WINDOWS USER PROFILE MANAGMENT

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User profile

User profile consist of personalized settings such as desktop background, network settings & user data. First time user login to the computer, it will create a user profile for the user. On the legacy windows systems (XP, 2000), user profile will be created under "Documents & Settings" folder & with new operating systems (Win7, Win8) it's coming under "Users" folder.

Content of the user profile (Folders & Files) inside the profile

User profile consist of some folders. Below are some of the important folders/files inside the user profile

NTUSER.DAT

This file includes the personalized user settings such as desktop background & screen saver.

Desktop

This folder includes all the shortcuts in users' desktop

My Documents

This is the default location for save the user documents such as word & Excel files.

AppData

By default this is a hidden folder and this includes some important settings of the applications such as MS Outlook.

How to migrate User profile from one pc to another

When we are formatting our computers/Laptops it's very important to protect user profile data. Most of the users, they save all the official data in their profile and not in the file server (Home drive or network share). To migrate the user data to new computer, or new OS we can use windows in build tools. If we are using Windows XP we can use **"User State Migration Tool".** New operating system have **"Easy Transfer wizard"**

Roaming profile

Roaming profile is a feature of the MS Windows Active Directory. We have configure that feature user basis. Once we enable & configure roaming profile on particular user, he will be able to get same profile from any computer which are in the same domain. To store roaming profile data normally we have to use Windows file server. Since user profile data availability is critical for the organization, we can configure file server on failover cluster wizard for provide the high availability.
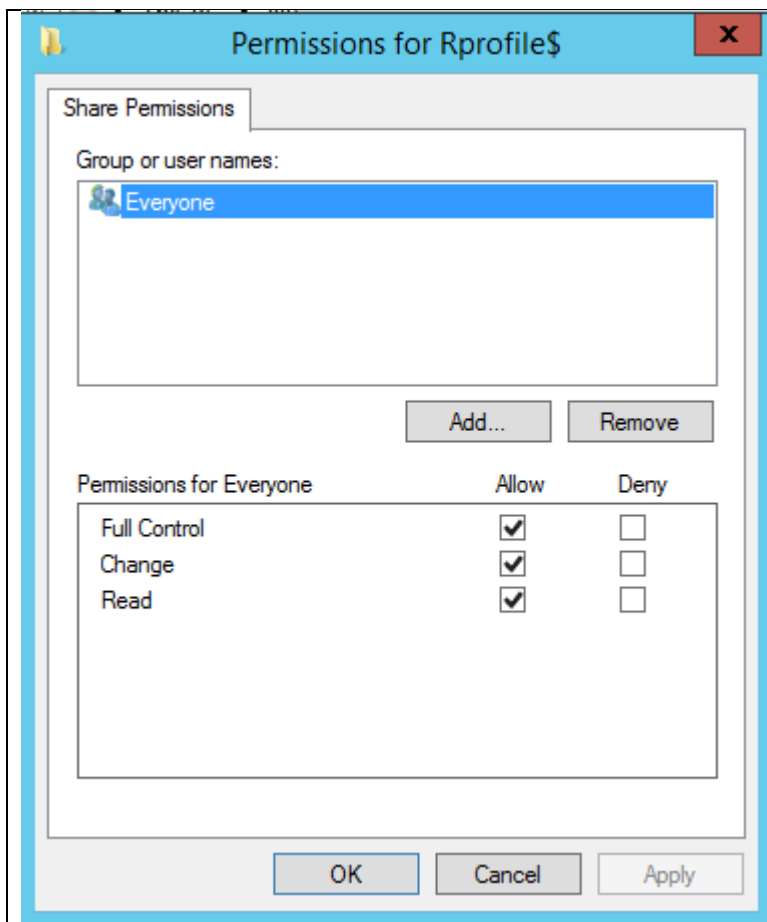
How to configure Roaming profile

Create a share folder on file server for store roaming profile

Create a shared folder on D or E drive and assign share name as "Rprofile$"
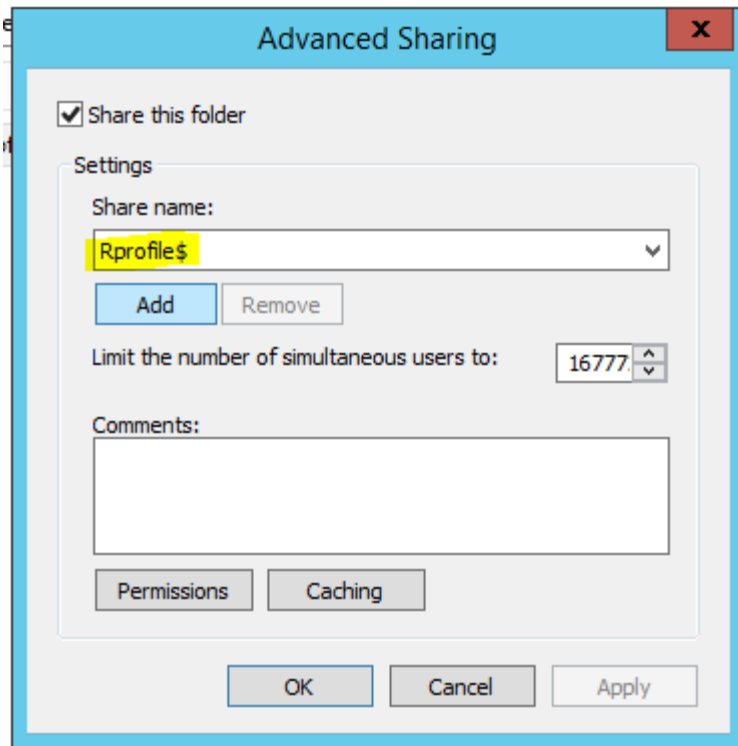
Assign "Everyone" full control as a share permission

Note-We can protect data using NTFS permission

Assign NTFS permission as bellows

User Account	Access Permission	Access Level
Administrators, Domain Administrators	Full Control	This folder & Subfolders
Create Owner	Full Control	Subfolders & Files
Domain Users	Traverse Folder/Execute File/List Folder/Read Data/Read Attributes/Read extended attributes/Create Folders/Append data	This Folder

System	Full Control	This folder & Subfolders & files

Configure Roaming profile on Active Directory

Login to the Domain Controller > Open **"Active Directory Users & computers"** > Go to the "Profile"

tab > Assign a profile path as **\\Server02\rprofile$\%username%**

*Server02 is my file server's host name

When the users are login to their computes, it will create a separate folder for each user. This folder will be used to store roaming profile of the users

Folder Redirection

Using windows roaming profile we can store user profile in a central location. With the folder redirection we can customize that settings also. We can do it item level. As an example we can redirect only "MY documents" to the central location. We can redirect below mentioned single folder or multiple folders to file server/shared location.

AppData

Contacts

Desktop

Documents

Downloads

Favorites

Links

Music

Pictures

Saved Games

Searches

Start Menu

Videos

How to configure folder redirection

Create a shared folder

Create a shared folder on D or E drive and assign share name as "FolderRE$"
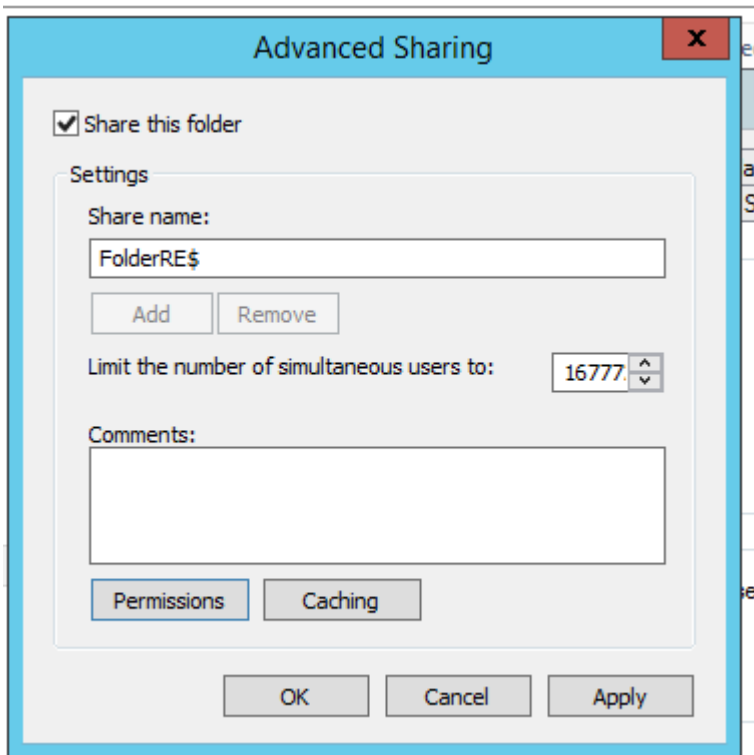
Note-We have to assign the permission same as roaming profile

Configure & Apply Group Policy

Open group policy management console > Create a new group policy **"Folder Redirection"**
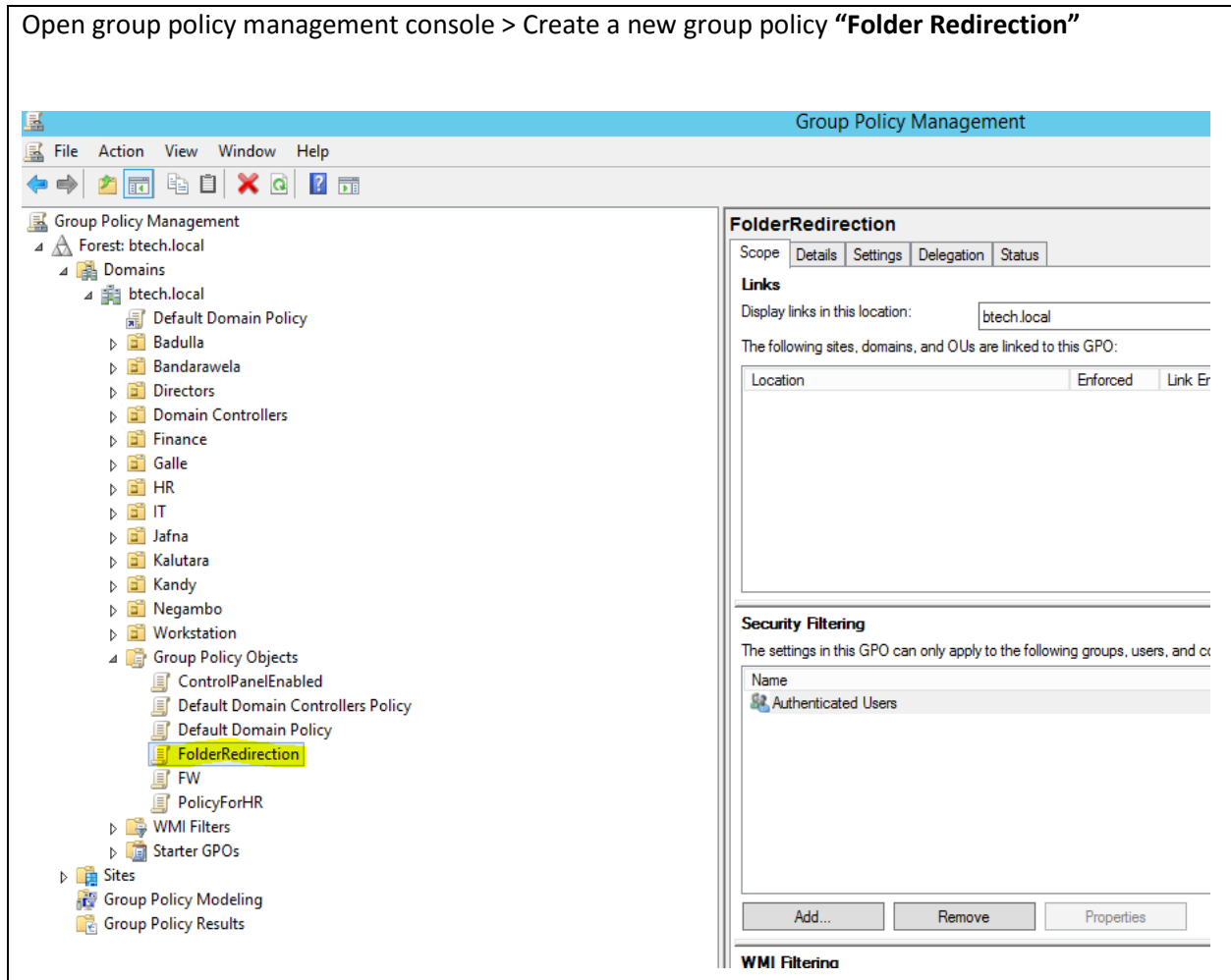
Right click on the group policy **"FolderRedirection"** and select **"Edit" >** Go to the **"User Configuration"** > **"Windows Setting" > "Folder Redirection"**
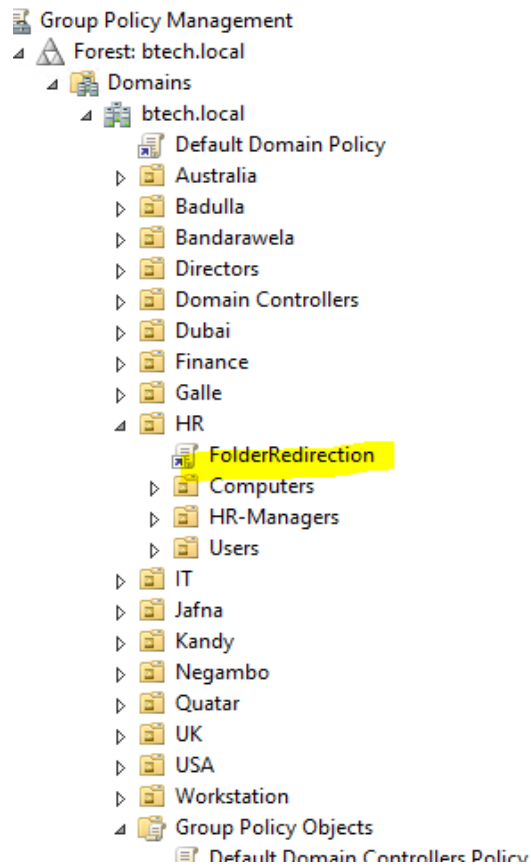
Right click on the folder which we want to redirect > Select **"Properties" >** Select **"Basic- Redirect everyone's folder to the same location"** option from **Settings** drop down list > Select **"Create a folder for each user under the root path"**
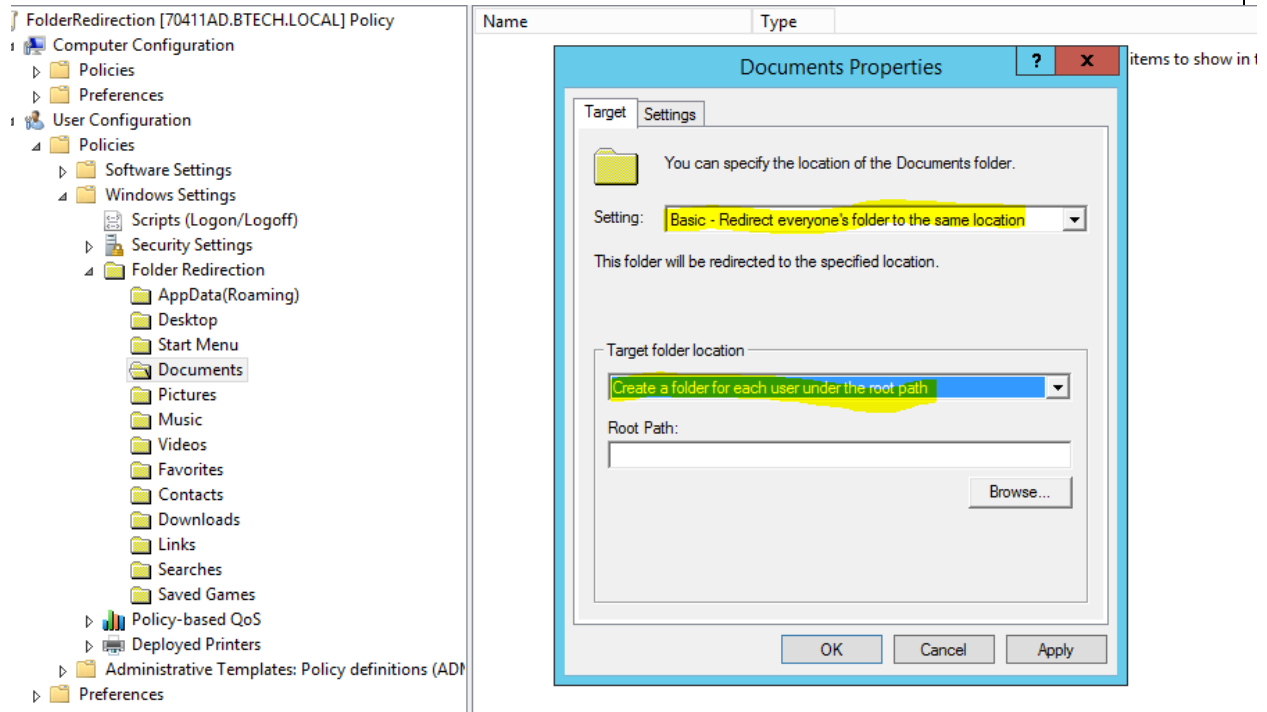
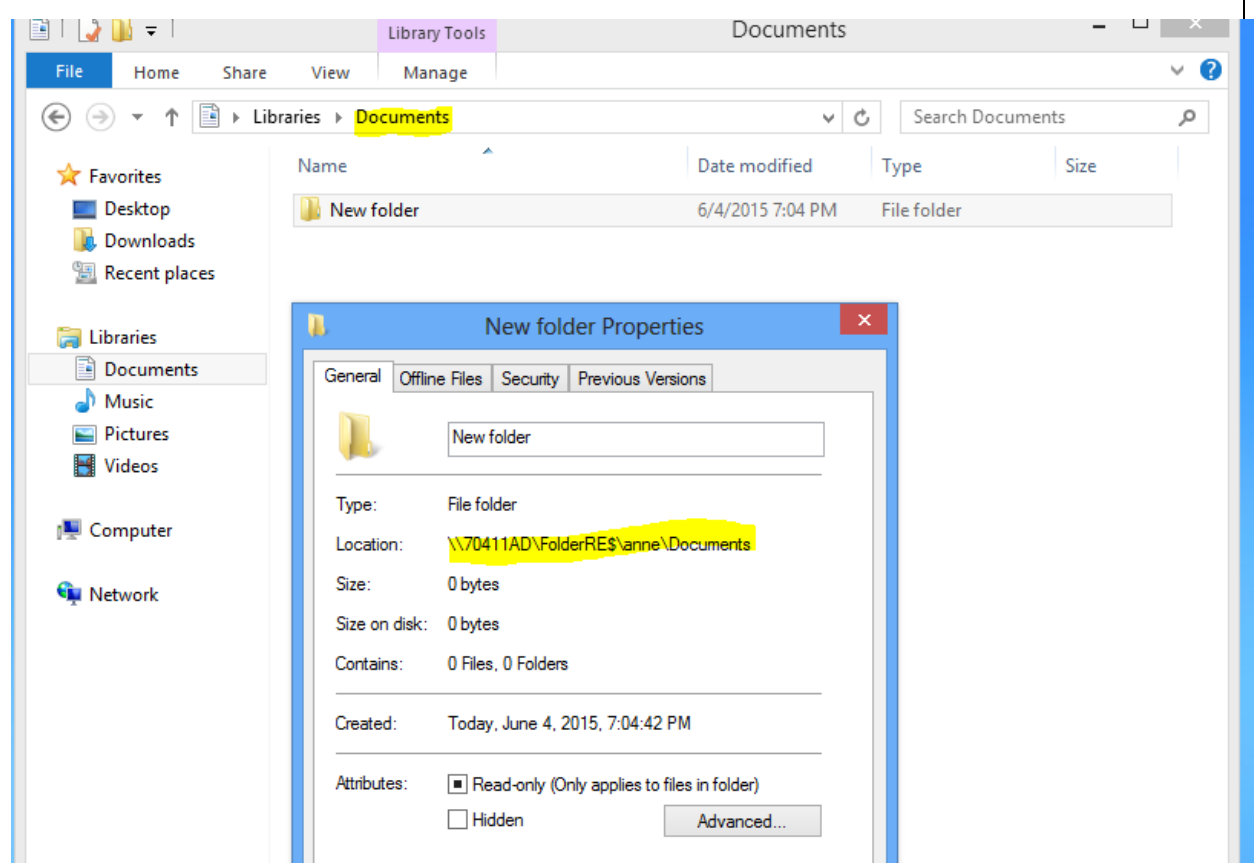Assign a root path(This is the shared folder which we have created as a first step)
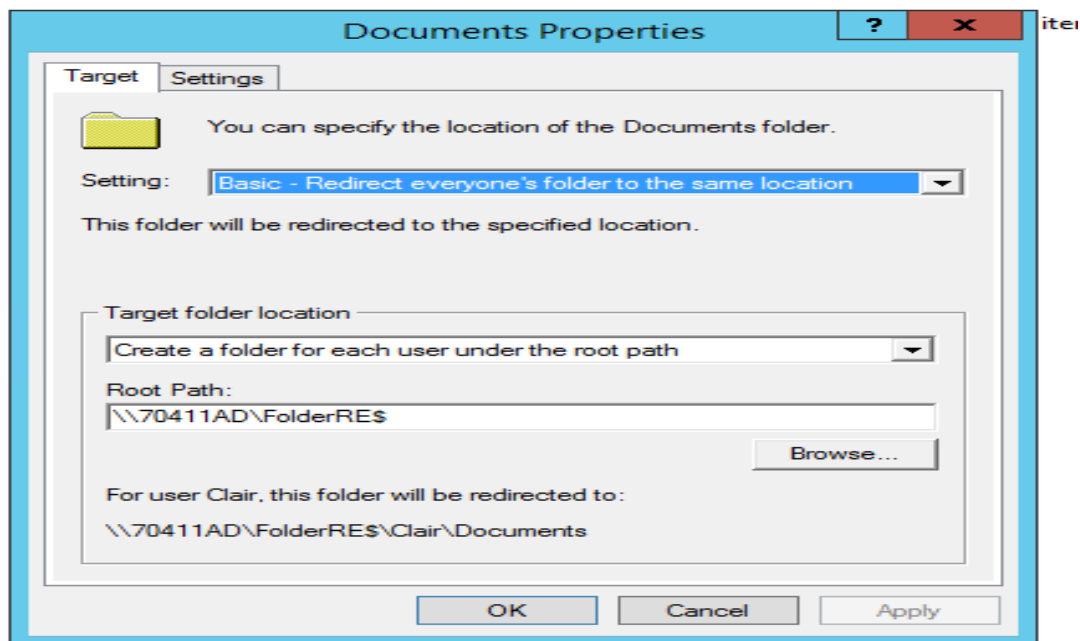
Apply group policy to the OU/Domain/Site

Verify the user data

Login to the client computer > Create a folder/file in MY Documents > check the file/folder path

Advantages of Folder Redirection

- User can log in to multiple computers, but they can access their data

- Using offline folder technology users can access their data even they are working offline

- This is useful when we are backing up corporate data using enterprise backup software such as MS DPM

- Administrator can customize and redirect only required folders. With folder redirection this is not possible thing.