

# Windows NT<sup>®</sup>

## MAGAZINE

### EDITORS' faves

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from Jonathan Cragle

#### ***ConfigSafe 2.0 Network Edition***

Almost every administrator deals with situations in which a computer works one day but doesn't work the next. Imagine a magic button on your keyboard that automatically restores a system to its working state. Wouldn't it be great if this magic button could also take a snapshot of the system's important files, including the Registry, and you could store these files wherever and whenever you want?

With imagine LAN's ConfigSafe 2.0, you can have that magic button. ConfigSafe is a software program that lets you take system snapshots, compare before-and-after software installations, and restore one or more computers to previously working configurations.

ConfigSafe is valuable because it increases the efficiency of system troubleshooting and support while reducing computer downtime. A major cause of system problems is users who install software programs that may not be compatible with the OS.

With ConfigSafe you can give users the ability to quickly restore their system's settings; you don't need to spend excessive technical-support time trying to pinpoint the cause of the problems. ConfigSafe lets you watch your monthly support costs dwindle as users become comfortable with the program and its easy-to-use process.

ConfigSafe Network Edition has two components: Network Manager and LAN Clients. Network Manager controls the LAN client license distribution and enables central management of ConfigSafe functions.

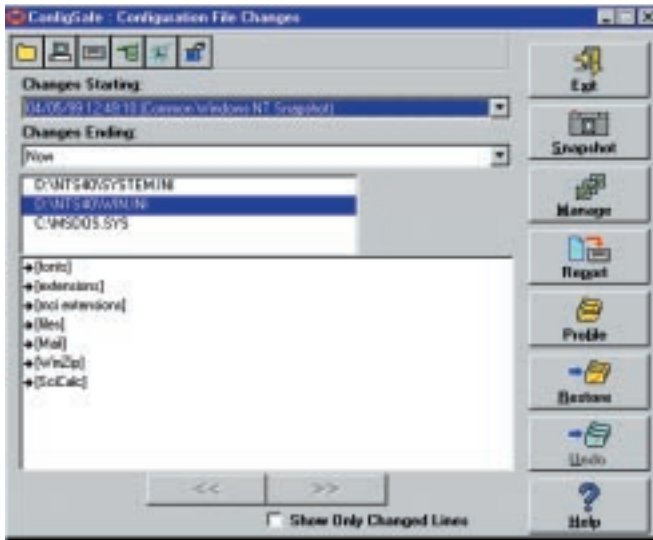
The software impressed me because all the clients can use the same shared program, snapshot, and profile folders, and you can update these folders in one easy step. When you install the program, you can choose to store user snapshots on the server running Network Manager, or on the user's local hard disk. The company recommends that you store the snapshots on a hard disk with at least 1MB of storage for each client system. The LAN Clients component lets users manage, compare, report on, and restore on-demand or scheduled snapshots.

As a *Windows NT Magazine* Lab Guy, I need a tool that lets me quickly return test systems to a specific configuration. Otherwise, I'd have to plod through time-consuming installations or image-cloning programs during comparative product reviews. I particularly liked the product's fast and easy installation, and it's refreshing to see a valuable systems administrator tool that fits on two 3.5" disks.

#### **ConfigSafe 2.0 Network Edition**

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ConfigSafe 2.0 Network Edition

ConfigSafe is also valuable as a support tool. The software's Import/Export Snapshots feature lets users send a snapshot of their problem system to support personnel for problem resolution. After systems administrators fix the problem on a test system, they can email a corrected snapshot to the user for importing and restoration.

The user interface includes large buttons and easy-to-understand dialog boxes. The detailed reports are valuable because they contain all configuration changes between two time periods. You can view these reports on-screen, print them, or save them to a separate file. I've often used the Undo feature after restoring to a previous configuration that didn't solve a system problem. By using Undo, I returned one of my systems to the most recent configuration prior to attempting the restore.

ConfigSafe lets developers watch everything their application does during installation and uninstallation routines, test the portion of their software that interfaces with the Registry or .ini files, or assist lab personnel in monitoring problems in new software versions. I enjoy reviewing cool software utilities, but I love utilities that save me valuable time in the midst of busy review deadlines. ConfigSafe fits that bill exactly because it lets me save Registry entries and configuration files if I need to restore them later. ▲

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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