

INFRASTRUCTURE

► **REVIEW:** *future gate software's DeTroubler for NDS 2.02*

Different backup approach makes sense for NDS

DeTroubler brings flexibility and immediacy through object-based restore to directory services database

By P.J. CONNOLLY

Data recovery schemes for network operating systems often founder on the way that they handle core access and security data. Preserving this critical information is an even greater challenge when the information is distributed across a number of servers, as is common in organizations implementing NDS (Novell Directory Services), which first appeared with NetWare 4.0 in 1993.

future gate software, Inc. offers the first object-oriented approach we've seen to this problem in its DeTroubler for NDS 2.02.

Be aware that DeTroubler (formerly NDSBR) backs up only NDS; you'll need another product, such as Computer Associates International Inc. ArcServe or Seagate Technology Inc. Backup Exec, to protect the bulk of your data. But DeTroubler excels beyond the general-purpose backup solutions in its approach to NDS backup and restore.

DeTroubler
future gate

	POOR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Features	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Manageability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scalability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Value	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Price: Starting at \$11.50 per user object

In conventional backup solutions, NDS information is stored on the same media as gigabytes of "ordinary" data. In recovery situations, you may need more immediate access to

your NDS data. Because the NDS database is relatively small, it makes sense to use a separate system for it, even if this does resemble a belt-and-suspenders approach.

The other feature DeTroubler has that the heavyweights lack is the capability to restore selected objects to NDS. You can also select from a history of the object's backups. This makes it feasible to undo changes to the NDS tree.

DeTroubler is one of the few third-party programs we've seen in recent years that uses Novell Install instead of a client-driven setup. Nevertheless, it's a painless process to set up a NetWare server running the DeTroubler database, on which you can also install the backup engine.

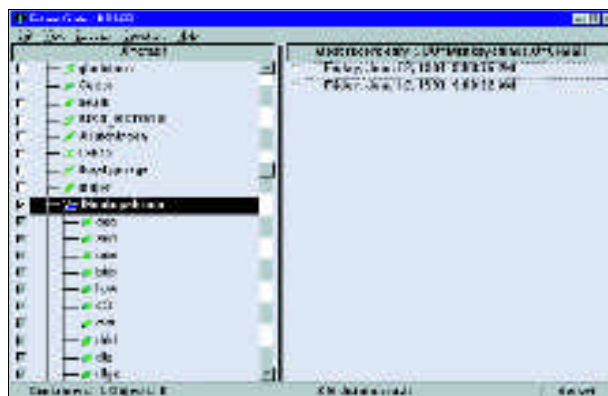
Once you have the backup server going, you install the DeTroubler agent to the other servers in your tree. Because of DeTroubler's reliance on the Btrieve database engine for grunt work, the database server is usually the only machine that needs rebooting. The documentation provides good examples of correctly configured servers.

Easy to manage

Administering DeTroubler is simple. You can edit the configuration files on the server as needed through NetWare Install or a text editor. DeTroubler defaults to once-daily backup, but this can be modified easily, which is a good thing to do if you're making a lot of changes to your NDS tree.

The DeTroubler console runs on IBM OS/2 or Microsoft Windows 3.x, 95, 98, or NT, and doesn't replace the server-based configuration. The console displays a tree view of your NDS data through which you can browse various containers to select objects for restoration.

We'd like to see the interface give the user more feedback during the process, indicating the progress of the



► DeTroubler lets you recover only the last backup of a container object—if you include subordinates such as these user objects.

restore job. Also, the printed documentation for the console is too brief and needs illustrations, and no online help is available.

We were glad that DeTroubler was simple to install; we don't relish the thought of making a transatlantic call for technical support. future gate, which is based in Germany, intends to address this situation as its North American customer base grows.

Network managers have found restoration of the NDS database to be a weak link in the data-recovery scheme. DeTroubler for NDS, because of its purpose-built design, is never going to replace ArcServe or Backup Exec. But by virtue of its flexible object recovery and retention of object histories, we recommend it for any organization using NDS. ■

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