

Address Book Update Tool 1.0 (ABUPT)

Version: 1.0

White Paper

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Overview

With the introduction of Active Directory, The Directory Services in Windows 2000, Microsoft introduced a set of management tools (both MMC based and command-line utilities) to help in locating and managing Active Directory Objects. However, no web access tools are included in the out-of-the-box product.

The main purpose of Address Book Update Tool (ABUPT) is to grant the field and users with a simple web-based tool to perform the most frequent tasks on the most importantly-used type of objects in the Directory: The Users general information (address, city, state, country, postalcode, Notes).

ABUPT was born as a result of the need for a tool which would reduce cost, time and man power for updating of common user details on the Address Book, the tool that is web-based to do the most simple and critical daily operations with User Account in AD domains, such as modifying User properties.

ABUPT Interface Overview

The ABUPT is a web form based tool that is run using IE (Internet Explorer).

ABUPT Initial Screen

Upon Loading, ABUPT automatically tries to locate the currently logged-on User information, and the Domain that the User is currently logged on to.

If Successful, ABUPT enters the display name with a welcome prefixed to it automatically.

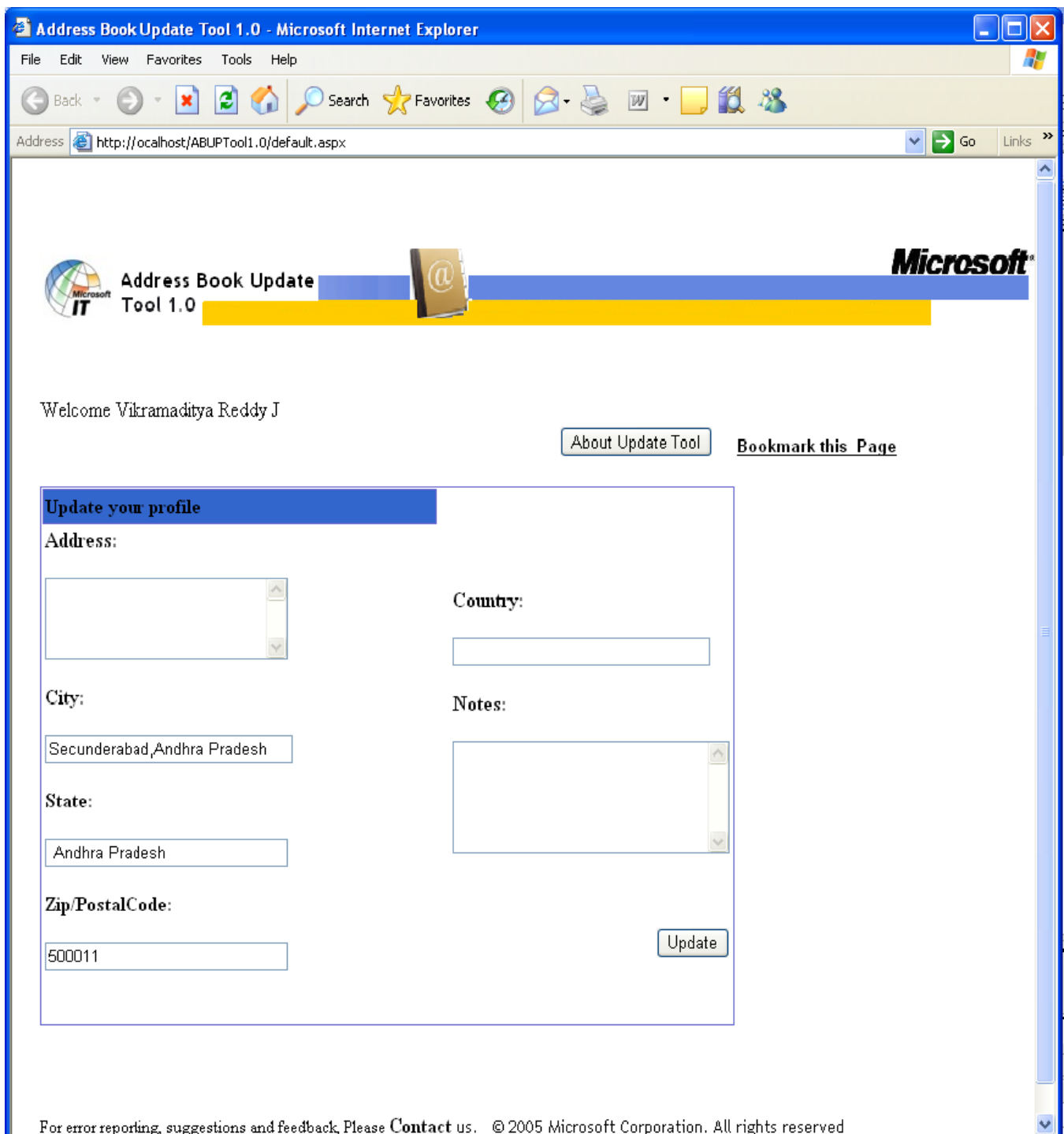


Figure 1: ABUPT Initial Screen

Updating / Modifying User properties

When the user is successfully logged in the tool automatically retrieves his previous data pertaining to the fields if any existing. The he can modify it or can enter details to the empty fields and then can update them with a single click.

If there are any errors which percolate in then he is given a text message saying that the:

`"Problem in processing the updation, Please refresh and retry after sometime. If problem persists please contact us."`

If it still persists the user can simply click the "CONTACT us" link which is at the bottom of the webpage, which would automatically popup the client's local default email client with the contact email-id. Thus he can write a mail stating his problem.

Querying multiple domains

As an Enterprise Tool, ABUPT has the ability to query various domains but based on the users accounts mapped to the respective domains available in the "CORP" forest. This tool is based for the respective users to update there respective fields.

ABUPT's Architecture

ABUPT's work 'behind the scenes' in a nutshell

The Active Directory Update User tool is a web form that retrieves & updates user information from their respective domains.

The ABUPT uses Directory Services Namespace to access and manipulate the domain and user objects. It also uses DirectoryEntry and Directory Searcher search mechanism.

Please note that these actions should ideally be performed in a Secured Environment, since passwords may be exposed over the wire during these procedures.

You can use SSL/TLS for your web page to encrypt the transportation between the client and the DC/GC server (e.g: using https ://)

Client Side issues (IE)

The steps to make sure the ABUPT component runs well are:

1. Make sure your Browser Security Settings prompt for or allow JavaScript enabled.
(Tools->Internet Options->Security->Local Intranet->Custom Level:
Allow Scripting/Active Scripting)
2. Make sure your Browser Advanced Settings prompt for or allow SSL enabled.
(Tools->Internet Options->Advanced->: SSL)

Summary

ABUPT is a simple yet very needed and highly-valued tool that extends Microsoft's existing set of Management tools, and provides Web-Access Operations for Active Directory Users.

This is the first offering version of ABUPT and might include changes and improvements for later versions. Your feedback is highly welcome.

Please email your comments to: t-vreddy@microsoft.com

Many thanks to my Manager, my team in India, Jon Edwards and Team from Redmond for the feedback and suggestions during the Tool's development.