ManageEngine
ADManager Plus

3 must have fail-safe mechanisms

needed for your **Active Directory backup and recovery**

www.admanagerplus.com

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Introduction

It's a given that an IT admin will face a few accidental deletions of Active Directory (AD) objects during their workweek. Although the deleted attribute or object may seem insignificant in the grand scheme of things, IT admins know better than to ignore them. Even a small deletion could lead to a domino effect where users cannot access their resources, and the entire section of the affected network comes to a standstill.

AD backup and recovery comes to the IT admin's rescue in these situations. However, in large organizations, the volume of objects and attributes in a single domain controller (DC) alone could take hours to back up, so it's important to make this process efficient.

A few drawbacks in native AD backup and recovery

According to Gartner, a domain being down costs the average organization $5,600 per minute, which adds up to over $300,000 per hour. One of the main reasons for service downtime is ineffective AD backup and recovery after a mishap. The following drawbacks of native AD tools hinder admins from restoring a domain quickly, and translate into loss of productivity and increased costs.

a. Doesn't support granular restoration

Native AD tools do not enable IT admins to restore individual objects or specific attributes of an object; instead, they can only restore the entire AD infrastructure from bare-metal backups. If just a handful of users or OUs were deleted, restoring an entire DC isn't efficient, even though it might solve the problem.

b. No incremental backups

AD's native backup tools do not support incremental backups. That means admins can't just back up the changes made to AD since the last backup; they'll have to back up the entire domain every time. This can make maintenance and security costs skyrocket.

c. Restart-free recovery not possible

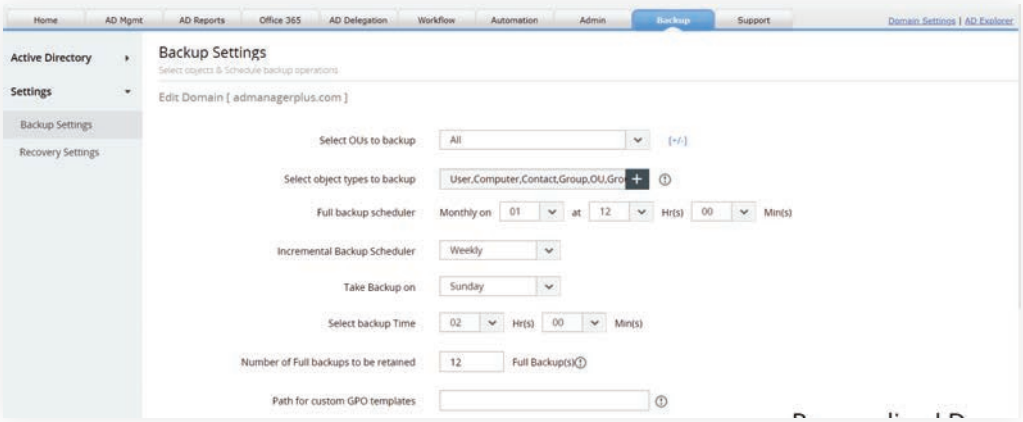
When performing a restoration of any scale using native tools, the DCs have to be restarted. Until the restart is complete the domain remains offline, and since native AD tools don't have the option of incremental backups, the downtime could be much longer than desired and severely decrease the organization's productivity.

Three essential features for efficient backup and recovery

Now that we've listed the shortcomings of the native tools, we can dive into the must-have features in a backup and recovery AD solution. Surprisingly, many of the shortcomings of the native tools are actually essential to keep AD backup and recovery efficient and secure. The following are three must-have features for efficient backup and recovery.

a. Incremental backups

IT admins need a tool that enables incremental backups. Apart from backing up only from the last saved version of the objects and attributes that have changed, having incremental backups also enables better storage management, reduces redundancy, and improves efficiency. Since an incremental backup only saves the changes that have occurred since the last backup, there are much fewer changes to be backed up and each backup occupies less space. Smaller backups also take less time to complete and can be restored more quickly than a full backup.



The ideal backup settings offered by a third-party tool.

b. Delegation for AD backup and recovery

In large organizations, it's impossible for just one IT admin to shoulder the entire burden of AD backup and recovery. To manage the process efficiently, an IT admin should be empowered to delegate AD backup and recovery rights to specific OUs, and track backup and restore activities through audit reports.

c. Object and attribute-level restoration

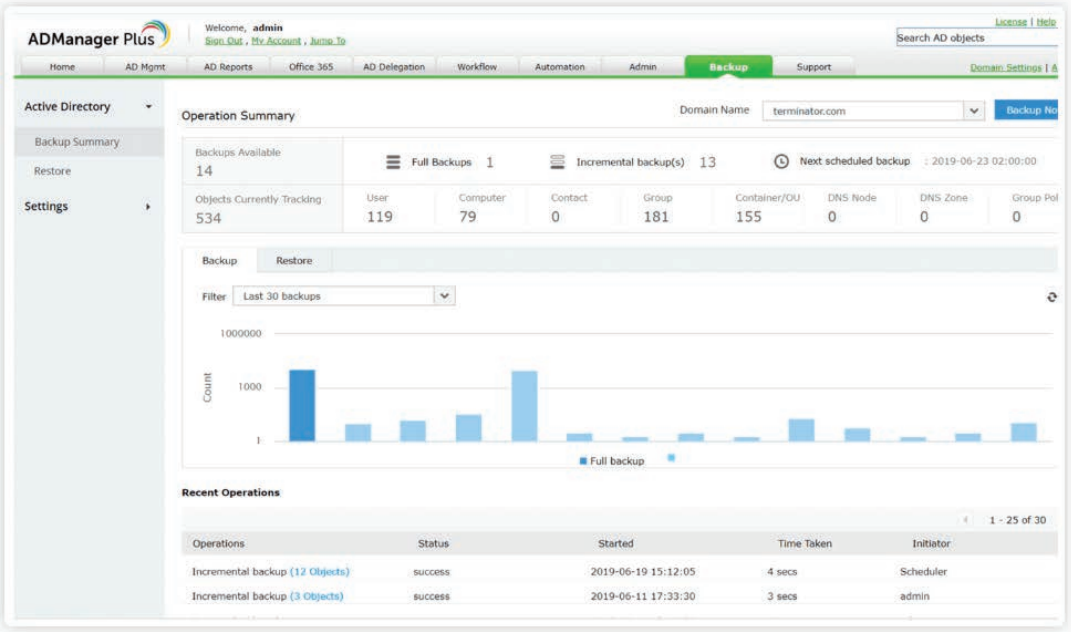
IT admins need the option to restore only the required objects, as well as individual attributes of specific objects. The option to perform incremental backups and store the subsequent backups of objects as versions makes an IT admin's job child's play, as they can simply restore their AD domain to a previous version with the click of a button.

Benefits of using ADManager Plus for AD backup and recovery

ADManager Plus is a secure, web-based AD management and reporting solution from ManageEngine. Besides offering AD backup and recovery, ADManager Plus enables admins to perform end-to-end management, reporting, and more for AD, Office 365, and Microsoft Exchange, all from a single console. Here are a few advantages of using ADManager Plus for AD backup and recovery.

a. Minimized downtime

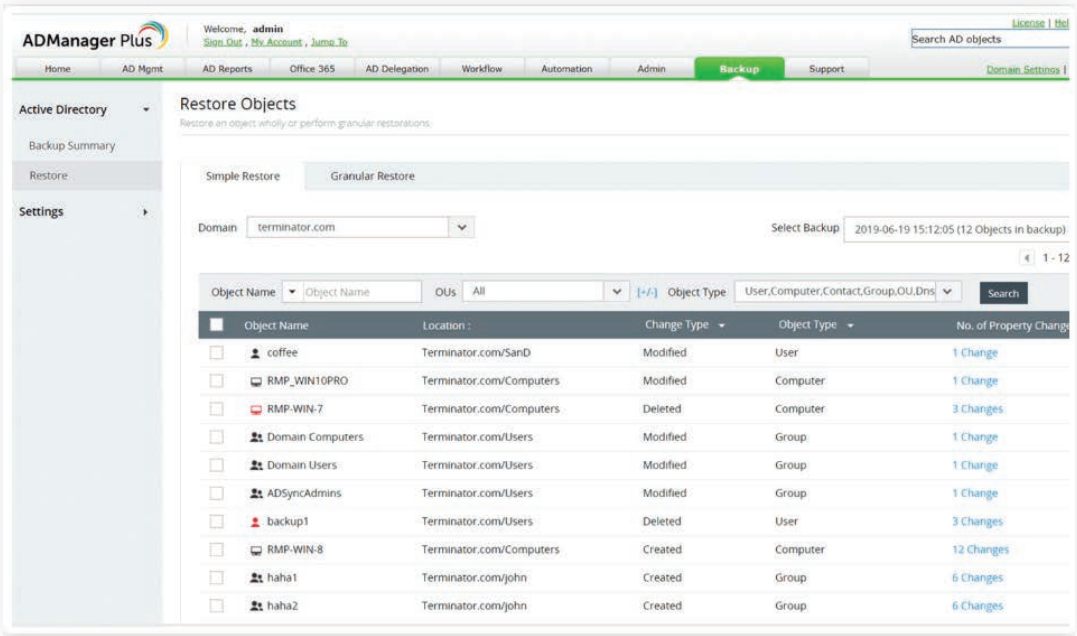
The extensive AD monitoring and reporting features offered by ADManager Plus allow very little chance for AD mishaps or accidental deletions, reducing server downtime and keeping the organization's productivity intact. ADManager Plus also offers incremental backups and granular restoration of objects just to be safe, so IT admins can accomplish AD domain recoveries quickly and efficiently if need be.



Backup summary tab in ADManager Plus.

b. Quick recovery

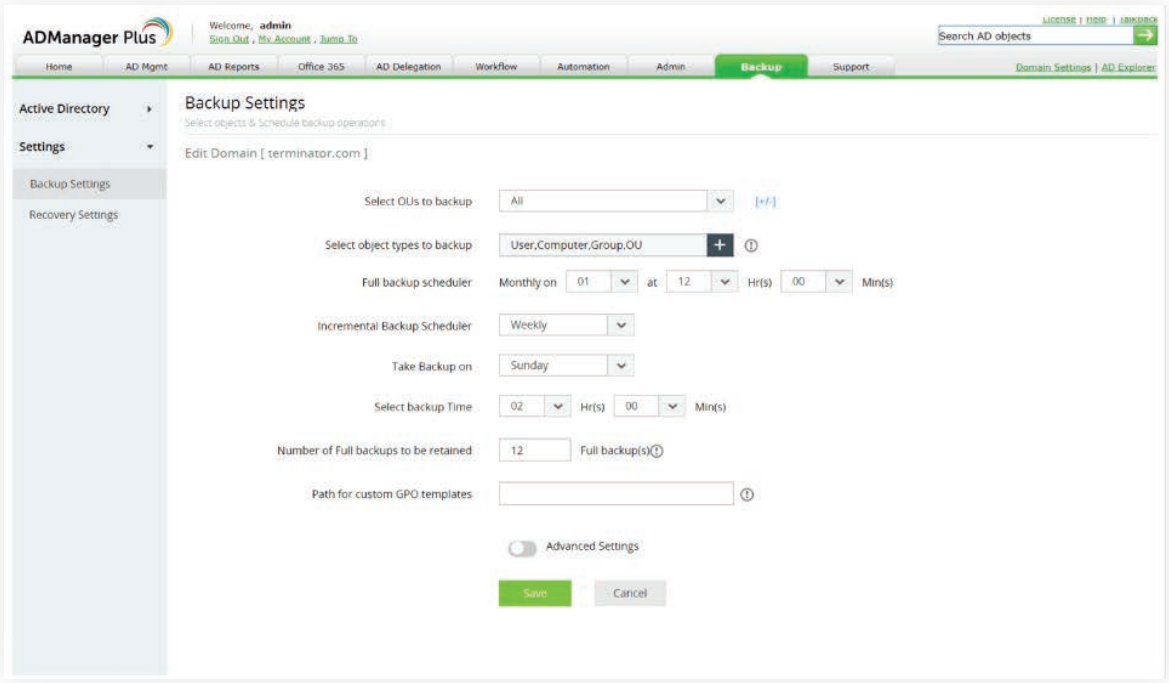
When something goes wrong in the domain, IT admins are flooded with requests from frustrated users. Until the domain returns to full functionality, IT admins might feel like they're under a lot of pressure. The Restore Objects feature in ADManager Plus enables IT admins to restore their domains in a single click. This uncomplicated, effective method brings domains back up quickly and saves IT admins from getting stuck in a PowerShell scripting nightmare.



ADManager Plus' Restore tab includes granular details of which properties were changed in each object.

c. Restart-free backup and recovery

Never having to restart the domain for backup and recovery saves IT admins time since they don't have to check if previously applied settings are functioning properly. ADManager Plus' restart-free backup and recovery helps ensure users aren't negatively affected by the backup and restoration process.



Back up settings in ADManager Plus

Tips for backup and recovery

IT admins are often challenged by restoration problems. A recovery plan isn't error-proof unless IT admins have tested the system to make sure they can restore their domains from the available backups.

To ensure effective restoration, IT admins should periodically check their restoration software in a test environment. Ensuring the newest available backup is used for recovery is another good practice. Admins can calm any worries about losing information during the backup process by using incremental backups between full backups.

ManageEngine
ADManager Plus

ManageEngine ADManager Plus is a web-based Windows AD management and reporting solution that helps AD administrators and help desk technicians accomplish their day-to-day activities. With an intuitive, easy-to-use interface, ADManager Plus handles a variety of complex tasks and generates an exhaustive list of AD reports, some of which are essential requirements to satisfy compliance audits. It also helps administrators manage and report on their Exchange Server, Office 365, and Google Apps environments, in addition to AD, all from a single console.

For more information about ADManager Plus, visit manageengine.com/ad-manager.

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