

Agent for Open Files

Arcserve® Backup

18.0

arcserve®

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Arcserve Product References

This document references the following Arcserve products:

- Arcserve® Backup
- Arcserve® Unified Data Protection
- Arcserve® Unified Data Protection Agent for Windows
- Arcserve® Unified Data Protection Agent for Linux
- Arcserve® Replication and High Availability

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Arcserve Backup Documentation

Arcserve Backup documentation contains specific guides and release notes for all major releases and service packs. Click links below to access documentation.

- [Arcserve Backup 18.0 Release Notes](#)
- [Arcserve Backup 18.0 Bookshelf](#)

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Chapter 1: Introducing the Agent

Arcserve Backup is a comprehensive storage solution for applications, databases, distributed servers, and file systems. It provides backup and restore capabilities for databases, business-critical applications, and network clients.

- Back up all files safely and consistently, even when they are open and continually updated by applications.
- Continue working on critical files during a backup.
- Perform backups as they are needed.

This guide provides the information you need to configure and run the Agent for Open files (OFA), as well as troubleshooting advice.

This section contains the following topics:

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Licensing

There are two licensing methods that you can use to back up and restore open files.

- Install the Arcserve Backup Agent for Open Files on the client computer.
This method lets you protect open files using the Agent for Open Files and Microsoft Volume Shadow Copy Service. With this method, the Agent for Open Files license provides you with a 30-day trial period.
- Apply the license for the Arcserve Backup Agent for Open Files on the Arcserve Backup server (do not install the agent on the client computer).
This method lets you protect open files using Microsoft Volume Shadow Copy Service instead of the Agent for Open Files. This method does not provide you with a 30-day trial period.

If you are using an older version of the agent, then Arcserve Backup checks for the license on the computer where you installed the agent. For more information about licensing, see the [Administration Guide](#).

Note: If the license for the Arcserve Backup Agent for Open Files is not available on a backup node, the corresponding VSS writer will not be shown in the Source tab of the Backup Manager.

File Access Control

When an application opens a file, no other application can access it. As long as the file is open, it remains under the exclusive control of the application that opened it, and all other applications—even backup programs, which only need to read the file—are prevented from accessing the file.

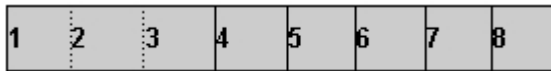
The Agent for Open files solves the access control problem. It recognizes file open requests from backup programs (or *backup clients*, as they are known to the agent) and allows them to be honored, even if they would normally conflict with operating system file access control. Additionally, the agent only honors file-open requests from backup clients, ensuring that all other applications continue to be subject to normal file access restrictions.

The Data Integrity Problem

To ensure data integrity, the backup copy of a file must be an exact image of the original at a given point in time. However, copying a file is not an instantaneous process. Unless the file is very small, the backup client must read from the file and write to the backup media several times to make a complete copy. If the backup client cannot ensure that no other application modifies the file while it is being copied, you may have a problem with the integrity of the data being copied.

Example: Copy eight successive read and write operations

This example illustrates the data integrity problem, where a file is copied by eight successive read and write operations.



The backup client copies each block in turn. Halfway through the backup, while block 4 is being copied, an application makes small changes to blocks 2 and 6, which together form a single transaction (a debit and a credit, for example). The backup captures the change to block 6, but not the change to block 2, since it has already been copied. The backup copy, therefore, contains a partial transaction that may render the backup useless, because the application that created the file will probably consider the file corrupt.

This is a common problem in database applications. Many users require simultaneous access to a particular file, and at the same time, a single transaction is likely to make a number of small changes in different places within the file, or even to a group of files.

File Synchronization

The Agent for Open files solves the data integrity problem by ensuring that when a backup client attempts to open a file, access is not granted until the agent is satisfied that the file is in a good state to be backed up. To do so, the agent does the following:

1. The agent searches for a period of time during which no applications are writing to the file. This period of time is known as the *Write Inactivity Period* and is typically set to five seconds.
2. After the Write Inactivity Period has been found, the agent establishes that the file is stable, and it allows the backup process to continue. The file is now *synchronized*.
3. After a file is synchronized, applications can write to the file, but the agent ensures that the backup client receives the file data as it was at the time of synchronization. To accomplish this, when an application attempts to write to a synchronized file, the agent creates a copy of the data that is about to be changed before allowing the write to occur. This private copy of the data, called the *preview data*, is sent to the backup client when the backup is made, ensuring that the file remains synchronized. Thus, applications can continue to write to synchronized files while a backup is taking place without jeopardizing the integrity of the file.
4. The agent also accumulates preview data if a file being backed up is opened by an application after the backup has started. In this situation, synchronization occurs at the point when the application opens the file.

Group Synchronization

Configure the agent to synchronize a number of files as a group. Group synchronization is useful for situations in which a single transaction can affect several files—for example, when working with a database. To preserve *transactional integrity* (a transaction is a set of procedures used to preserve database integrity), the agent does the following:

1. The agent applies the Write Inactivity Period to all the files in a group simultaneously. Only when all the files in the group have been inactive for this period does the agent synchronize the group, allowing the backup client to start copying the files.
2. When all the files have been backed up, the agent releases the group and discards any preview data.

Agent Components

The Agent for Open files consists of the following components:

The Console

Allows you to install, configure, and monitor the agent on one or more servers.

Windows Engine

Consists of a service and device driver executables, a client definition file, and a configuration file for Windows. This component requires a valid Arcserve license and is only installed on Windows computers.

Console

The Backup Agent for Open files (BAOF) Console is the user interface for the agent. It allows you to configure your backups and monitor the status of the servers where the Windows Engine has been installed. You can perform these tasks for all such servers from any computer running the console.

The Backup Agent for Open files Console also allows you to select either the Microsoft Volume Shadow Copy Service or Backup Agent for Open Files on servers on which the Windows Engine has been installed to back up open files.

Windows Engine

The Windows Engine is the software that enables Arcserve Backup to back up open files without conflicting with the operating system file access control on a computer running Windows. The Windows Engine does not have a user interface, so you cannot manage your servers from a computer with only the Windows Engine installed. You must use the Console to manage your servers.

Chapter 2: Installing the Agent

This chapter describes how to install and configure the Agent for Open files on Windows computers. You must be familiar with the characteristics and requirements including the administrator responsibilities on the specified operating systems.

This section contains the following topics:

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Installation Prerequisites

Before installing the Agent for Open files, verify the following prerequisites:

- Your system meets the software requirements needed to install the option.
For more information about these requirements, refer [compatibility matrix](#).
- You have administrative privileges or the proper authority to install software on the computers where you will be installing the agent.
- If you do not use the default installation path, make a note of the installation path you use for easy reference.

Agent Installation

The Agent for Open files follows the standard installation procedure for the system components, agents, and options of Arcserve Backup.

For more information about this procedure, see the [Implementation Guide](#).

You must install the Windows Engine on each Windows computer that has files to be backed up. Install the Backup Agent for Open files Console on a server or workstation on the network from which you will manage the backup and restoring of files.

Restart your computer after the installation is complete.

Note: Arcserve Backup Microsoft Volume Shadow Copy Service is automatically installed when you install the Agent for Open files.

Console and Windows Engine Installation

To install the console and Windows Engine, follow the standard installation procedure for the system components, agents, and options of Arcserve Backup.

For the detailed steps in this procedure, see the [Implementation Guide](#).

Uninstall the Agent

Use the following procedure to uninstall the agent.

To uninstall the Agent for Open files

1. Open the Windows Control Panel.
2. Double-click the Add or Remove Programs icon.
The Add or Remove Program dialog opens.
3. Select Arcserve Backup.
The Arcserve Backup Remove Application window opens.
4. Select Arcserve Backup Agent for Open Files, and then click Next.
Warning messages if any appear.
5. Click Next.

6. Select the Click this check box to confirm that you want to remove the specified components from your computer check box and then click Remove.

The agent is uninstalled and the updated list of Arcserve Backup components available on your server appears.

Chapter 3: Using the Agent

The following sections provide information about the console, procedures to configure the agent, view the agent status, and perform advanced configuration.

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Preliminary Considerations for Using the Agent

Install the Windows Engine on your server, to start using Arcserve Backup to back up open files. In most cases, you can use the agent quite effectively without any further configuration but to avoid possible problems, verify the following preliminary considerations:

- Ensure that the Windows Engine is running on the same server as the files you will be backing up. This is usually, but not always, the server on which you run Arcserve Backup. If you want the agent to operate on files located on more than one server, you must purchase and install a separate copy of the Windows Engine for each server.
- If Arcserve Backup runs on another server and executes a backup of any remote computers running the Windows Engine by using a network share, ensure that the remote server clients are enabled in the Agent for Open files configuration of the remote computer running the Windows Engine.
- If your backup program runs on another server, and uses a client agent to perform a backup of remote computers running the Windows Engine, you must ensure that the client agent is enabled in the Agent for Open files configuration of the target server.
- Configure the file groups. If you have an application that maintains a set of related files, such as a database manager or an email system, there is a possibility that you will need to set up one or more file groups.
- Configure VSS settings. On Windows Vista and newer operating systems, whether or not the global option **Use VSS** is enabled, all backups will use only VSS to back up open files. By default the Agent for Open Files will update the registry key on the agent machine to always use VSS to back up files.
- Use the Console for configuration. The Console does not need to be running for the agent to work on your server, but you do need it for configuration and status monitoring.

More information:

[Clients Tab](#)

[Group Synchronization](#)

[The Agent and VSS](#)

[Configure the Agent](#)

[Advanced Configuration](#)

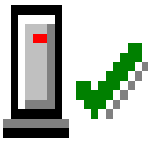
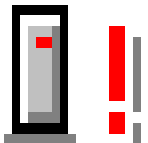
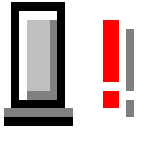
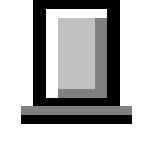
The Console

When you start the Console on your workstation, the main dialog opens. From this dialog, you can control and monitor Arcserve Backup on the selected computer.

The File Servers field lists the active Windows server that the agent found on your network. The Windows network is shown as a separate hierarchy that you can expand or collapse.

To add a specific computer to the console display, click Find and enter the name of the computer. To search your entire network, click Scan.

The following icons represent the state of the agent on each server:

Icon	Agent Status
	<p>The agent is running on this server; you can configure if you are logged in with administrator, backup operator, server operator, or supervisor rights. To view the agent status, double-click the entry.</p>
	<p>The agent is running on this server, but you can only view its status because you are not logged in as an administrator, backup operator, server operator, or supervisor. To log into the server, click Login. To view the agent status, double-click the entry.</p>
	<p>You are not logged into this server, so the Console cannot determine if the agent is running.</p>
	<p>The agent is not running on this server. The agent can be installed on this server, but a user might have temporarily suspended or unloaded the agent.</p>

Console Dialog

The Console buttons operate on specific servers. Select a server before using the Status, View Log, Configure, Login, or Install button.

File Servers

Lists the active Windows server that the agent found on your network. You can expand or collapse the Windows network hierarchy.

Scan (or F5)

Searches for active servers on your network and updates the File Servers list.

The Console only scans expanded branches of the network tree, it does not scan collapsed branches. When you expand a branch, the Console scans it and updates any newly added server. To do a full scan of the branch, expand the branch and click Scan.

Find

Locates a server. In the Find Server dialog, select the networks for to search, and specify the name of the server. You can include wildcard characters (* and ?) in the server name. More than one matching server may be found. The agent prompts you to log into the server if you do not have access rights.

- For Windows computers, you must log in using Windows Explorer.

Note:When using wildcard characters, you can only use those supported by the filesystem that owns the volume. Wildcard character behavior is controlled by the filesystem.

Login

Lets you log in to the selected computer. When you log in with administrator, backup operator, server operator, supervisor, or console operator rights, you can configure the server.

Note:If you are already logged in to the server with administrator or supervisor rights, this button is disabled.

Install

This option is not available for Windows servers.

Use Microsoft VSS for Open Files Backup

Open files will be backed up using Microsoft VSS based technology on the selected Windows computer. If you select this option, you will not be able to view

Agent for Open Files status, log files, and view or edit the Backup Agent for Open Files configuration.

Use BAOF for Open Files Backup

Open files will be backed up using Agent for Open Files on the selected Windows computer. If you select this option, the Status, View Log and Configure buttons will be enabled.

Status

Displays the Agent for Open files Status dialog and allows you to view the files and groups the agent is currently processing on the selected computer. You can double-click a server to go to the Agent for Open files Status dialog if the agent is running on that server and Agent for Open Files option is selected to back up open files.

View Log

Displays the Log File Viewer dialog and to see the log file for the selected computer.

Configure

Lets you configure the General tab of the agent Configuration window and set global settings for the agent on the selected computer.

More information:

[Servers Scan](#)

[Agent for Open files Status Dialog](#)

[Access Log File Viewer](#)

[Configure the Agent](#)

Configure the Agent

Use the Agent for Open files Configuration dialog to configure global settings on the selected computer.

To access the Agent for Open files Configuration dialog

1. Click Configure from the console.

Note: The Configure button will be enabled only if you configure the server to back up open files using Agent for Open files.

The Agent for Open files Configuration dialog appears.

For more information about the Backup Agent for Open files Console, see the section The Console.

2. Configure the global settings on the selected computer.

Note: This procedure is enabled only if you have installed the Agent for Open files Console on the same computer as the Arcserve Backup Manager.

3. On the Source tab, select a computer from the browser in the left pane.
4. From the Additional Information pane, click Configure Open File Agent.

The Agent for Open files Configuration dialog opens.

The following sections describe the options you set in the General, File/Group, and Clients tab of the dialog.

The General Tab

The General tab of the Agent for Open files Configuration dialog allows you to change the default settings for log files, timing, and free space.

Log Files Configuration

The agent keeps a record of its activity on the server in log files. The log file is updated in real-time and contains information about specific files and routine agent functions.

Use the Logfiles group to change the default settings for the Logfiles Directory, the maximum size of the log files, and the maximum number of log files.

Note: If Arcserve Backup Agent for Open Files and Arcserve Backup are installed on the same Windows server, real-time agent events are written to the Arcserve Backup activity log.

The following options are available in the Logfiles section of the General tab:

Directory

Defines the directory in which the agent places its log files. You must give the full path, including the volume or drive name.

Default

Windows:

C:\Program Files\CA\ARCserve Backup Agent for Open files\LOGS

Note: If you change the default path of the log, you must restart the Arcserve Universal Agent service (using either the Arcserve Server Admin option or the Windows Control Panel), or close the main window of Arcserve Backup Manager and open it again. Only then the Central Agent Admin gets the Open File Agent log files from the changed log path.

Maximum Size

Specifies the maximum size, in kilobytes, to which a log file can grow before the agent starts a new file.

Maximum Number

Specifies the maximum number of log files the agent can retain. After this number of log files has been reached, the agent automatically deletes the oldest log file and creates a new one.

Default Timing Configuration

Use the Default Timing section of the General tab to change the default settings for the Write Inactivity Period, the file/group sync timeout, and the group inactivity timeout. The agent uses these values for all open files on the selected server that belongs to the agent. If you specify non-default values for any of the files in the File/Group tab, those files do not use these settings.

The following options are available in the Default Timing section of the General tab:

Write Inactivity Period

The number of consecutive seconds that an open file must be inactive before the agent considers the file safe for backup. In the case of a group, the agent applies the Write Inactivity Period to every file in the group simultaneously before synchronizing the files in the group. The agent will continue to try to find a Write Inactivity Period of the indicated duration for each file or group until the File or Group Sync Timeout is exceeded. The default value is applied to all files unless modified by a specific entry in the File/Group tab of the Configuration dialog.

Default NSS Write Inactivity Period (NSS Volumes Only)

The period, specified in seconds, that the agent waits to determine if it is safe to create the NSS snapshot volume from which a backup client can access the files. The agent continues to try to establish an inactivity period of the required duration until the NSS Sync Timeout is exceeded.

File/Group Sync Timeout

The number of consecutive seconds that the agent continues attempting to determine if a file, or group of files, is inactive (as defined by the Write Inactivity Period). If the timeout expires before it finds a safe time, the agent rejects the open request from the backup client.

Default NSS Sync Timeout (NSS Volumes only)

The period, specified in seconds, that the agent waits before it stops trying to find a safe time to create the NSS snapshot volume. If the timeout expires without finding a safe time, the agent does not create the NSS snapshot volume. In this case, the backup client can either fail the backup, or it can access the files from the original volume but without access to any open files.

Group Inactivity Timeout

The period the agent waits to determine when to close an open group if the backup client has not processed all of the files in the group, but none of the files is currently open.

If this activity times out, it is noted in the log, the group is closed automatically, and the preview data is discarded. You should set this parameter to at least the time normally taken for the client to perform a complete backup run. The default value is applied to all new groups you add using the File/Group tab of the Configuration dialog.

For example, if there are five files in a group and you set the Group Inactivity Timeout to two hours, a timeout occurs if the backup client takes more than two hours between finishing the backup of file 4 and opening file 5. This can happen for a number of reasons, such as those listed below:

- The files are in different volumes.
- The drive has run out of media.
- The backup is aborted.

Data Volume Preview

The Minimum Free Space Value specifies the minimum amount of free space that must exist on the selected computer's preview data volume for the agent to function.

The following option is available in the Preview Data Volume section of the General tab:

Minimum Free Space

The agent requires a certain amount of free space in which to create temporary preview file data (the data that is accumulated for open files when applications make changes while the backup client is active).

- ◆ If there is insufficient free space, the agent prevents the backup client from opening any new files, and fails any ongoing client operations.
- ◆ When sufficient free space becomes available, the agent automatically resumes its activities.

More information:

[Change the Preview Data Volume](#)

The File/Group Tab

Use the File/Group tab to configure files and groups of files to have non-default timing values.

For more information on Groups, see Group Synchronization.

The files list displays the files and groups that you have selected for non-default settings. A file specification appears if the agent is handling it in a non-default way. If a file does not appear in the list, the agent handles it using the default settings.

Each file specification consists of either a single file or directory name, or a wildcard defining a range of files in a single directory. The order of the entries is important, particularly if wildcards are used, because it determines the order in which the agent performs its checks for processing eligibility.

Note: When using wildcard characters, you may only use those supported by the file system that owns the volume. Wildcard character behavior is controlled by the file system.

To edit a group or file specification, double-click on a group or file.

The New Non-Group File icon is a special entry to enable a new file to be added. Select the icon and click New File to add a file that is not part of a group. The remaining controls in the Files tab of the Configuration window (with the exception of New Group) all operate on the file or group currently selected in the file list.

Note: If you want to add all files under a root volume to the Agent for Open Files configuration, you must use wildcards as shown in the following example: Use: C:*.*. Specifying only the volume label is not supported.

More information:

[Default Timing Configuration](#)

New Group Addition

Groups are useful when a single transaction can affect several files; for example, when working with a database.

To add a group, file, or directory

- To add a new group to your agent configuration, click New Group.
You must provide a unique name for the group.
- To add a new file or directory to an existing group, select the group in the file list, and then click New File.
- To add a new file or directory that will not be part of a group, highlight the (New Non-Group File) icon in the Files list, and then click New File.

New File Addition

The New File or Directory dialog has the following fields:

File Namespace

Defines the namespace for the new file or directory name in the File Namespace list. File servers normally support a number of different file systems, corresponding to different client operating systems. Each different system of file naming is known as a *namespace*, which embodies all of the conventions for file naming, wildcard symbols, and so on.

File Name

Specifies the full path of the file or directory to be added.

In the DOS namespace, you can also use wildcards such as “?” or “*” to include some or all files in a directory.

Example: Paths

Windows:

C:\ACCOUNTS\2002\DATA.DBS
C:\ACCOUNTS\2002\DATA.*
C:\ACCOUNTS\2002*

Macintosh

SYS:folder1:folder2:filename

When defining file names for the Macintosh namespace, use the colon character (:) as the path separator, and not the backslash (\) or slash (/) used in other namespaces.

Note: Wildcards are not available in the Macintosh namespace.

Browse

Lets you browse for files and directories using the Add Files and Directories dialog.

More information:

[Add Files and Directories](#)

Delete Files or Groups

Click Delete to remove the selected file or group on the File/Group tab. You will be prompted to confirm the deletion.

Add Files and Directories

Use the Add Files and Directories dialog to add or remove files or directories by browsing your computer's volumes.

The Add Files and Directories dialog contains the following fields:

Volumes

Displays the volumes or drives available on the selected server. When you select the name of a volume or drive, the Directories list and the Files list are updated.

Directories

Displays the directory tree for the volume or drive currently selected in the Volumes list. Double-click a directory name to expand the subtree and display its contents in the Files list. A yellow folder icon identifies directories that have already been added.

Files

Displays the files in the directory currently selected in the Directories list. Double-click the name of a file, or click Add, to add a file either to the currently selected group or as a nongroup item. A yellow file icon identifies files that have already been added.

Add

Adds the current selection either to the current group, or as a non-group item. You can add more than one file or directory at a time. Select all the files or directories you require and click Add. To select multiple files, either drag your mouse over them, or click each name while holding the CTRL key down.

Note:Subdirectories are not included when you add a folder.

Remove

Removes the current selection either from the current group or as a non-group item. To remove a file that was previously added, double-click its name, or click Remove.

Sync Method Options

The File/Group tab provides access to the Sync Method options. Use these to specify how the agent detects if an open file is ready to be backed up by the backup client.

The Sync Method section contains the following options:

Write Inactivity

Selects Write Inactivity as the method to use to check if a file is in a safe state to be backed up. If no write activity occurs on a file for the number of seconds specified by the Write Inactivity Period, the agent considers the file to be in a safe state to be backed up.

If write activity does occur during this period, the agent again begins looking for a safe period for a backup, as defined by the Write Inactivity Period, until the File/Group Sync Timeout is exceeded.

For more information, see [Group Synchronization](#).

Note:This is the only synchronization method available for Windows-based computers.

Ignore (No BAOF Operation)

Processes a file or group as though the agent were not present.

- If this option is set on a file (either a single file or a file within a group), the agent does not try to synchronize the file if it is open when the backup client tries to back it up.
- If this option is set on a group, the agent still attempts to synchronize the files in the group, but does so as if the group definition were not present. That is, if one of the files in the group cannot be synchronized, the rest of the files can still be backed up.

For example, consider a group that consists of the following files:

C:\Arcserve SRM\Database\index1.dat

C:\Arcserve SRM\Database\index2.dat

C:\Arcserve SRM\Database\data.dat

If you set the Ignore (No BAOF Operation) option on this group, and if index2.dat cannot be synchronized, index1.dat and data.dat are still backed up, assuming that the agent could synchronize them.

More information:

[File Synchronization](#)

Timing Options

The Timing options let you configure non-default timeout values for individual files and groups.

Note: To reset any of the three Timing fields to its default value, double-click the setting, or press Ctrl+D.

The Timing section contains the following options:

Write Inactivity Period

Specifies the number of consecutive seconds that an open file must be inactive before the agent considers the file safe for backup.

- In the case of a group, the agent applies the Write Inactivity Period to every file in the group simultaneously before synchronizing the files in the group.
- The agent will continue to try to find a Write Inactivity Period of the indicated duration for each file or group until the File or Group Sync Timeout is exceeded.

Note:The Write Inactivity Period applies only if you select the Auto Sense or Write Inactivity method.

For example, if the Write Inactivity Period is set to five seconds, and no write activity occurs on a file for five seconds, the agent determines that it is safe for a backup client to back up the file.

File Sync Timeout or Group Sync Timeout

Specifies the number of consecutive seconds that the agent continues attempting to determine if a file, or group of files, is inactive (as defined by the Write Inactivity Period).

- After this period is exceeded, the agent stops trying to find a safe time to allow the backup client access to the file or group.
- If the timeout expires without a safe time having been found, the agent rejects the open request from the backup client.

Note:The name of this field changes depending upon your selection. If you select a file in the File list, it is called File Sync Timeout; if you select a group, it is called Group Sync Timeout.

For example, if the File/Group Sync Timeout is set to 60 seconds, the agent tries to find a Write Inactivity Period for the file or group for 60

seconds. If the agent cannot find a Write Inactivity Period within this time, the agent rejects the request for the file or group.

Group Inactivity Timeout

Specifies the number of consecutive seconds in a backup process during which the backup client can fail to back up additional files in the group. If this period is exceeded, the agent closes the group and stops the group backup. The timeout is noted in the log and the agent discards preview data.

You should set this to the lowest time value normally taken for your backup client to perform a complete backup. The default timeout is applied to all new groups added using the Files/Group tab of the Configuration dialog; those groups given a different, non-default Group Inactivity Timeout in the File/Group tab do not use this value.

Clients Tab

Use the Clients tab in the Configuration dialog to enable, disable, and configure backup clients on the selected computer.

Note: Whenever you disable or enable the Arcserve Client Agent for Arcserve Backup, you should also disable or enable the Arcserve Client Agent for Arcserve Helper service.

For information about configuring remote servers, see the section Advanced Configuration.

The following options are available in the Clients tab:

Clients

Displays all the backup clients supported by the agent. A green tick mark appears next to a client if it is enabled.

Client Disabled

Disables the selected backup client. When a client is disabled, the agent prevents it from accessing open files.

This field is currently disabled. This behavior is now controlled by the backup server.

Login Name

Specifies the name to be associated with the selected login based client. The agent recognizes workstation-based backup clients and remote server-based clients, by associating particular login names with them. This field is currently disabled.

Note: If a client does not require a login name, you must disable this field for that client.

Important! This name must be reserved for use only by the client when performing backups. Other file activity under the same name causes unnecessary agent activity, which interferes with its correct functioning. Do not use "Admin," "Administrator" or any other name that is easy to guess as the login name.

User and Group (Windows only)

Determines whether the login name is a user or belongs to a group.

- When you select User, the current login-based client is recognized only when file activity originates from the user specified in

the Login Name field.

- When you select Group, the current login-based client is recognized when file activity originates from any user belonging to the group specified in the Login Name field.

Enable Extended Features

Sends logging information and alerts to the Arcserve Backup event system. You can do this only if you are using Arcserve Backup as your backup client and have not enabled extended features for any other entries in the Client list, except for remote clients. If you select the option while other clients are selected, you are asked if you want to disable them.

Note: The agent can only send information to the local Arcserve Backup server when both, the Arcserve Backup server and the agent are installed on the same computer.

Advanced Configuration

The following sections provide information about advanced configuration changes. In most cases, you will not need to modify the way you use your backup program. However, in one or two cases, small configuration changes may be necessary.

Login Name Configuration for Remote Backup Programs

Backup applications that log in to a server, either from a workstation or from another server, must have a login name configured. This does not include backup applications that use remote agents such as Push Agents. If your backup application is not of this type, leave the corresponding client entries disabled.

Example: Login name configuration

To set the login name using Arcserve Backup

1. Open the Backup Manager and go to the Source tab.
2. Right-click the server for which you want to configure the login name, and then select Security from the pop-up menu.
3. Enter a login name and password.
 - ◆ If the login name is the same name configured on the client workstation, you can successfully log in.
 - ◆ If it is not the same name configured on the client workstation, update the login information.

More information:

[Clients Tab](#)

Retry Mechanisms

Some backup programs try to gain access to open files by attempting a series of open requests, so that one of the attempts in the series might succeed. This method of backing up open files can only be partially successful, and it is rendered obsolete by the ability of the agent to obtain unconditional access to open files. You should, therefore, disable any such retry mechanisms in your backup program.

For example, if you are using Arcserve Backup, ensure that you disable the Retry Immediately and Retry After Job options in the Open File Retry Options area of the Global Options dialog.

Note: The agent does not provide the eTrust® Real-Time scan engine with access to open files. This is to prevent a virus from potentially hiding itself, by presenting the scan engine with a version of the infected file concealed as an uninfected file.

File Write Cache

Some application programs have the ability to cache file writes on the workstation on which they are run. Therefore, a backup program on the server is not guaranteed to see an up-to-date view of the file. This can lead to data integrity problems. This problem is not created by the agent, but may arise as a result of using the agent, since you can now, for the first time, back up such files while they are in use.

The best solution is to configure the application, if possible, to prevent write caching.

Example: prevent write caching

In Microsoft Access, ensure that your database does not have the *exclusive* attribute.

Renamed or Deleted Files

If an application tries to rename or delete a file while the client is backing it up, the agent delays the rename or delete request for a period up to the File Sync Timeout setting for the file. If the client is still backing up the file when the timeout expires, the agent passes the rename or delete request on to the server operating system, which may fail it with a File In Use error.

Files that are part of an active agent group can give rise to warning messages in the log file when they are renamed or deleted.

Files that are frequently renamed or deleted are typically text, spreadsheet or similar files of relatively small size, which are backed up before the timeout expires.

Servers Scan

The first time the agent starts, it displays only your local computer in the File Servers list. When you run the agent subsequently, it displays all the computers found in all previous scans. You must expand any collapsed network branches to see these computers.

- In the File Servers list, when you expand a collapsed network branch (such as Microsoft Windows Network or a workgroup or domain name), the agent displays any servers already known to exist in that branch.
- If no servers are known to exist in the branch, the agent automatically performs a scan as soon as you expand it.
- If you double-click the name of a server whose status indicates that it is not running the agent, that server is re-scanned to update its status, if necessary.

To force the agent to re-scan all expanded components of the network hierarchy, click Scan.

If the Console encounters more than 200 servers when scanning, it terminates the scan and reports only those servers in the recently-used list. The agent then prompts you to use Find to locate the server you want.

More information:

[The Console](#)

Change the Preview Data Volume

In some circumstances, you might need to move the preview data generated by the agent to a different disk volume—for example, if the volume on which the preview data is stored is too small. The default volume for Windows is the volume on which the agent was installed.

To change the preview data volume

1. Check that no backup sessions are in progress by entering the following command for Windows:

```
NET STOP OPENFILEAGENT
```

The agent closes.

2. Use a text editor and open the agent's configuration file, OFANT.CFG.

By default, the agent is located in the following directory:

```
C:\Program Files\CA\ARCserve Backup Agent for Open files
```

3. Add a new line to the section that starts with [General]. If the section does not exist, you can create it.

```
[General]
```

```
PreviewDataVolume = x
```

Note: Substitute x with the desired volume identifier.

4. Save the changes to the configuration file.
5. Restart the agent using the following command for Windows:

```
NET START OPENFILEAGENT
```

The preview data volume is changed.

More information:

[Data Volume Preview](#)

Agent Status

This section describes how you can check the agent for Windows servers using the Agent for Open Files Status dialog.

Agent Status on a Windows Server

The Agent for Open files Status button is enabled only if you configure Agent for Open files to back up open files on the server. This button is disabled when you configure Agent for Open files to back up open files using Microsoft VSS.

To view the Agent for Open files Status on a Windows server

1. Open the Backup Manager.
2. Select a computer in the Source tab.
3. Right-click the computer that has Windows Engine installed and select View Agent for Open Files Status from the pop-up menu.

The BAOF Status for Server (name) dialog opens.

You can also select this option from the Additional Information pane on the Backup Manager.

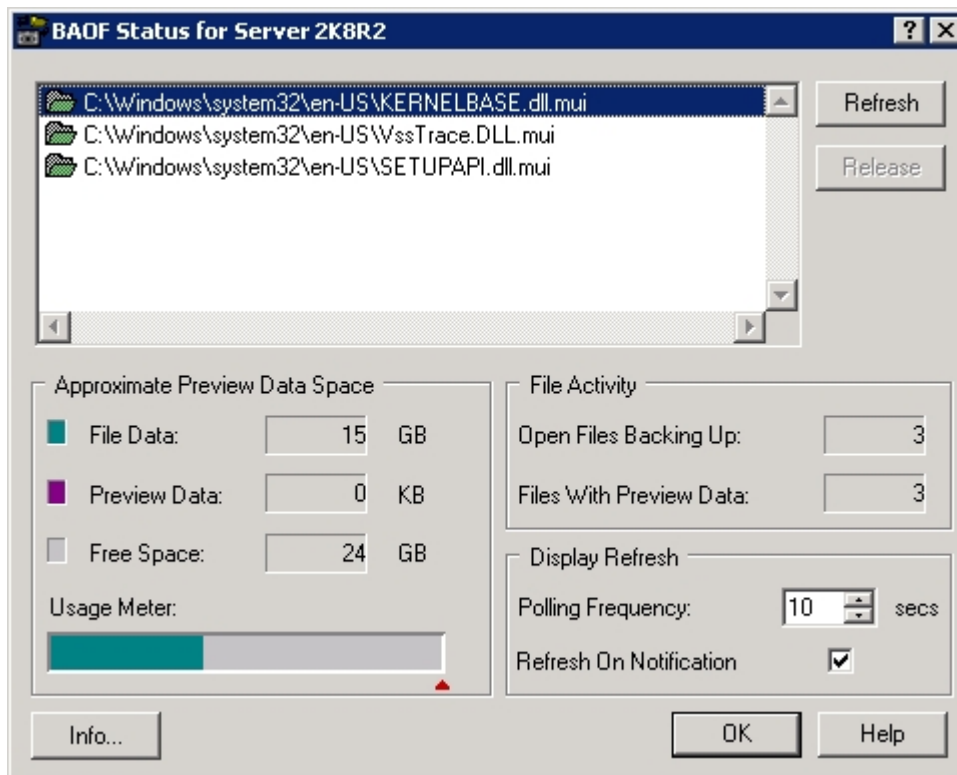
Note: The option is enabled only if the Agent for Open files Console and Arcserve Backup Manager are installed on the same computer.

To access the BAOF Status for Server (name) dialog from the console, select a server from the File Servers list, and then click Status.


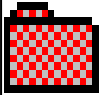
Agent for Open files Status Dialog

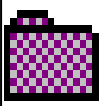
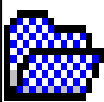
The Agent for Open files Status dialog shows the files and groups currently being processed by the agent on the selected computer.

- The list displays a file if the file is currently open or waiting to be opened by the agent.
- The list displays a group if the group contains open files or files waiting to be opened.



The following table shows the icons next to each file name or group name, and indicates the status of that file or group.

File	Status
 Green	The file is open and the agent is using it.
 Red	The file is waiting for the agent to open it. The file will not be opened until it is in a safe state for backup as determined by timeout values.

	This synchronized file is part of an open group and has preview data, which the agent is retaining. The preview data is retained until the group closes.
Purple	
	This group contains at least one open or waiting file. The dialog also shows the total number of files from the group that has been processed (including currently open files) and the total number of files remaining to be processed.
Blue	

Note: The Agent for Open files Status dialog displays an alert if the agent becomes disabled. The agent is disabled if there is insufficient free space on the server's preview data volume or if a license violation occurs, for example. The alert closes when the error condition is corrected.

The following options are available in the dialog:

Refresh

Refreshes or updates the information in the Agent for Open files Status dialog.

Release

Cancels the synchronization request for a file or to close an open group after selecting an entry in the Agent for Open files Status dialog. You should do this only when you think the file or group is no longer being processed by the backup client.

Note: The Release option is available only if you have administrator rights.

Preview Data Volume Space

The following list explains the fields in the Approximate Preview Data Space dialog:

File Data

Displays the amount of space in use on the selected computer's preview data volume, excluding the temporary file data used by the agent. This is indicated in green on the Usage Meter.

Preview Data

Displays the amount of temporary file data the agent is currently holding on the selected computer's preview data volume. The agent makes a temporary copy of those portions of files that are changed by an application while they are open for backup by a client. This is indicated in purple on the Usage Meter.

Free Space

Displays the amount of free space on the selected computer's preview data volume. This is indicated in gray on the Usage Meter.

Usage Meter

Graphically illustrates the current usage of space on the selected computer. A red triangle indicates the current setting of the Minimum Free Space threshold, below which the agent suspends activity. You can set this value in the General tab of the Configuration window. Green indicates File Data; purple indicates Preview Data; and gray indicates Free Space on the server's preview data volume.

File Activity

The File Activity section of the Agent for Open files Status dialog displays real-time information about the files that are currently used by the agent.

The File Activity section contains the following fields:

Open Files Backing Up

Displays the number of open files that the agent is currently backing up.

Files With Preview Data

Displays the number of files currently with the agent and in use by an application. These files may have temporary preview data held by the agent.

Display Refresh

The Display Refresh section of the Agent for Open files Status dialog lets you set notification options for the agent.

The following fields are available in this section:

Polling Frequency

Specifies the frequency, in seconds, with which the status display is updated. Saved from one run of the Console to the next.

Refresh on Notification

Updates the display whenever there is a change in the status of the agent. This option is independent of the Polling Frequency setting.

Access Log File Viewer

You can access the Agent for Open files Log File Viewer from the Backup Manager.

To access the Agent for Open files Log File Viewer

1. Select a computer from the browser in the left pane of the Source tab.
2. Right-click the computer that has the Windows Engine installed and select View Agent for Open Files Log File from the pop-up menu.

The agent log files on the selected computer are displayed.

You can also select this option from the Additional Information pane on the Backup Manager. This option is enabled only if the Agent for Open files Console and Arcserve Backup Manager are installed on the same computer.

To access the BAOF Log File Viewer for Server (name) from the console, select a server from the File Servers list and click View Log.

Note: The View Log button is enabled only if you configure Agent for Open files to backup open files.

Log File Viewer

The Agent for Open files Log File Viewer displays log file information. The Viewer selects the most recent log file by default. The Logfile field displays the full name of the log file you are currently viewing.

Each log file is shown as a range of dates and times. You can scroll forward and backward through the entries. You can also select multiple files from the list and copy them to a clipboard or any text editor.

Note: The date is displayed in the format yyyy/mm/dd.

Each entry in the log shows the agent's activity with respect to a single file or group of files.

If you are viewing the currently active log file on a Windows server, you can see agent events in real time simply by scrolling to the end of the log file. New entries appear automatically as they are generated by the server.

Note: If the Agent for Open files and Arcserve Backup are installed on the same Windows server, real-time agent events are written to the Arcserve Backup activity log.

Chapter 4: Best Practices

This chapter provides information about making the best use of the agent and Microsoft's Volume Shadow Copy Service (VSS) to handle the backup of open files. It gives a comparison of the agent with the VSS feature and provides specific recommendations for their use in backup jobs.

This section contains the following topics:

The Agent and VSS	64
Using the Agent to Handle Open Files	65
Backing up a Small Amount of Data on a Large Volume	66

The Agent and VSS

Open files can cause significant problems when backing up data. Arcserve Backup provides two solutions for dealing with open files:

- Agent for Open files
- Support for VSS

VSS works with Arcserve Backup and VSS-aware applications and services to create shadow copies of the volumes on your computer. A shadow copy is a frozen view (a snapshot) of a volume's file system; it resides on a volume separate from the one that was copied. The shadow copy serves as the source for the backup after it is created.

Using the Agent to Handle Open Files

Use the agent to back up files in the following scenarios:

- When you are backing up small amounts of data on a large volume
- When you are backing up files on a volume that has high utilization
- When you are backing up files that are not supported by a Writer (A Writer is an application that is aware of VSS.)

More information:

[Introducing the Agent](#)

Backing up a Small Amount of Data on a Large Volume

The agent operates on a per-file basis. This means that each open file is processed as it is encountered. By contrast, VSS operates on a per-volume basis, which means that VSS must prepare the entire volume for the backup job before the backup job can begin. With this in mind, consider a backup consisting of 10 gigabytes of critical database files that reside on a 120 gigabyte hard disk.

- Using VSS, a snapshot of the entire 120 gigabyte volume must be taken, and each Writer with data on that volume must prepare its files (both open and closed) before the backup job can begin.
- Using the agent, if the files to be backed up are closed when the request for the backup is made, the backup can begin immediately. If there are any open files, the agent synchronizes them and allows Arcserve Backup to back them up.

For these reasons, when you are backing up a small amount of data (relative to the size of the volume on which it resides), using the agent to handle open files results in a much faster backup.

Backing up Files that are Not Supported by a Writer

The agent operates independent of other applications. The agent for Arcserve Backup backs up open files without disturbing an application; an application can write to its files when a backup job is running without having to communicate with the agent at all.

- When backing up open files, VSS relies on VSS-aware applications, known as *Writers*, to prepare their associated files for backup. For example, the Microsoft Exchange Writer is responsible for preparing Microsoft Exchange files.
- If there is no Writer available for a certain application, any open files of that type are not reliably backed up.

Using the agent for backing up is the only way to guarantee that all open files, including those that are not associated with a Writer, will be reliably backed up. If open files that are not associated with a Writer are backed up using VSS, there is no guarantee of transactional integrity and you will run the risk of invalidating the entire backup.

Using VSS to Handle Open Files

VSS technology is best used when the files you are backing up are associated with a Writer. Because of the way in which Writers communicate with their applications and the application's files, VSS is able to obtain an in-depth knowledge of the transactional behavior of a Writer's files. In a situation where file activity is very high, the agent may take much longer than VSS to find a transactionally safe period to back up the open files.

VSS support is enhanced on Microsoft Windows Vista and other new operating systems. It is recommended that you use VSS on Microsoft Windows Vista and Microsoft Windows Server 2008, to backup open files.

For more information on how VSS works, see *Arcserve Backup for Windows Microsoft Volume Shadow Copy Service Guide*.

Chapter 5: Troubleshooting

This section contains the following topics:

Common Problems	70
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Common Problems

This section describes some common problems that you may encounter.

Install the agent on a compressed drive

Cannot install the agent on a compressed drive

Symptom

Installing the agent on a compressed drive, partition, or directory may cause data corruption.

Solution

If you must use compressed storage, store the Preview Data volume in an uncompressed location to prevent data corruption.

More information:

[Change the Preview Data Volume](#)

Unable to Access the Agent Using the Console

Unable to Access the Agent Using the Console

Symptom

You are unable to access the Windows Engine on your server using the Backup Agent for Open files Console on your workstation.

Solution

If you encounter this problem, you must:

- ◆ Check that the Windows Engine is properly installed and running on the server.
- ◆ Check if you can view the server from Windows Explorer on your workstation. If not, a problem may exist in your network hardware or software configuration.
- ◆ If a server is displayed in Windows Explorer but does not appear in the File Servers list on the console, check if you are scanning the network properly. Verify if you have at least Guest access to the server.

If the server appears in the File Servers list but you cannot configure the agent on it, you may not be logged in to the server with sufficient rights.

More information:

[Servers Scan](#)

Cannot access agent on my server when using the Console

Cannot Access the Agent on my server when using the Console on the Workstation

Symptom

Any or all of the following:

- The file is not listed in the log.
- The log shows Unable to Sync File/Group Filename.

Solution

Use the console to check the agent log file to identify the server that is storing the skipped files. Each time Arcserve Backup accesses an open file, an entry is made in the log.

- ◆ If the file is not listed in the log, the agent has not recognized the client.
- ◆ If the log shows Unable to Sync File/Group Filename, the agent could not find a time when the file or group was in a consistent state to be backed up. Try increasing the value of File Sync Timeout or reducing the value of Write Inactivity Period. Make sure that the timers are set with enough time to ensure transactional integrity.
- ◆ If the file is not part of a group, you can create an entry for the file in the File/Group tab of the Configuration dialog rather than change the default values in the General tab.

More information:

[Clients Tab](#)

Network Scan Takes Too Long

Network Scan Takes Too Long

Symptom

The agent takes an extremely long time to scan the Microsoft network.

Solution

This can happen if the files you are copying are held locally in a cache on your workstation.

Note: This is the cache used by the network client software, and is not related to local disk caching, for example, by SMARTDRIVE. In these circumstances, the agent, on the server, never sees you access the files on your workstation, and cannot tell when to close the group.

You can prevent this from happening if you ensure that you only access the files once. This forces the workstation to get the file data from the server, allowing the agent to function properly. If you were to access the files a second time, there is a good chance that the data would be obtained from the cache.

More information:

[Servers Scan](#)

Insufficient Rights to Display File Name

Insufficient Rights to Display File Name message

Symptom

File names do not display.

Solution

To view file names on the BAOF Status dialog, log in to the server with administrator, backup operator, server operator, supervisor, or console operator rights. The system security only identifies file names you have on one of these levels of access.

Note: You can still view synchronization status and group information, including group names and progress information, even if you are not logged in to the server with administrator, backup operator, server operator, supervisor, or console operator rights.

More information:

[Advanced Configuration](#)

Arcserve Backup Loses Its Connection to a Remote System

Arcserve Backup Loses Its Connection to a Remote System

Symptom

Arcserve Backup sometimes loses connection to a remote system while executing a backup job.

Solution

If a file on the remote system being backed up takes a long time to synchronize—for example, if it is written to continuously by an application—the host system (the one on which you are running Arcserve Backup) can time out, leading to a lost connection.

There are two possible solutions:

- Reduce the File Sync Timeout period to 40 seconds to increase the chances that the file will be synchronized.
- If this is not possible, increase the session timeout on the host system, as follows:
 - From the Windows Start menu, click Run. Enter REGEDIT, and click OK. The Registry Editor opens.
 - Locate the following registry key:
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE/System/CurrentControlSet/Services/LanmanWorkstation/Parameters
 - Set the value of SessTimeout to be greater than the File Sync Timeout.

For example, if File Sync Timeout is set to 60 seconds, set SessTimeout to 70 seconds. If SessTimeout does not exist, create it as a new REG_DWORD value.

Important! Be very careful when editing the Windows Registry. Incorrectly modifying registry settings can cause your system to become unstable. For assistance, contact Arcserve Support at <https://www.arcserve.com/support>.

Windows Computer Stops Responding When Many Files Are Open During a Backup Job

Windows Computer Stops Responding When Many Files Are Open During a Backup Job

Symptom

Your Windows computer stops responding when many files are open during an Arcserve Backup job.

Solution

When a computer running Windows has many files open that are frequently being written to and a backup job is requested, the agent may require a large amount of disk space to store the file preview data. By default, preview data is stored on the C:\ drive. Thus, if the disk usage gets to be too high, your system can stop responding.

To solve this problem, reconfigure the agent to store the preview data on a different drive. For instructions on how to change the drive on which the preview data is stored, see [Change the Preview Data Volume](#).

Backup seems to pause

Backup seem to pause for a while

Symptom

When Arcserve Backup tries to copy an open file, the agent holds the request until it has established that the file is in a good state for backup. Because of the Write Inactivity period, this can take a few seconds. The backup continues automatically once the file or group is synchronized or when the File/Group Sync Timeout has expired.

Solution

None

File groups stay open after backup has finished

File groups stay open after backup has finished

Symptom

If you are performing an incremental or differential backup, some files are not backed up because they have not changed. If these files are in a group, the agent does not close the group because Arcserve Backup did not access all the files. This is not harmful, and the group closes automatically when the Group Inactivity Timeout expires.

Solution

To force the group to close, click Release in the Agent for Open files Status dialog.

Agent does not recognize file name for Macintosh namespace

Agent does not recognize the file name for Macintosh namespace

Symptom

The backslash (\) or slash (/) characters used in other namespaces are not valid path separators on the Macintosh.

Solution

Ensure to use the colon (:) character as the path separator when using the Macintosh namespace.

The following illustrates a valid Macintosh namespace:

SYS:folder1:folder2:filename

Note: Wildcards are not available in the Macintosh namespace.

Files belonging to my backup problem could not be synchronized

Files belonging to my backup program were not synchronized

Symptom

Your backup program probably maintains its own database and log files containing information about backups, media, and so on. It probably uses these files quite often, and this activity can be sufficient to prevent the agent from synchronizing the files during backup.

Solution

To solve this problem, define a group containing all these files and configure the agent to ignore these files. (These files typically occupy only one or two directories.) To do this, go to the File/Group tab of the Configuration dialog and select the Ignore (No Arcserve Backup Agent for Open files Operation) option for each file specification within the group.

Important! Do not select the Ignore (No BAOF Operation) option at the group level. Setting this option at the group level does not stop the agent from backing up the files in the group; it only makes the agent function as though the files were not part of the group.

Open Files Status dialog appears to be corrupted

Agent for Open files Status dialog appear to be corrupted

Symptom

Some of the techniques the agent uses in the server display cannot be replicated by RCONSOLE and this causes blinking and incorrect formatting of the remote display. Operation is unaffected and it is safe to use RCONSOLE with the agent.

Solution

If you use RCONSOLE frequently, you can disable the graphic display and use a conventional text format. To do this, add the -v switch when loading the agent:

```
LOAD OFA -v
```

When using workstation as a backup client to copy files, groups do not always close

When using workstation as a backup client to copy files, groups do not always close

Symptom

This can happen if the files you are copying are held locally in a cache on your workstation. In these circumstances, the agent on the server does not know when you access the files on your workstation and cannot tell when to close the group.

Note: This is a cache used by the network client software and is not related to local disk caching (for example, the kind of caching done by SMARTDRIVE).

Solution

To prevent this from happening, ensure that you only access the files once. This forces the workstation to get the file data from the server, allowing the agent to function properly. If you were to access the files a second time, there is a good chance that the data will be obtained from the cache.

When agent synchronizes a group it does not wait for the entire Write Inactivity Period

When agent synchronizes a group, it does not wait for the Write Inactivity Period

Symptom

Under Windows, the agent is able to determine accurately when a file was last modified. When it needs to synchronize a group, it may find that none of the files in the group have been modified for a period equal to or exceeding the Write Inactivity Period so that it can synchronize the group immediately.

Solution

None.

A backup job fails with license errors when backing up open files on a virtual machine

A backup job fails with license errors when backing up open files on a virtual machine.

Symptom

A backup job fails with license errors when backing up open files on a virtual machine.

Solution

Verify if you have the following items installed on the virtual machine:

- A valid license for the Agent for Open Files on Windows, or a valid license for the Agent for Open Files for Virtual Machines on Windows
- VMware tools

If you do not have these items, install them and then resubmit the backup job.

Cannot see Agent for Open Files menu items

Valid on Windows XP, Windows Vista, and Windows 7

Symptom

Any or all of the following:

- I cannot see the menu items for the Agent for Open Files in the Source tab of the Backup Manager.
- When I add a server from the Console using the Find button, the operation fails and the message, “Unable to locate the specified file server” appears.

Solution

Verify if you have turned on the Windows firewall. If you have turned it on, add Netlogon Service to the Windows firewall exception list.

Cannot Log into the Agent from the Backup Manager

Valid on Windows XP, Windows 7, and Windows 8 platforms.

Symptom

When you try to view the node from the Backup Manager, you cannot view the following items (properties):

- Configure Agent for Open Files
- View Agent for Open File Status
- View Agent for Open File Log Files

Solution

This behavior occurs because the user account that was used to log in to the node does not possess the credentials that are required to establish a remote connection to the node. To correct this behavior, try to access the administrative shares, such as \\Node\C\$, and then correct the issues related to security policies and user credentials that prevent you from accessing the shares from a remote location. After the issues related to security policies and user credentials are updated, you should be able to log in to the node successfully and view the items listed under Symptoms.

Chapter 6: Glossary

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write inactivity period

Write inactivity period is a period of time during which no applications are writing to an open file.

preview data

Preview data is a copy of an open file, which is created during the write inactivity period, and sent to the backup agent to be backed up.

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