

Microsoft Exchange 2003 – How to completely remove a Exchange server or the entire Exchange organization

Written by Marc Grote - <mailto:grotem@it-training-grote.de>

Abstract

In this article I will give you a detailed overview ...

- ? How to remove Exchange Server 2003 from your computer
- ? How to Remove the First Exchange 2003 Server Computer from the Site
- ? How to completely remove Exchange 2003 from Active Directory

Let's begin

The first question is – Why do I need to remove Exchange Server from my systems?
The answer is – *Normally never* because Exchange Server 2003 is a great product but under some circumstances like in test environments or through orphaned Exchange objects it may be necessary to remove an Exchange Server or the entire Exchange organization from Active Directory.

An often used reason is to remove the first Exchange Server from a site because the Hardware of this Exchange Server is too old. The first Exchange Server in a Site has some special functionality so you must be care of what you do – but more lately.

REMOVE EXCHANGE FROM ONE SERVER

Before you remove a Microsoft Exchange Server 2003 server from a production environment that has multiple servers in the administrative group, make sure that you know all the roles that are held by the server. Take steps to move those roles to another server before you follow the steps in this article to remove the Exchange Server. For example, the server may hold special roles such SRS server or routing group master, or the server could be listed as a bridgehead server on a connector such as an SMTP connector or a routing group connector.

Be sure to remove the Exchange Server after you transfer the server specific Exchange roles. If you forget this, you may experience adverse effects including the following:

- ? Mail flow may stop if the server is a Exchange bridgehead server.
- ? Mail flow may be adversely affected if the server is the routing group master, because the link state data for the remaining servers in the site is not updated for each other and the link state data for the remaining servers in the site is not updated to other sites.
- ? Outlook and OWA Free/busy problems may occur if the server is the site folder server.
- ? And many other effects when that you know after the removal ☺

Before you remove Exchange 2003, you must disconnect all mailbox-enabled users from the mailboxes on the Exchange server. It is not possible to remove an Exchange Server when it has mounted mailboxes. If you think it is enough to dismount and delete every Exchange store – you are wrong. This is not a solution.

After all mailbox-enabled users have been disconnected; you can use the Exchange 2003 Setup program to remove Exchange 2003.

If you are not being able to use the Exchange 2003 Setup program to remove Exchange 2003. In this scenario, you can manually remove Exchange 2003. You must first stop and disable all Exchange services.

Then you must use Registry Editor to remove registry keys that are part of the Exchange installation. After you have removed the registry keys, you must remove and then reinstall Microsoft Internet Information Services (IIS). You must then reinstall any service packs or security updates that had been installed on your server.

High level Steps

I will not explain every step, because I think that some processes are self explaining. If you have any question, look in the Knowledge Base articles that you can find at the end of this article.

- ? Use the Active Directory User and Computers snap-in to disconnect all mailbox-enabled users
- ? Run the Exchange Server 2003 Setup program to remove the installed components
- ? Manually remove Exchange 2003
- ? Stop and disable the Exchange 2003 services
- ? Use Registry Editor to remove the Exchange registry keys
- ? Remove and reinstall the Internet Information Server (IIS) component
- ? Remove the Exchange 2003 server object from the Exchange 5.5 Admin program
- ? Remove the Exchange 2003 server from Active Directory
- ? Use the /removeorg switch to remove the whole Exchange 2003 organization from Active Directory

Stop and disable the Exchange 2003 services

Set the start up type of the following services to disabled and stop the services:

- ? Distributed Transaction Coordinator.
- ? Internet Information Services (IIS) Admin Service
- ? Microsoft Exchange Event
- ? Microsoft Exchange Internet Message Access Protocol (IMAP4)
- ? Microsoft Exchange Information Store
- ? Microsoft Exchange Message Transfer Agent (MTA) Stacks
- ? Microsoft Exchange Post Office Protocol version 3 (POP3)
- ? Microsoft Exchange Routing Engine
- ? Microsoft Exchange Site Replication Service
- ? Microsoft Exchange System Attendant
- ? Network News Transfer Protocol (NNTP)
- ? Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP)

Use Registry Editor to remove the following Exchange registry keys:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Exchange
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\DAVEX
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\EXIFS
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\ExIPC
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\EXOLEDB
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\IMAP4Svc

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeActiveSynchN
 otify
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeADDXA
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeAL
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeDSAccess
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeES
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeFBPublish
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeIS
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeMGMT
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeMTA
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeMU
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeOMA
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeSA
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeSRS
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeTransport
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\MSExchangeWEB
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\POP3Svc
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\RESvc

Remove and reinstall the Internet Information Services (IIS) component

Remove IIS over the Add/Remove feature of the computer. After you have removed Exchange, you can reinstall IIS if necessary.

Remove the Exchange 2003 server object from the Exchange 5.5 Admin program

If the Exchange 2003 server is installed in an existing Exchange Server 5.5 site, and you use the Exchange 5.5 Admin program, you must delete the Exchange 2003 server object from the Exchange 5.5 Admin program.

Remove the Exchange 2003 server from Active Directory

Start the Exchange System Manager to remove the server object expand Administrative Groups / "your administrative Group Name" /Servers.

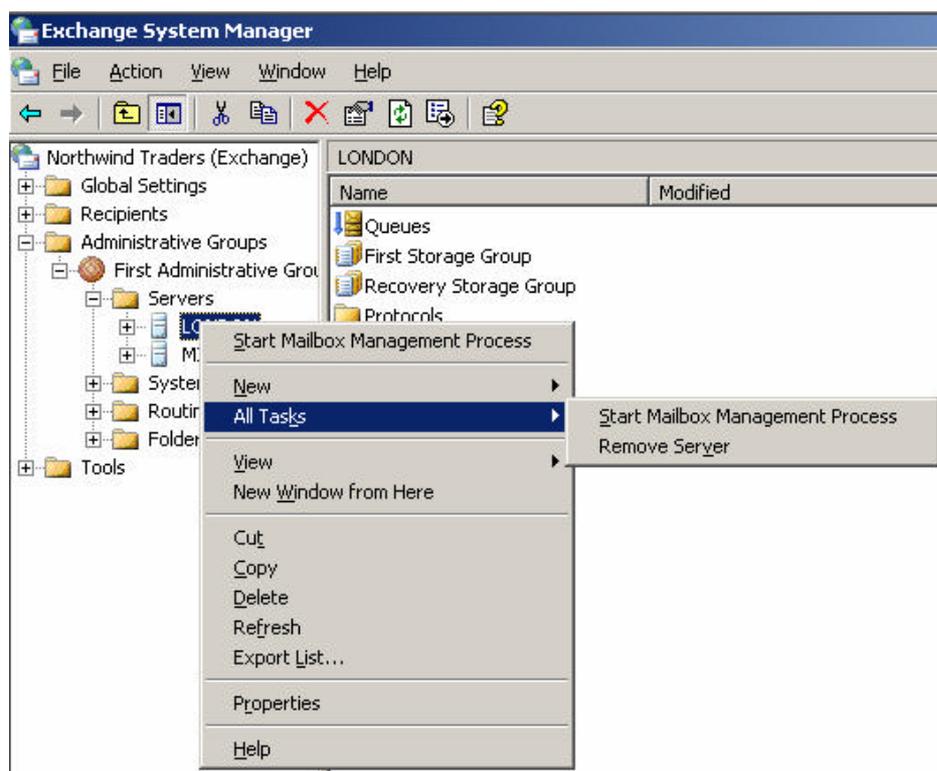


Figure 1: Remove server in ESM

If you cannot run Exchange System Manager, you may use the ADSI Edit snap-in to manually remove the server attributes so that you can try a successful reinstallation. This method does not perform cleanups of references to the server object outside the server's own container.

ADSIEDIT is part of the Windows 2003 support tools. You can find the support tools on the Windows 2003 CD under the folder \Support\TOOLS. Install the support tools by double clicking SUPTOOLS.MSI.

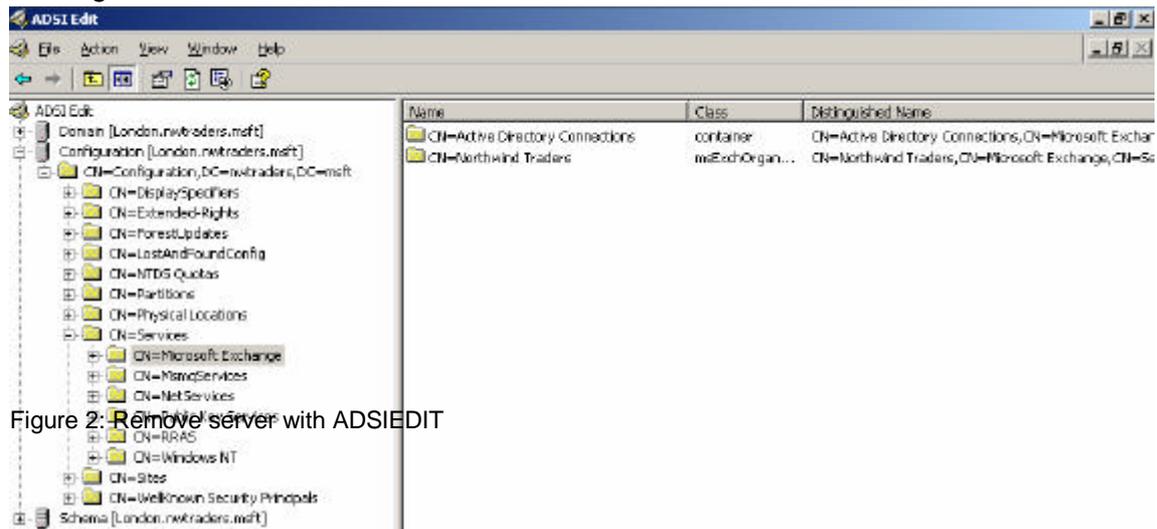


Figure 2: Remove server with ADSIEDIT

Use the /removeorg switch to remove the whole Microsoft Exchange 2003 organization from Active Directory

You can use the /removeorg switch with the Exchange 2003 Setup program to remove the whole Exchange 2003 organization from Active Directory.

The /removeorg switch removes the Organization container and all sub-containers from Active Directory. You can run this command from any server in the forest, not just from an Exchange 2003 server. This command does not remove services, files, or registry keys.

Important

Do not use this method unless you want to remove Exchange completely from your enterprise. The /removeorg switch will remove all the Exchange servers from your organization. If you do this inadvertently, you may be forced to reinstall all the Exchange servers in your enterprise.

HOW TO REMOVE THE FIRST EXCHANGE 2003 SERVER COMPUTER FROM THE SITE

Removing of Exchange 2003 if this machine is the first installed Exchange Server in the site (administrative group) is a little bit different from a normal Exchange deinstallation.

The high level steps are:

- ? Replicate All Public Folders to Another Server
- ? Rehome Connectors to Another Server
- ? Rehome the Schedule+ Free Busy Folder

- ? Remove the First Exchange 2003 Server Computer
- ? Rehome the Offline Address Book Folder
- ? Rehome the Recipient Update Service (RUS)
- ? Designate Another Server to Be the Routing Group Master
- ? Move Mailboxes to Another Server

The first Exchange Server 2003 computer that is installed in an administrative group holds the following important roles.

- ? Offline Address Book folder
- ? Schedule+ Free Busy folder
- ? Events Root folder, and other system folders

Replicate All Public Folders to another Server

All public folders and system folders that are housed on the first Exchange 2003 computer must be replicated to another Exchange 2003 computer that is in the site

Rehome the Recipient Update Service (RUS)

In Exchange System Manager, expand Recipients, and then click Recipient Update Services. Under “General” click “Browse” right of “Exchange Server” and select the Server that should host the Recipient Update Service.

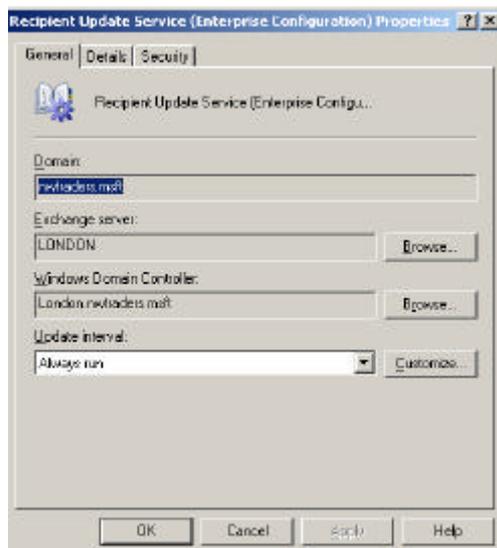


Figure 3: Rehome RUS

Designate another Server to Be the Routing Group Master

If this server is the routing group master, you must designate another server to be the routing group master.

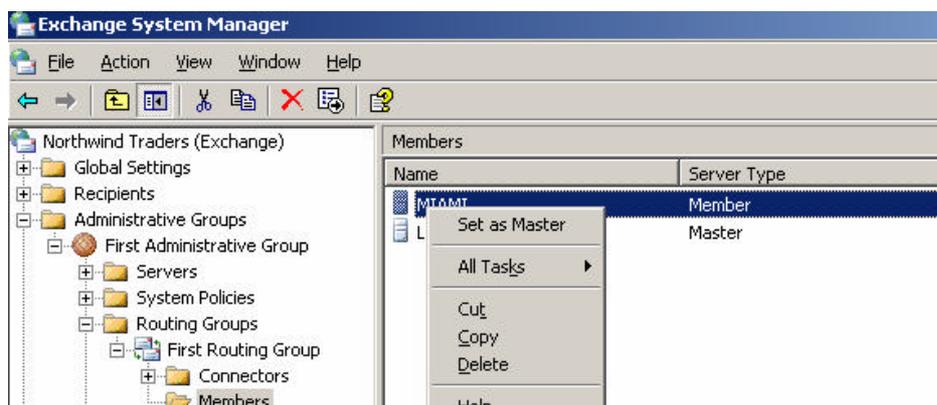


Figure 4 Change the Routing Group Master

If this Exchange 2003 computer has the Site Replication Service (SRS) installed and running on it, you must create a new SRS in Exchange System Manager. To do this, follow these steps:

Start Exchange System Manager on the Exchange Server 2003 computer where you want to create the SRS, and then expand Tools.

Right-click Site Replication Service, click New, and then click Site Replication Service.

When you receive the "re you sure you want to install a new Site Replication Service on this server (ServerName)" prompt, click Yes.

When you receive the order to create a Site Replication Service on the local machine, enter the password for the Exchange service account (Domain\service account) prompt, type the password for the Exchange service account.

This creates the SRS, and it also creates an associated configuration Connection Agreement.

Rehome Connectors to another Server

If this Exchange Server 2003 computer has any connectors that are hosted on it, these connectors must be rehomed to another server before you remove this Exchange 2003 computer from the routing group. For example, if the source server hosts an X.400 connector, you must set up this connector on the destination server. For information how to setup a SMTP connector see the following article:

<http://www.msexchange.org/tutorials/Configuring-SMTP-Connector.html>

Move Mailboxes to another Server

Use Active Directory Users and Computers or the Exchange System Manager to move mailboxes.

Remove the First Exchange 2003 Server Computer

Insert the Exchange Server 2003 CD in the CR-ROM drive in the Exchange 2003 computer, and then click Remove for each component that has been installed.

HOW TO COMPLETELY REMOVE EXCHANGE 2003 FROM ACTIVE DIRECTORY

You have to completely remove all instances of Microsoft Exchange 2003 from the Active Directory service.

Note

This procedure will completely remove all instances of Microsoft Exchange Server 2003 from Active Directory.

SETUP/UPDATE /REMOVEORG

Exchange 2000 SP2 and later contains a setup command-line switch, /removeorg, that removes the Organization container and all sub-containers from Active Directory. You can run this switch from Exchange 2000 Server Service Pack 2 or later by using the following

command: update.exe /removeorg. Additionally, you can run this command from any server in the forest, not just from an Exchange 2003 server. This command does not remove services, files, or registry keys.

In Exchange 2003 the switch /removeorg is part of setup.exe.

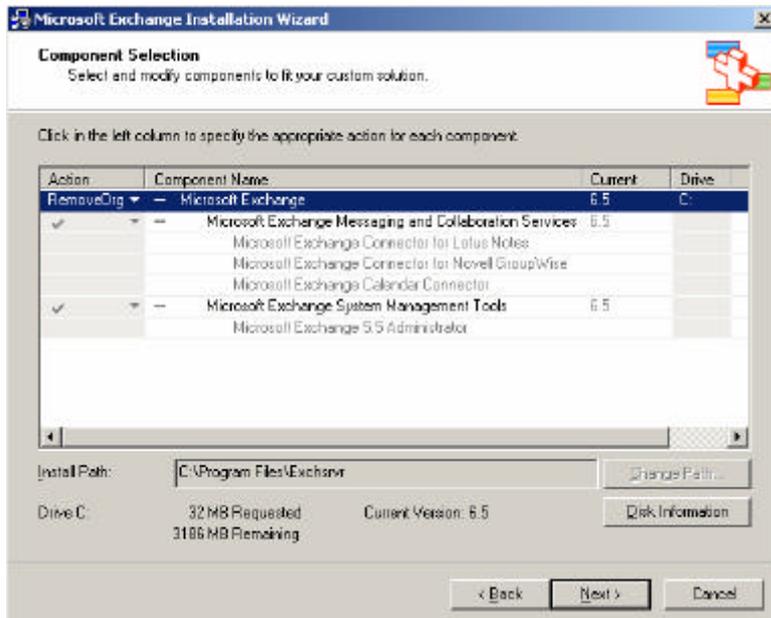


Figure 5: SETUP /REMOVEORG switch

The next steps are the following:

- ? Shut down the member server or domain controller where Exchange 2003 was installed.
- ? Restart the domain controller that you were using to remove the Exchange organization.
- ? Allow sufficient time for replication to occur between the domain controllers.
- ? Save the setup logs.
- ? Rerun setup /forestprep.
- ? Rerun setup /domainprep. If this is the same server that was used previously, move the old setup logs out.
- ? Verify permissions in the Exchange 5.5 organization. The user who is logged on must be in the group that was designated during forestprep and must have permissions on the Exchange 5.5 Organization, Site, and Configuration containers.
- ? Make sure that you can connect to all the Exchange 5.5 computers by using the Administrator program from the intended Exchange 2003 installation server, and then view the properties of the Exchange 5.5 servers.
- ? Remove the Administrator program from this server.
- ? Install Exchange 2003.

Conclusion

As you can see, it can be tricky to remove Exchange Server from your system, but it is possible.

I hope you never had to remove the excellent messaging system from your systems.

Related Links

How to Remove the First Exchange 2003 Server Computer from the Site

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;822931&Product=exch2003>

How to remove Exchange Server 2003 from your computer

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;833396&Product=exch2003>

How to completely remove Exchange 2000 or Exchange 2003 from Active Directory

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;273478&Product=exch2003>