenge events will be posted one at a time and—discounting weekends—be up for only a day or so. (See the schedule to the left for more details.) Among other things, that means you'll need to come back pretty much every day if you hope to earn a perfect score in the Sudden Death Challenge. That's all there is to it.

Oh, right: what *is* the deal with the name Sudden Death Challenge? Well, originally, we thought this was going to be a fight-to-the-death matchup: as soon as you missed a deadline or otherwise failed to complete an event you would be eliminated from the Challenge. In that way, we'd methodically winnow out the competition until only the best of the best were left standing. Sudden Death.

Like we said, that was our original thought; upon further reflection, however, we changed our minds, deciding that it might be a bit too much to expect people to come back to the Script Center every day. Therefore, you're now free to enter as many (or as few) of the events as you like, with the winners determined by whoever earns the most points, whether or not they complete each and every event. (All events are worth 1 point, with 10 points representing a perfect score.) So, yes, we changed the rules; however, we liked the sound of Sudden Death Challenge so much that we decided to keep the name anyway.

At any rate, take a look at the Challenge event each day (the first event will be posted on Monday, February 18th); try the ones you want to try and, well, don't try the ones you don't want to try. We'll keep track of the scores and, when all is said and done, we'll award a prize to the winners. Most important, this time *no one* can complete all 10 events on the first day.

Or at least we don't think so, anyway.

# You May Already Be a Winner!

OK, so, maybe we haven't been entirely honest with you when it comes to the 2008 Winter Scripting Games. After all, we've been telling you that the Scripting Games are all about having fun. Well, we need to clarify that just a little: the Scripting Games are *mostly* about having fun. But they're also about the chance to win some great prizes.

Ah, we knew that would get your attention. What kind of prizes can you win, and how can you win them? Let's take a peek.

2008 Winter Scripting Games Certificates of Excellence

Admittedly, all the other prizes we're giving away are worth more money than the Certificates of Excellence. Still, these are the prizes that matter the most. Why? Because you actually have to earn them. All the other prizes are given

away as part of a random drawing: anyone who enters at least one event in the Games is eligible to win. That's not the case with the Certificate of Excellence, however. Instead, there's only one way to get one of these babies: you must score at least 60 points in any one division (e.g., Beginners Perl). Do that, and you'll earn a Certificate of Excellence, signed by the Scripting Guys. And yes, we'll send you as many certificates as you earn; if you enter all six divisions and score at least 60 points in each one then we'll send you six different Certificates of Excellence.

## Dr. Scripto Bobblehead Dolls (Special Scripting Games version)

Last year, when we handed out Dr. Scripto bobbleheads as part of the Scripting Games we said to ourselves, "How will we ever come up with a prize better than Dr. Scripto bobbleheads?" Well, as it turned out, we couldn't; therefore, we decided to give out bobbleheads (250 of them) again this year. Of course, this year's version is special: it's a customized Scripting Games bobblehead featuring Dr. Scripto in a toga, wearing a laurel wreath around his head, and carrying a torch. Believe it or not, it's even better than it sounds.

### Sapien Books and Software

Sapien software is well-know in the scripting world for their incredible products, so it probably shouldn't come as any surprise that Sapien is offering some incredible prizes as part of the Scripting Games. For starters, they're giving away two copies of Primal Script Professional, a multi-language script editor/development environment that will knock your socks off. (Note: Scripting Guys not responsible for cold feet.) And that's just for starters. They're also giving away two copies of their VBScript debugging tool Primal Scope. And then there are the books, including 4 copies of Windows PowerShell v1.0: TFM (2nd edition) by the

legendary Don Jones and Jeffrey Hicks. And did someone say flying monkeys? Hey, it wouldn't be a Scripting Games without flying monkeys, now would it?

### **Shell Tools Script Editors**

Can't get enough of script editors? Well, in that case, we have good news for you: the folks at Shell Tools are giving away 5 copies of their PowerShell suite, which includes copies of both PowerShell Analyzer and PowerShell Plus. (Do you really need two different PowerShell script editors? Let's put it this way: just wait until you see what PowerShell Analyzer and PowerShell Plus can do.) And if that's not enough, they're also giving away 5 copies of System Scripter, one of the coolest and most innovative VBScript editors you'll ever run across.

### **SpecOps Command**

SpecOps Command is an incredible piece of software that you have to see to believe: it manages to fully incorporate Windows PowerShell and Group Policy, giving you a management system that lets you automate just about anything you could ever hope to automate. (Just be careful if you do take a look at it; Windows PowerShell architect Jeffrey Snover has been quoted as saying that when he saw it the software "blew the top of his head off." Ouch.)

That's cool. Even cooler is the fact that Special Operations software is giving away a free, fully-licensed version of SpecOps Command as part of the 2008 Winter Scripting Games!

Ouch. We think we just blew the tops of our heads off.

And yes, VBScripters, SpecOps Command also works with VBScript as well as with PowerShell.

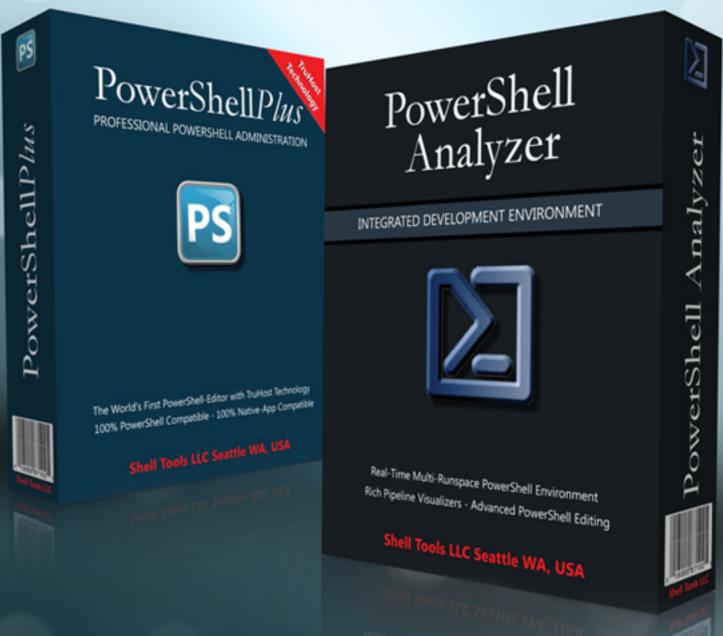
### **Microsoft Windows Vista Ultimate**

So is Windows Vista truly the ultimate operating system? Well, it must be: after all, it has the word "ultimate" right in the name! And you just might get a chance to find out, because we're giving away 50 copies of Windows Vista Ultimate (with a suggested retail price of \$399).

Needless to say, this is very cool. And remember, you could win one of these copies of Windows Vista Ultimate just by entering a single event in the 2008 Winter Scripting Games.

Other than the Certificates of Excellence, all the prizes are awarded via random drawing. Put that way, why *wouldn't* you enter the Games?

# The PowerShell host of choice for IT professionals and system administrators



PowerShell Analyzer and PowerShell Plus are rich interactive environments for Windows PowerShell. They have all the typical editor and IDE functionality that you would expect when working on a modern language, but focus on the real time interactive experience as if you were at the console, helping you compose and debug the commands you want to use and giving you rich graphical visualization of the results.

www.powershell.com

# Beginners Events

The 2008 Winter Scripting Games include two separate competitions, one aimed at beginning scripters and the other at more advanced script writers. Each competition includes three separate subdivisions: one in which all the scripts must be written in VBScript; one in which all the scripts must be written in VBScript; one in which all the scripts must be written in Perl. The individual events are the same in all three divisions; however, due to differences between the languages there will occasionally be different instructions for the divisions. Before submitting an entry make sure you are looking at the instructions for the appropriate division.

Following are brief descriptions of the 10 events in the Beginners Division. Complete instructions for all the events—including information on submitting the event to the competition—will be posted in the Script Center no later than 8:00 AM Pacific Standard Time on Friday, February 15, 2008.



Points Available: 5

Deadline: Wednesday, February 20, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Pairing Off, competitors will be given a series of five playing cards and asked to determine the number of pairs.



Points Available: 10

Deadline: Wednesday, February 20, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In the True Type event competitors are asked to read a series of keys from the Microsoft Windows system registry.



Points Available: 10

Deadline: Friday, February 22, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Let's Get Together, competitors must read all the text files in a folder, copy the first line of each file, and then paste all those lines into a new text file.



Points Available: 5

Deadline: Friday, February 22, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

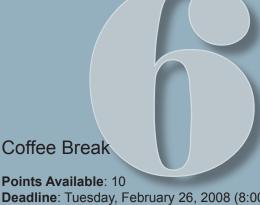
Count Yourself In involves reading from a text file, a text file that just happens to be a script.



Points Available: 10

**Deadline**:Tuesday, February 26, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In What's the Difference? competitors will be asked to read a parameter from a command line and perform date calculations based on that parameter.



Deadline: Tuesday, February 26, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Coffee Break, competitors will be asked to read from a text file and find unique entries within that file.



Points Available: 15

Deadline: Thursday, February 28, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Random Guess, competitors will be asked to generate a random number and allow the user to try to guess that number.



### Squashing Bugs

Points Available: 10

Deadline: Thursday, February 28, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Squashing Bugs, competitors will be required to debug a script that contains a number of errors.



Points Available: 15

Deadline: Monday, March 3, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Pool Party, competitors will be asked to read from a database and make some simple calculations based on the data in that database.



Points Available: 10

Deadline: Monday, March 3, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Bowling, competitors will be given the score card for a 10-frame bowling game and asked to calculate the score.

# **Advanced Events**

The 2008 Winter Scripting Games include two separate competitions, one aimed at beginning scripters and the other at more advanced script writers. Each competition includes three separate subdivisions: one in which all the scripts must be written in VBScript; one in which all the scripts must be written in Windows PowerShell; and one in which all the scripts must be written in Perl. The individual events are the same in all three divisions; however, due to differences between the languages there will occasionally be different instructions for the divisions. Before submitting an entry make sure you are looking at the instructions for the appropriate division.

Following are brief descriptions of the 10 events in the Advanced Division. Complete instructions for all the events—including information on submitting the event to the competition—will be posted in the Script Center no later than 8:00 AM Pacific Standard Time on Friday, February 15, 2008.



Points Available: 10

**Deadline**: Wednesday, February 20, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Could I Get Your Phone Number? competitors are given a phone number and then—using the letters found on a standard phone dial-must construct a word in which the letters correspond to the numbers in the phone number.



Points Available: 10

Deadline: Wednesday, February 20, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Skating on Thin Ice competitors must write a script that determines the winner of a figure skating competition.



Points Available: 20

Deadline: Friday, February 22, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Instant (Runoff) Winner, competitors must write a script that determines the winner of an "instant runoff" election.



Points Available: 5

Deadline: Friday, February 22, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Image is Everything, competitors must write a script that displays a nicely-formatted calendar onscreen.



Points Available: 10

Deadline: Tuesday, February 26, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In You Call That a Strong Password? competitors must write a script that, based on the supplied criteria, determines the strength of a password.



### Play Ball!

Points Available: 10

Deadline: Thursday, February 28, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Play Ball! competitors must write a script that schedules all the games for a round-robin baseball tournament.



**Prime Time** 

Points Available: 5

Deadline: Tuesday, February 26, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Prime Time, competitors must write a script that calculates – and displays – all the prime numbers between a designated starting and ending point.



Points Available: 15

Deadline: Thursday, February 28, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Making Beautiful Music, competitors must write a script that can compile a music playlist listing songs to be burnt to a CD.



Points Available: 5

Deadline: Monday, March 3, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In You're Twisting My Words, competitors must write a script that reverses the letter in each word in a text selection, all the while maintaining the same word order in that selection.



Points Available: 10

Deadline: Monday, March 3, 2008 (8:00 AM PST)

In Blackjack! competitors must write a script that deals and plays a single hand of Blackjack (Twenty-One).



2008
Winter
Scripting
Games
Schedule

### Friday, February 15, 2008

Opening ceremonies: all the events in all the divisions are posted to the TechNet Script Center.

### Monday, February 18, 2008

Sudden Death Challenge 1 is posted to the TechNet Script Center.

### Tuesday, February 19, 2008

Sudden Death Challenge 2 is posted to the TechNet Script Center. Sudden Death Challenge 1 solution due by 3:00 PM PST.

### Wednesday, February 20, 2008

Sudden Death Challenge 3 is posted to the TechNet Script Center. Sudden Death Challenge 2 solution due by 3:00 PM PST.

Deadline for completing Event 1 (all divisions) is 8:00 AM PST. Deadline for completing Event 2 (all divisions) is 8:00 AM PST.

Event 1 solution (all divisions) posted to the TechNet Script Center. Event 2 solution (all divisions) posted to the TechNet Script Center.

### Thursday, February 21, 2008

Sudden Death Challenge 4 is posted to the TechNet Script Center. Sudden Death Challenge 3 solution due by 3:00 PM PST.

### Friday, February 22, 2008

Sudden Death Challenge 5 is posted to the TechNet Script Center. Sudden Death Challenge 4 solution due by 3:00 PM PST.

Deadline for completing Event 3 (all divisions) is 8:00 AM PST. Deadline for completing Event 4 (all divisions) is 8:00 AM PST.

Event 3 solution (all divisions) posted to the TechNet Script Center. Event 4 solution (all divisions) posted to the TechNet Script Center.

### Monday, February 25, 2008

Sudden Death Challenge 6 is posted to the TechNet Script Center. Sudden Death Challenge 5 solution due by 3:00 PM PST.

### Tuesday, February 26, 2008

Sudden Death Challenge 7 is posted to the TechNet Script Center. Sudden Death Challenge 6 solution due by 3:00 PM PST.

Deadline for completing Event 5 (all divisions) is 8:00 AM PST. Deadline for completing Event 6 (all divisions) is 8:00 AM PST.

Event 5 solution (all divisions) posted to the TechNet Script Center. Event 6 solution (all divisions) posted to the TechNet Script Center.

### Wednesday, February 27, 2008

Sudden Death Challenge 8 is posted to the TechNet Script Center. Sudden Death Challenge 7 solution due by 3:00 PM PST.

### Thursday, February 28, 2008

Sudden Death Challenge 9 is posted to the TechNet Script Center. Sudden Death Challenge 8 solution due by 3:00 PM PST.

Deadline for completing Event 7 (all divisions) is 8:00 AM PST. Deadline for completing Event 8 (all divisions) is 8:00 AM PST.

Event 7 solution (all divisions) posted to the TechNet Script Center. Event 8 solution (all divisions) posted to the TechNet Script Center.

### Friday, February 29, 2008

Sudden Death Challenge 10 is posted to the TechNet Script Center. Sudden Death Challenge 9 solution due by 3:00 PM PST.

### Monday, March 3, 2008

Sudden Death Challenge 10 solution due by 3:00 PM PST.

Deadline for completing Event 9 (all divisions) is 8:00 AM PST. Deadline for completing Event 10 (all divisions) is 8:00 AM PST.

Event 9 solution (all divisions) posted to the TechNet Script Center. Event 10 solution (all divisions) posted to the TechNet Script Center.

### Monday, March 10, 2008

Prize drawing. Winners will begin to be notified on March 10; note that this process will likely take several days.



2008
Winter
Scripting
Games
Schedule

# The Scripting Languages Trivia Test

Sure, you know everything there is to know about using scripting languages. But do you know everything there is to know about the origin and development of those scripting languages? Well, there's only one way to find out, isn't there? (The answers are on page 29 in this program.)

### 1. Who invented Perl?

- A. Larry Wall
- B. A team of researchers at Xerox Parc
- C. Jeffrey Snover
- D. Bill Gates and Paul Allen
- 2. True or False: The word Perl can be found in the Oxford English Dictionary.
- 3. What year was Perl 1.0 released?
- A. 1992
- B. 1954
- C. 1987
- D. 2001
- 4. After Microsoft began work on Visual Basic 1.0 (which would begat VBScript) the project was given what code name?
- A. Project Thunder
- B. Snowball
- C. Frosting
- D. Touchdown
- 5. What do the letters in Perl stand for?
- A. Nothing; Perl is not an acronym.
- B. Performance Enhancing Relational Language.
- C. Paul, Eileen, Roger, and Lily (the names of the developer's children)
- D. Programming: Easy, Rational, Logistical
- 6. Before being released as Windows PowerShell, Microsoft's latest scripting technology was known as Monad. Why?
- A. Monad is the name of a much-beloved hobbit in Lord of the Rings
- B. Monad was a much-beloved character in the children's TV show Thunderbirds
- C. The project team just liked the sound of the word
- D. Monads are Leibniz's term for the fundamental unit of existence that aggregates into compounds to implement a purpose.

- 7. True or False: VBScript was released before Visual Basic for Applications.
- 8. Who is known as the "Father of Visual Basic"?
- A. Larry Wall
- B. Alan Cooper
- C. Bill Gates
- D. Paul Allen
- 9. In what city was Windows PowerShell 1.0 officially announced?
- A. Redmond, WA
- B. Barcelona, Spain
- C. Houston, TX
- D. Montreal, Canada
- 10. Visual Basic began life as a replacement for the Windows command shell. Before long, however, that shell functionality was merged with what programming language?
- A. C
- B. Perl
- C. QuickBASIC
- D. Monad
- 11. Visual Basic began life as a replacement for the Windows command shell. What did Windows PowerShell begin life as?
- A. A replacement for Visual Basic for Applications
- B. A replacement for the Windows command shell
- C. A "lite" version of Visual Studio
- D. A new scripting language for Web developers
- 12. Which of the following is not a scripting language?
- A. HaskellScript
- B. Groovv
- C. BeanShell
- D. Osgood 2



# Special Operations Software

# Specops Command

PowerShell remoting through Group Policy



Jeffrey Snover

Windows Management Partner Architect

Read more about Jeffrey's impressions of Specops Command at the MSDN PowerShell blog: http://blogs.msdn.com/PowerShell/



Specops Command ™ We bring you the future of scripting, today!



 For more information about Specops Command and how to download your FREE limited version please go to:

# Profiles in Perfection

When we first posted the events for the 2007 Winter Scripting Games we were concerned that maybe we were asking too much: that maybe we had created too many events, maybe those events were a little too hard for people to complete in two weeks time. How valid were those concerns? Well, in answer to that question, just take a look at the number of people who earned at least one perfect score in the 2007 Games. We'll never underestimate the scripting community again—promise!

### **PowerShell Advanced**

/\/o\/\ The Netherlands

Aaron Peterson USA

> Alex Chan USA

Alex Duckworth Australia

Alistair Young USA

Andy Schneider USA

Arnaud PETITJEAN France

Frank Fattizzi USA

> Gaurhoth USA

Gilles LAURENT France Jacob Gable USA

Jakub Niedźwiedź Poland

Jason Clement USA

Jason Joy USA

Jeremy Clore USA

Jerzy Prusinski Poland

Joseph Tilley USA

Kasey Nichols USA

Marco Shaw Canada

Mark Sheppard United Kingdom

Mike Holden Albania Nagy János Hungary

Rhoderick Milne United Kingdom

Richard Siddaway England

Robin LEMESLE France

> Russ Pitcher England

Sanket Shetye India

Simon Dalling England

Stefan Suesser Germany

> Steve Kulyk Canada

Thorbjörn Sjövold Sweden

Tobias Reinwald Germany



Marco Shaw



Stefan Suesser



Richard Siddaway

Umesh Chandra Thakur India

Yves PASCAULT France

### **PowerShell Beginners**

Alistair Young USA

Brian S. USA

Chris H (C2) USA

Curtis J. O'Connell USA

Dan George Filimon Romania

Dan Richardson USA

Dennis G. Landsem Norway

Erik Renes
The Netherlands

Frank Fattizzi USA

> gln Sweden

Imran Kamaluddin United Kingdom Jakub Niedźwiedź Poland

Jerzy Prusinski Poland

> Jim Wells USA

joseomjr USA

Keun Hyung, Lee South Korea

Marco Rijnbeek the Netherlands

Matheesha Weerasinghe United Kingdom

Mike Holden Albania

Mitchel Smedts Belgium

> njn Sweden

Reinhard Lehrbaum Austria

> Russ Pitcher England

> > ScooterK USA

Steve Kulyk Canada Vinod Panikar Singapore

> Yury Bich Belarus

### **VBScript Advanced**

Alan Dunbar Canada

Alan Mosley Australia

Alan Roberson USA

Alex Duckworth Australia

AlioTheFool USA

Ben Simkins Switzerland

> Blackhawk Canada

Bob Stammers No Affiliation

Chris Bland Canada

Chris Osborne USA

Christian Pfeiffer Austria



Erik Renes



Simon Daling



Chris Bland

Clifford Williamson, III	Ed Z	H2Data
USA	USA	Australia
Clinton Huff	Eelco Ligtvoet	Helder Sepulveda
USA	The Netherlands	Cuba Libre
Courtney Newman	Eric Payne	Homer Yu
USA	USA	ITExpert
Craig Naumann	Erik Renes	Hong Quan YU
Australia	The Netherlands	China
Curtis J. O'Connell	Fábio de Paula Junior	Imran Hashim
USA	Brazil	Pakistan
Dan Richardson	Francis de la Cerna	Jakub Niedźwiedź
USA	USA	Poland
Darren Malik	Frank den Haan	James Ward
USA	The Netherlands	USA
Dave E	Frank Fattizzi	Jan Kuvaja
United Kingdom	USA	Sweden
Dave Rosen	Fred Jenkins	Jarno Mäki
Israel	USA	Finland
Dave Wyatt	Geoffrey Grinton	Jason Clement
USA	Australia	USA
David Coles	Gilles LAURENT	Jason Joy
Australia	France	USA
Dennis G. Landsem	Gordon Yuen	Jean - JMST
Norway	Bmraarykduesn	Belgium
djhayman	Gyorgy Nemesmagasi	Jerry G
Australia	Hungary	USA
DrBayer	H. S.	Jerzy Prusinski
Vandyland	Denmark	Poland



Marcus Farmer



Tim Laqua



Alan Mosley

John Medwid	Nick Ford	Tobias Reinwald
DSG	England	Germany
John Reichenbach	Patrick Donahue	wa ayoub
USA	USA	No Affiliation
Josh Bradbury	Patrick O'Connell	Willem van Egmond
Kazakhstan	USA	The Netherlands
Luis Martín Caballero Spain	Paul M Marshall Australia	VBScript Beginners
Marcus L. Farmer	Peacerich Timecastle	Andre Starkloff
USA	Sweden	Germany
Mark B	Robert Moore	Angie
USA	New Zealand	USA
Matthew R. Davis	Russ Pitcher	Anoop Puthan Veetil
USA	England	India
Matto	Russell Smith	Anthony Guimelli
Australia	USA	USA
Maureen Farrell	ScriptingGuys-TargetChapter	Ben Clifford
USA	Targetopia	United Kingdom
Michaela Doil	Stefan Suesser	Bizzy
Germany	Germany	No Affiliation
micra	Stephen Coombes	Carlos A. Silva Jr.
Poland	USA	Brazil
Mike Holden	Steve Kulyk	Chris Hollenbeck
Albania	Canada	USA
Miles Willmek	SUF	Christian Pfeiffer
Canada	Hungary	Austria
MrRat	Tim Laqua	Dave E
USA	USA	United Kingdom



Imran Hashim



Jarno Mäki



Jean JMST

David Coles	Jhonny Yamaniha	Rob Allan
Australia	Peru	Canada
David Moravec	John Reichenbach	Rod Stewart
Czech Republic	USA	USA
Dennis Weston	joseomjr	Russ Pitcher
USA	USA	England
Dent	Karen Elliott	Ryan Mich
Canada	USA	USA
Elena Cozzarolo	Luis Martín Caballero	S. Oxford
Italy	Spain	USA
Frank Anstey	Matheesha Weerasinghe	Sankar Muthaiah
Canada	United Kingdom	India
Frank Fattizzi	Matthew R. Davis	ScriptBon
USA	USA	Canada
Geoffrey Grinton	Matto	Seth Levenberg
Australia	Australia	No Affiliation
Helder Sepulveda	Michael Mize	Tony Colgrove
Cuba Libre	USA	USA
Hong Quan YU	Muhammad Faheem Sarani	Tracy Roberts
China	Pakistan	Australia
Jakub Niedźwiedź	Nathan Lare	Vinod Dadhe
Poland	USA	India
Jean-Marc Clement	Pake73	Willem van Egmond
Mauritius	Sweden	The Netherlands
Jerry G	Rafael T	Woody
USA	Ryukyu	Jamaica
Jerzy Prusinski Poland	Ralf Bittiger Germany	



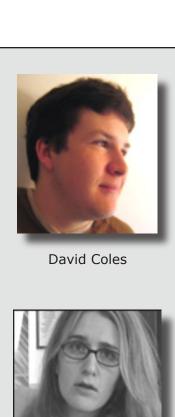
Muhammad Faheem Sarani



David Moravec



Sankar Muthaiah







Geoffrey Grinton



Jeremy Clore



Robert Moore



Helder Sepulveda



Frank Fattizzi



Carlos Alberto



Anoop Puthan Veetil



Eric Payne



Fábio de Paula



David Bayer

# 2007 Team Scores



The international aspect has always been an integral part of the Scripting Games. In the inaugural Scripting Games (2006) we had competitors representing 51 countries; in 2007, we had competitors representing 64 countries. Granted, some of those countries might not be real countries—has anyone been able to find Cubicletania on a map?—but hey, that's part of the fun: you can choose to play for any country you wish. (If only the Olympics worked that way, huh?) In 2007, 7 countries (well, 7 pseudo-countries, anyway) tied for first place with an average score of 100 Now, admittedly, that average score was somewhat easier to achieve thanks to the fact that each country had only a single representative. (Apparently Bmraarykduesn isn't as well-populated as we thought.) Among the countries that had at least 10 entrants, Belgium took home the gold medal with an average score of 91.

And they make great waffles and chocolate there, too.

Complete team results are shown on the next page.

100ITExpert66The Netherlands100Targetopia66Brazil100Mauritius66Austria100Kazakhstan65Russia	
100 Mauritius 66 Austria	
100 Kazakhstan 65 Russia	
100 DSG 65 Jamaica	
100 Vandyland 64 Singapore	
100 Cuba Libre 64 England	
100 Bmraarykduesn 63 Australia	
99 Albania 63 Uruguay	
97 Finland 62 USA	
97 Pakistan 61 India	
95 Malawi 61 United Kingdom	
95 Wales 59 France	
95 Nicaragua 59 Czech Republic	
94 Spain 58 United Republic Of Write	nia
93 PRC 58 South Africa	
92 Dataland 55 Cubicletania	
92 Switzerland 53 Norway	
91 Malaysia 52 Italy	
89 Hungary 50 Macedonia	
89 Belgium 48 No Affiliation	
87 Ryukyu 43 Denmark	
85 Nigeria 39 New Zealand	
84 Poland 38 Romania	
84 Sweden 33 Scotland	
84 Hyrule 31 Philippines	
82 Puerto Rico 31 Croatia	
81 Qatar 29 Sinaloa	
80 Kara-Tur 26 Egypt	
79 Canada 25 Luxembourg	
77 Belarus 23 Thailand	
77 Germany 20 Turkey	
76 Israel 20 Hohenwald	
76 Winterfell 20 Gerald Smith	
75 Vanuatu 18 Colombia	
74 Guatemala 17 Kurdistan	
72 Ireland 15 Iceland	
72 South Korea 15 Mexico	
71 Slovenia 15 Andorra	
70 Japan 15 United Arab Emirates	
69 Ukraine 5 Deutschland	
68 China 5 Zimbabwe	

66

Peru

# Training for the Winter Scripting Games

To tell you the truth, we sort of like the training plan put together by the legendary Mr Rat and friends. According to Mr Rat, he and his friends are preparing for the Games by "drinking heavily and polishing our bobbleheads." Now that's training!

**Note**. The Scripting Editor has pointed out that the Scripting Guys do not condone or encourage heavy drinking. That one we can go along with: drink responsibly. However, she also insists that the Scripting Guys do not condone bobblehead polishing. We're going to have to think about that one a little.

At any rate, the point is that you don't really need to do much (if anything) to prepare for the Games; about all you really need to do is read through the FAQ portion of this program (to make sure you understand the policies and procedures) and then show up at the Script Center on Friday, February 15th. Still, if you're worried about how to best get ready for the Scripting Games, well, here are a few suggestions:

Take a look at the 2006 and 2007 Games. The Events from the 2006 and

2007 Winter Scripting Games are still available online. (Go to http://www.microsoft.com/technet/scriptcenter/funzone/games/default.mspx and click the appropriate link.) Read through the instructions for an event or two; those will give you a pretty good idea of what to expect during the 2008 Games. While you're at it, you might even *try* an event or two; the solutions are all available online as well.

Remember to test your scripts before you send them in. Thousands and thousands of scripts will be submitted for the Scripting Games, and the Scripting Guys will test each and every one of those scripts. What we won't do is debug those scripts in any way. Instead, we'll run them and see if they work. If they do, you get the points. If they don't, well, not only will you not get the points, but we won't make any effort to try and figure out why they didn't work.

Granted, sometimes scripts fail because the approach is all wrong. All-too-often, however, scripts fail because of a simple mistake. Time and time again last year we heard from people who wrote a script and tested it and then, just before submitting it, made a minor tweak to the code. Tweaking the code is fine, but make sure you test the modified script before sending it in; don't just assume it's OK. Last year several people added a comment to their script, but failed to include the comment character. Consequently, the script failed when we ran it. A very large number of the mistakes we see could have been caught—and fixed—before the script was submitted.

**Use Select All when copying your scripts**. We realize that we don't have a very good submission process but—for the time being, anyway—it's the only submission

process we have. As you know, in order to submit a script you must copy the code and then paste that code into the body of an email. Most people simply select the script code with the mouse, and most of the time that works. However, it's not unusual for people to fail to select the last line of code. Is that a problem? You might say that.

The solution? Use Select All or Ctrl+A or whatever command your script editor uses to select *all* the code in your script.

If possible, send your emails in plain-text mode. Back in the good old days emails came

across *only* as plain-text. Now we have fancy HTML-based emails that can include graphics, sounds, animations, etc. Those emails look pretty cool, but they can also play havoc with your script code. To test a script the Scripting Guys must copy the script from your email, paste it into Notepad, then run the script. With plain-text, this copy/paste operation works pretty well; with HTML or RTF-based email that's not always the case. Instead, we often end up with line break problems, the most-common being a script that comes across as one single, unbroken line of code. Usually we're able to fix these problems; however, we can't always guarantee that we put the linebreaks in the correct spots. Sending email as plain-text helps us avoid most of these problems.

**Most important, don't worry about it**. After all, the Scripting Games are supposed to be *fun*. Show up, have a little fun, and maybe learn something new about scripting. And who knows? With any luck maybe next year you'll have a bobblehead of your own to polish.



# What People Said About the 2007 Winter Scripting Games

I just started to learn to script and I learned a great deal. It really motivates.

I knew the Games would serve as a motivational factor to get me to learn more about the subject.

You guys are putting on a great set of games! They're actually a great motivator for getting me learning and actually writing scripts.

These games were the perfect training activities as they give you something to actually shoot for. Scripting is a lot of fun!

I totally missed it/wasn't scripting yet last year. This year, I counted the days until it started. ...Thank you for a week and a half of SUPER GEEK FUN! This has been a fun contest...next year I'll enter advanced!

I end up getting a 90 for total score, I want the chance to redeem my self, please bring the games back next year. I had tons of fun doing it....

I just wish if there were more games, I had so much fun in last two weeks ... Thank you very much 'Scripting Guys'...you ROCK!!!

As I'm not that well-spoken in English I'll keep it short. Brilliant work guys. I really enjoyed the games, learned new techniques.

The events were challenging and forced me to stretch my skills, yet not too esoteric or difficult that I felt I had no chance. I look forward to next year.

As a person who did not have any type of CS education, I enjoyed to chance to work on a few 'graded' projects.

I want to tell you again that I ( and my sons!) had a lot of fun and that I learned much about writing Power-Shell scripts - so I will definitely come back again next year!

## Answers to the Scripting Languages Trivia Test

- 1. A, **Larry Wall invented Perl**. Larry currently serves as the "Benevolent Dictator for Life" of the Perl project.
- 2. True, the word Perl can be found in the Oxford English Dictionary. And, sorry, VBScript and Power-Shell fans: neither of those words appear in the OED.
- 3. C, **1987**, the same year Aretha Franklin became the first woman elected to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the drug Prozac made its US debut. Coincidence? Probably.
- 4. A, **Project Thunder**. Snowball was the code name for Windows for Workgroups 3.11; Frosting the code name for Microsoft Plus! for Windows 95; and Touchdown the code name for Exchange Server 4.0.
- 5. B, **Performance Enhancing Relational Language**. Perl evolved from Larry Wall's interest in linguistics.
- 6. D, Monads are Leibniz's term for the fundamental unit of existence that aggregates into compounds to implement a purpose. According to the PowerShell team, "In this philosophy, everything is a composition of Monads. This captures what we want to achieve with composable management."
- 7. **False**. Visual Basic for Applications was released in 1993. VBScript was not released until 1995.
- 8. B, **Alan Cooper**. In 1994 Cooper was honored as one of the seven winners of a Windows Pioneer Award.
- B, Barcelona, Spain. PowerShell was officially announced—and made available for download—as part of TechEd Europe's IT Forum.
- 10. C, **QuickBASIC**. Originally positioned as a shell construction kit accessible to anyone, the addition of QuickBASIC turned Project Thunder into a full-blown programming language aimed at developers.
- 11. B, A replacement for the Windows command shell. At one point, early in its development, Power-Shell was seen primarily as a replacement for Cmd. exe.
- 12. D, **Osgood 2**. As far as we know, anyway.





# WINDOWS POWERSHELL TRAINING

"ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT WINDOWS POWERSHELL"

**WHEN: MARCH 17TH-21ST** 

INSTRUCTOR: DON JONES

**LOCATION: LAS VEGAS RENAISSANCE** 

