

Tech Tip: Managing Log Sizes

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Enabling Your IT Infrastructure

Every computer's operating system and applications come with the ability to log a variety of information on a regular basis, from application activities, to user login activity, to run-time errors. Some of these logs can grow quickly into very large files. While the disk space they occupy is not as important as it used to be in this world of inexpensive, one terabyte disks, the ability to quickly and easily extract important information can be negatively impacted by these excessively large files. Akibia has seen Solaris "messages" files in excess of 300MB in size. This makes it almost impossible to use an editor to inspect them, requiring us to split them in order to read them.

Although some operating systems will provide help by "rolling" certain log files into a series of numbered editions, controlling the size of these files is ultimately the System Administrator's responsibility. Take these steps to ensure log sizes remain functional.

- Identify all the log files in use on company systems and measure the speed at which they typically grow. Armed with that information, the System Administrator can then determine appropriate disk locations for the active logs. This will enable the System Admin to avoid filling a file system or tmp space and also head off any IO bottlenecks that could develop from a runaway log.
- Assess the need for archiving essential logged information, such as switch-user or web access logs.
- Develop a well-documented schedule for storing copies of the data, perhaps in compressed form, and emptying the active files.

If you follow these steps, you will not only secure your resources, but also satisfy your manager and suffer through fewer sleepless nights.

About Akibia, Inc.

Akibia provides innovative IT solutions that enable leading companies worldwide to optimize, secure, manage and support their mission-critical data center and security infrastructure. Combining expert consulting, integration and support services with world-class customer service, Akibia helps IT organizations maximize the value of their existing infrastructure, while mitigating risk and reducing complexity. Founded in 1988, Akibia is an independent IT services company with offices throughout the United States and Europe.