

newsletter



PGCG

Pretty Good Consulting Group

Got a problem? We create solutions.

EOM News and Views
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Running EOM as a desktop application

We give up. Some customers just do not like Windows services, but there is still a way to use EOM!

Sometimes you cannot fight City Hall, nor paying customers. Ever since the EOM architecture changed from a Windows GUI application to the current Windows client-service design there has been minor grumbling and reluctance from some customers to use EOM as a Windows service. There are a variety of reasons for this reluctance, usually related to additional work required to control and manage Windows usercodes & passwords for both the EOM service and Security Roles. Well fine, there is solution but it is not as elegant as running EOM as a Windows service (sniff).

EOM 7.0, 7.1, and 8.0 are released with a utility named `EOMDeskTopAgent.exe` which simply runs the EOM service code as if it were executing on the Windows desktop. This utility can be found in the `../bin` subdirectory where EOM is installed.

For EOM 8.0 users it can be started via Start / Programs / Unisys Enterprise Output Manager / Tools / Output Manager Desktop Agent. Keep in mind that you still must run the EOM Client program to configure and "see" what EOM is doing.

Before using the desktop agent make sure you stop the EOM Service and set the service "Startup Type" to Manual or Disabled. When executed, the only visible clue that the desktop agent is running is the icon in the Windows system tray. Interaction with the desktop agent is easy, simply right-click on the icon in the system tray - you can shutdown the desktop agent or start the EOM Client. You may want to include the `EOMDeskTopAgent.exe` program in the Startup folder so it runs whenever the user logs on to the system.

This means that EOM runs under the usercode signed on at the time, and will terminate when the user logs off. An advantage is that any network or printer resources defined will always be seen by EOM, which is sometimes a problem when a resource is added by a usercode different than what the EOM service runs under. Another advantage is that dialog boxes from Windows Print Manager drivers will be displayed.

"What's the downside?" you ask. Well, the major issue is that EOM runs only when someone logs on and starts the desktop agent. Some customers have tight security requirements that would not allow a GUI log on to run the software. Also, this method requires physical interaction with a system, which does not fit well in the movement towards lights-out data center operations.

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EOM 8.0 Feature (you might not know about)

The File Expiration Search is used to automatically delete files from directories and subdirectories. You can define 0 or more File Expiration Search attributes to the EOM service, depending on each of those configurations EOM looks to delete Backup, Index, or regular Windows files if they are "old" enough.

Backup Job attributes include two properties "Hours until File Expires" and "Days until File Expires" to control how long a Backup file (*.bkp) should remain on disk. Leaving the properties blank means that the file will not be delete. Index Job Attributes do not have expiration-type properties, instead rely on the Print Attribute "Hours until File Expires" and "Days until File Expires" fields to define how long the file (*.dix)

remains.

In both cases, the file is not removed until a File Expiration Search attribute is defined to scan AND remove that type of file. Each File Expiration Search attribute is defined with a "Search Interval" that specifies how often EOM should scan.

There is more: EOM does not have to scan for just Backup and Index files. The File Expiration Search can be configured to delete ANY Windows files (with file filter, *.* is the default). So, you can configure EOM to remove files that have nothing to do with EOM based on their creation or last modified date. While you might wince at this thought, it has been used by real customers already to remove files from temporary directories in order to keep sufficient disk space available.

How do I ...?

This section of the newsletter will discuss solutions to questions that come from real customers trying to solve real problems.
How do I configure EOM to send email?

Given that so many customers are already using this EOM feature we sometimes take it for granted that everyone already knows how to do it. So, we are going to walk through each of the steps to allow EOM to send text Email. We will cover emailing PDF files in the near future.

Configuring global email options

Under the EOM Configuration Explorer, select Tools / Options from the menu and then select "Server Options / E-mail / General Settings". Setting the "Interface" field to "SMTP" means that the EOM service will make a direct connection to the email post-office server using the Simple Mail Transfer Protocol. This is a good thing. Prior to EOM 7.0, EOM/DEPCON used the MAPI interface, which required a local email client (e.g. Outlook, Outlook Express) to actually send the email. The SMTP connection is much more stable and with EOM 8.0 more robust with an Alternate SMTP Transport configuration. You still can use the MAPI (or somewhat newer CDO) interface, but must also use the Legacy Assistant. We will assume SMTP for this discussion. Most SMTP post-office software requires some type of secured access (i.e. a usercode/password), so note that the example screen shot (next page) has Authentication set to "Use specified credentials" which are defined by the "User name" and "Password" fields. Also note that EOM 8.0 allows for an alternate SMTP Transport, used whenever the primary SMTP Transport is not available. The Server is simply a name or IP address of where the post-office software resides. The port number may need to be changed from the default of 25, depending on the post-office software (or hosting service).

Configuring E-mail attributes

Email recipients and other properties can be defined statically via the E-mail Attribute, or dynamically within the data file that EOM receives, or a mixture of both. "Statically" means that the person's email address and other email properties are defined directly in the E-mail Attribute. All email addresses need to be fully qualified, as in "name@company.com". One of the advantages of using the old, unsupported MAPI interface is that aliases could be used for both individuals (i.e. "TheDoctor" as opposed to "DrJack@BestHealthcare.com") and distribution lists (i.e. "Accounting"). Your post-office software may still support distribution lists, just using the full syntax (i.e. "Accounting@BestHealthcare.com").

The E-mail Attribute provides ample space for recipient address information (To:, Cc:, Bcc: properties), as well as other interesting properties. You can set the "From" address which will appear to the recipient as the email address that sent the email. Similarly, you can define the "Reply to" address which is used if the recipient replies to the email message sent by EOM. Notice that with EOM 8.0 you can specify multiple files for attachments.

The E-mail Attribute "Attachment display name" dictates whether the incoming data stream is emailed as an attachment or as the body of the email. If the value of this field defines anything other than a "txt" extension, the data stream is sent as an attachment. If "Attachment display name" is defined using "txt" then it will be sent as an attachment only if the data stream byte count is larger than the value of "Message text limit" set in the global email settings and the "Ignore size limit" is set to "No". Otherwise, the incoming data stream is the body of the email and NOT as an attachment. "Attachment display name" can be defined with a specific name (as in "JulyReport.txt") or it can be dynamic using keyword substitution (as in "<MONTH>Report.txt").

Even if email properties are sent with the incoming data file, you still need an E-mail Attribute (for this discussion). This E-mail Attribute could be completely defined or completely undefined (other than some defaults). The dynamic email information replaces values for properties defined in the E-mail Attribute. Often it is useful to have a few properties defined even if you are using dynamic data, especially if you do not trust that the programmers remember to send down all of the information. For example, the E-mail Attribute might be defined with a default subject ("If you are seeing this subject the out programmers goofed up"), default recipients (like your address so you know there is a problem), and a default Error Notification Address (maybe your address again).

Configuring E-mail printers

If there is dynamic email information in the file received then the ONLY way that information is used is if the file is "printed" to an E-mail type printer. You also may want to "print" to remove EOM specific syntax from the incoming file, usually when the file is sent from a Unisys Clearpath system. Under the Configuration Explorer you simply define a Physical Printer with "Print type" of "E-mail". If you plan on processing E-mail Jobs simultaneously you can create multiple E-mail printers and then create a Logical Printer referencing 1 or more of the E-mail printers.

Configuring Print Attributes for Email

If you do need an "E-mail" type printer then you also must have a Print Attribute. For this discussion the Print Attribute, used to compose the data that is emailed, is almost always defined using the "Generic" or "Generic-NoFF" Printer driver. The idea is that these settings simply strip out all of the EOM-proprietary syntax found in the file before emailing the data stream. The Print Attribute provides a long list of properties that impact the composition of the data stream. As a general rule of thumb we can make the following suggestions:

- Print driver should be Generic or Generic-NoFF
- Command Files are not usually used for E-mail Jobs
- Data Dependent Attributes are not usually defined for E-mail Jobs (although you could get fancy and insert HTML tags via the DDA)
- Paper type should not impede the automatic handling of E-Mail Jobs
- Lines at top, Lines after Heading, and Lines at bottom are usually set to 0

Putting it all together with a File Mask

Now it is just a matter of identifying the incoming file and submitting the E-Mail Job. Those E-mail jobs that require the Print Attribute specify both the Print Attribute and then the E-mail printer in the "Printer for re-formatting" property. Note that the E-mail Job also allows for changing the "Attachment display name" right from the File Mask E-mail Job definition.

Embedded Email syntax

O.k., seems pretty straightforward. Now the more complicated part: inserting EOM proprietary email syntax. There are a couple of ways to get the syntax into the data stream sent to the EOM server:

- Have the program creating the data stream also write the embedded syntax.
- From the Clearpath MCP side, use the NOTE parameter on the PRINT statement.
- From the Clearpath OS2200 side use the Mail processor program.

"What is the syntax?" The EOM 7.0, 7.1 and 8.0 Help files have a chapter named "Sending E-mail Routing Information with Print Files". It shows what the proprietary syntax looks like as provides a table with all of the email keywords.

The image shows two screenshots from the Configuration Explorer application. The left screenshot displays the 'SMTP Settings' tab, showing configuration for the SMTP interface. The right screenshot displays the 'E-mail Attributes' configuration for a 'GeneralEmailAttribute'.

Section	Property	Value
General	Interface	SMTP
	Message text limit	15000
SMTP Settings	From address	EOM1@PrettyGoodConsultingGroup.com
	Domain to add if missing	
	SMTP Transport	mail.PrettyGoodConsultingGroup.com:587
SMTP Transport	Enabled	Yes
	Delivery method	Network
	Server	mail.PrettyGoodConsultingGroup.com
	Port	587
	Encrypt connection	No
	Timeout	100
	Authentication	Use specified credentials
	User name	MyUsercode
	Password	XXXXXXXXXXXX
	Domain	
Alternate SMTP Transport	Pickup directory from IIS	

Section	Property	Value
General	Comments	
	Enable job	Yes
Basic Settings	To	JaneDoe@MyCompany.com
	Cc	
	Bcc	
	Subject	This is the GeneralEmailAttribute subject
Advanced Settings	Attachment display name	<Month> Report.txt
	From	EOMServer@MyCompany.com
	Body format	Determine dynamically
	Reply to	Accounting@MyCompany.com
	Error notification address	EOMAdministrator@MyCompany.com
	Importance	Medium
	Sensitivity	Normal
	Send delivery receipt notification	No
	Send read receipt notification	No
	Ignore size limit	No
Automatic Content	File to insert in message body	
	Files to attach	0 attachment files configured

Time to Upgrade?

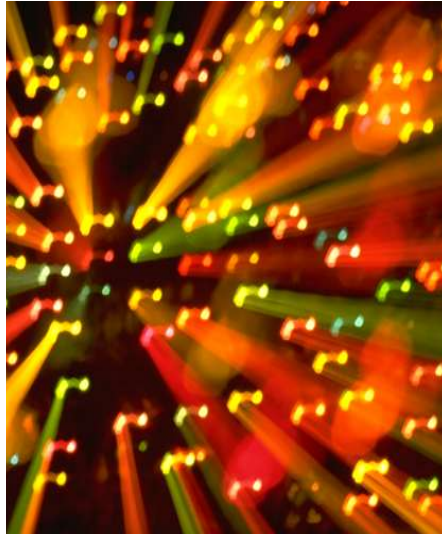
We continue to run into a lot of EOM 6.1.2, 6.1.3, and even a 6.1 sites. Helping customers with these versions is not nearly as easy as with EOM 8.0, nor is it as easy for the customer to maintain. Keep in mind that EOM versions 6.1 and below are no longer supported. EOM 8.0 is a new release with enterprise-class features to automate, re-engineer, and control your output environment.

Who are we?

Highly skilled, creative, solution provider focused on the Unisys Enterprise Output Manager product (formerly known as DEPCON) with a sense of urgency sums up who we are and what we do. We provide general Enterprise Output Manager consulting, migrations, upgrades, configuration, training, and custom programming.

On-site services, remote services, and general consulting are available now.

Why use PGCG? Deep knowledge of the EOM product integrated into a variety of customer environments sets us apart. Our customers production environment depends on solid, working solutions that we provide.



Quick Hits

The current Interim Correction for EOM 7.1 is the 7.1.7 version. There are no Interim Corrections for EOM 8.0 at this time (nor need for one).

Make sure you backup your EOM configurations! Pre-EOM 7.0 simply copy all of the *.cfg files. EOM 7.0 and above do an XML Export from the Configuration Explorer. See the July 2008 Newsletter for details.

Have a suggestion for "How do I ...?" Write a brief description and send it to SteveD@PrettyGoodConsultingGroup.com for future newsletter discussion.

Interested in EOM training? We can either do custom training on-site, via WebEx or arrange for a formal class through Unisys. Please contact us for details.

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