



WINDOWS SERVER DOMAIN SETUP WITH GPOS AND DRIVE MAPPING

Active Directory, GPO Management, and Drive Mapping Automation

Summary

This project set up a Windows Server domain with OUs, Security Groups, and users for different departments. I used PowerShell to automate repetitive tasks like creating users and mapping drives, while Group Policy Objects (GPOs) were applied to enforce both domain-wide security and department-specific settings.

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Table of Contents

Introduction (mention that this project is mainly focused on the summary I go in depth on how to do other things in these projects and that they could use them as a references)	OU and SG script worked
Create a Private Network	Verify OUs and SGs were created
Assigning the server, a static address	User creation script worked
Assigning the server, a new name	Verify creation of users
Adding ADDS Feature	Create storage disk
Promoting the server to a domain controller	Adding hard disk to my DC
CSV File (mention that I have linked where to find this csv file)	Initialize the disk
OU and SG script (mention that I have linked where to find this script)	Creating folders
User creation script (mention that I have linked where to find this script)	Install file server
	Creating shares
	Allow certain access to authorized users
	Set GPO rules
	Set default policies
	Default Policies overview
	GPOs for the rest of my department (list the GPOs for each department)
	Creating Maps for Disks

Ensure GPOs are updated

Verify GPO mapping was created

Installing DHCP server

Set scope

Install print server

Configure printers and deploy them on GPOs

Point PC1 DNS to DC

Rename PC1 and join to domain

Signing in with domain users

Map the disk

Verify the disk was added

Verify that it denies those without authorization

Adding Printers

Verify Printer rules are applied

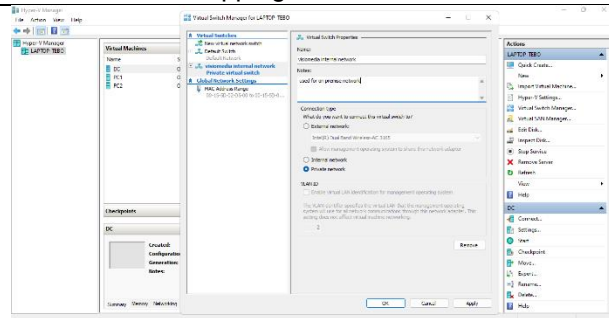
Verify Printer allows access to those who are authorized

Introduction

This project is mainly focused on Group Policy Objects (GPOs) and drive mapping. While ADDS, DHCP, and other roles were installed, the emphasis is on enforcing domain-wide security and department policies. Scripts for users, OUs, SGs, and drive mappings are included as references.

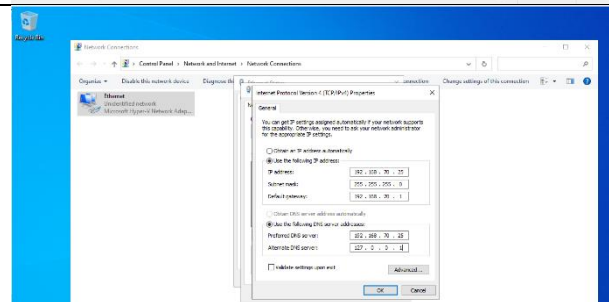
Create a Private Network

Created a private network to isolate the environment for domain testing.



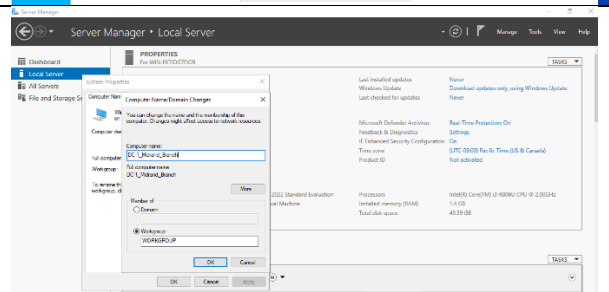
Assigning the server, a static address

Assigned the domain controller a static IP to ensure stability for DNS, DHCP, and domain authentication.



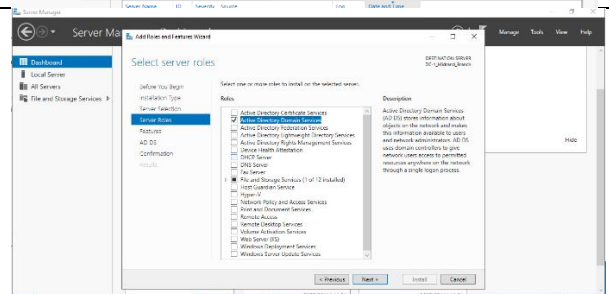
Assigning the server, a new name

Renamed the server to a clear naming convention for easy identification across the domain.



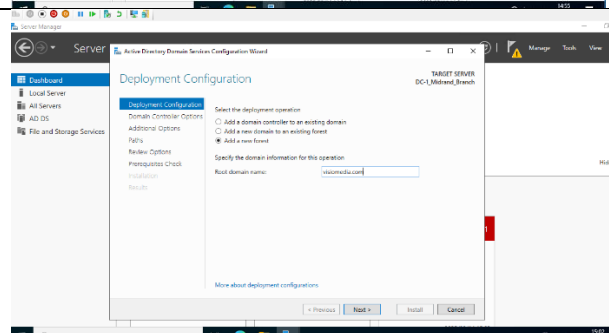
Adding ADDS Feature

Installed the Active Directory Domain Services role to manage users and resources.



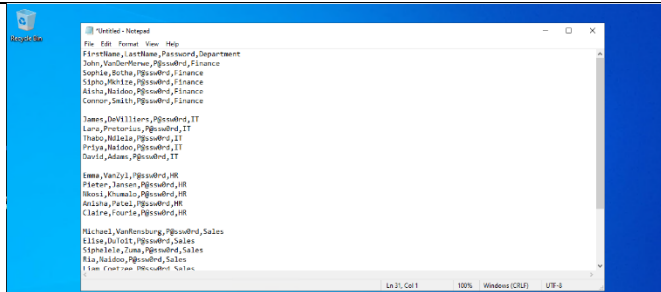
Promoting the server to a domain controller

Configured the server as the primary domain controller for the environment. This enabled centralized management of authentication and policies.



CSV File

CSV file prepared with user details. I created this file in another project and if you are interested in using it here is the link:

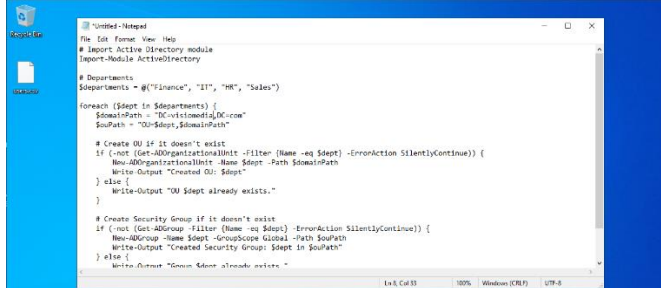


```
File Edit Format View Help
FirstName,LastName,Password,Department
John,MacDonnell,Password,Finance
Sophie,Buchan,Password,Finance
Sally,McIntyre,Password,Finance
Alison,McIntyre,Password,Finance
Connor,Smith,Password,Finance
James,DeVilliers,Password,IT
Liam,Proctorius,Password,IT
Thabo,Melisa,Password,IT
Priya,McIntyre,Password,IT
David,Adams,Password,IT
Emma,VanZyl,Password,HR
Pietie,Tanzer,Password,HR
Wendy,MacIntyre,Password,HR
Ariane,Potter,Password,HR
Claire,Courie,Password,HR
Michael,VanRensburg,Password,Sales
Ellen,duToit,Password,Sales
Stephanie,Tuma,Password,Sales
Rag,Macdon,Password,Sales
Line Fourteen Recalculated Sales
```

OU and SG script

Created a PowerShell script to automatically build Organizational Units and Security Groups for IT, Sales, Finance, Marketing, and HR.

Link to script:



```
File Edit Format View Help
# Import Active Directory module
Import-Module ActiveDirectory

# Departments
$Departments = @("Finance", "IT", "HR", "Sales")

foreach ($dept in $Departments) {
    $DomainPath = "OU=vlsmmedia,DC=com"
    $ouPath = "OU=$dept,$DomainPath"

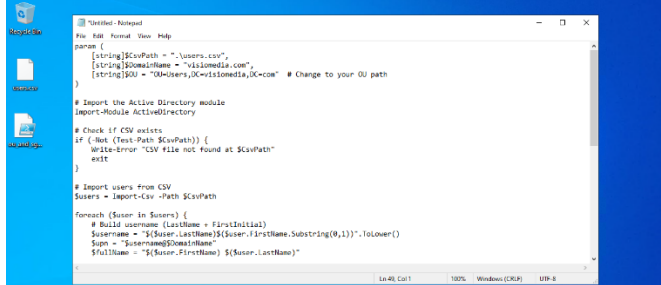
    # Create OU if it doesn't exist
    If (-not (Get-ADOrganizationalUnit -Filter (Name -eq $dept) -ErrorAction SilentlyContinue)) {
        New-ADOrganizationalUnit -Name $dept -Path $DomainPath
        Write-Output "Created OU: $dept"
    } else {
        Write-Output "OU $dept already exists."
    }

    # Create Security Group if it doesn't exist
    If (-not (Get-ADGroup -Filter (Name -eq $dept) -ErrorAction SilentlyContinue)) {
        New-ADGroup -Name $dept -GroupScope Global -Path $ouPath
        Write-Output "Created Security Group: $dept in $ouPath"
    } else {
        Write-Output "Group $dept already exists."
    }
}
```

User creation script

Used a PowerShell script to bulk-create domain users with a naming format of **<LastName><FirstInitial>@domain.com**. Each user was added to their department's Security Group.

Link to script:



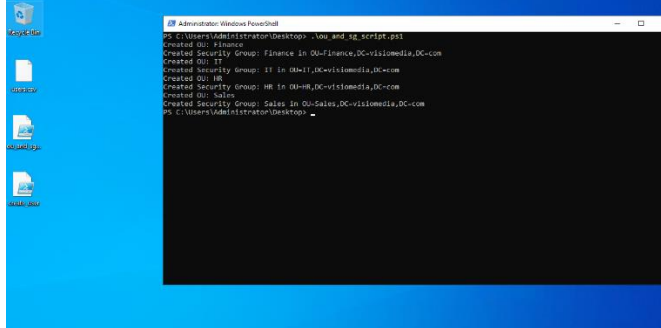
```
File Edit Format View Help
# Import the Active Directory module
Import-Module ActiveDirectory

# Check if CSV exists
if (-not (Test-Path $CsvPath)) {
    Write-Error "CSV file not found at $CsvPath"
    exit
}

# Import users from CSV
$Users = Import-Csv -Path $CsvPath

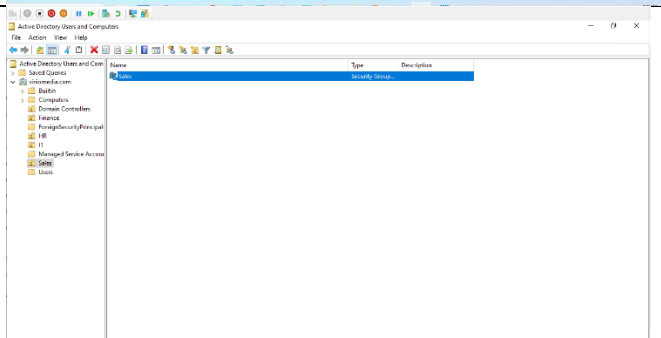
foreach ($user in $Users) {
    # Build username (LastName + FirstInitial)
    $Surname = "$($user.LastName)$($user.FirstName.Substring(0,1)).tolower()"
    $Upn = "$Surname@$DomainName"
    $FullName = "$($user.FirstName) $($user.LastName)"
}
```

OU and SG script worked

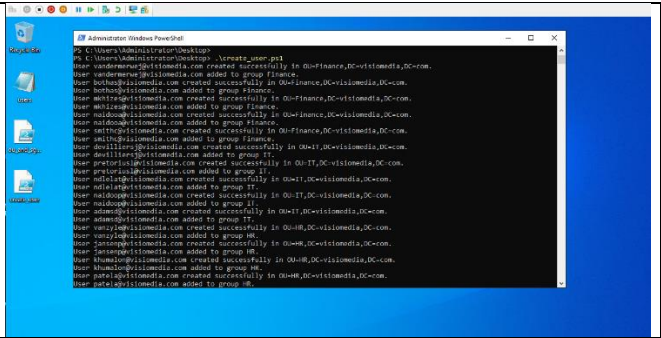


```
PS C:\Users\Administrator\Desktop> .\ou_and_sg_script.ps1
Created OU: Finance
Created Security Group: Finance in OU=Finance,DC=vlsmmedia,DC=com
Created OU: IT
Created Security Group: IT in OU=IT,DC=vlsmmedia,DC=com
Created OU: HR
Created Security Group: HR in OU=HR,DC=vlsmmedia,DC=com
Created OU: Sales
Created Security Group: Sales in OU=Sales,DC=vlsmmedia,DC=com
PS C:\Users\Administrator\Desktop>
```

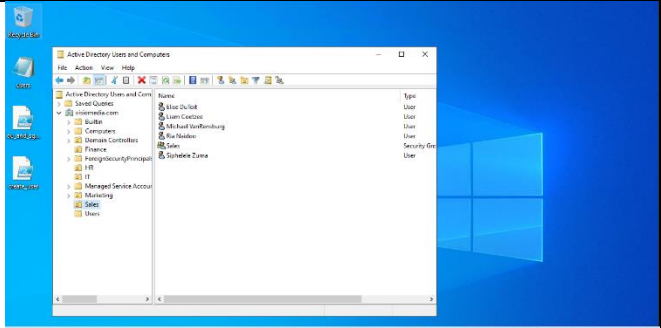
Verify OUs and SGs were created



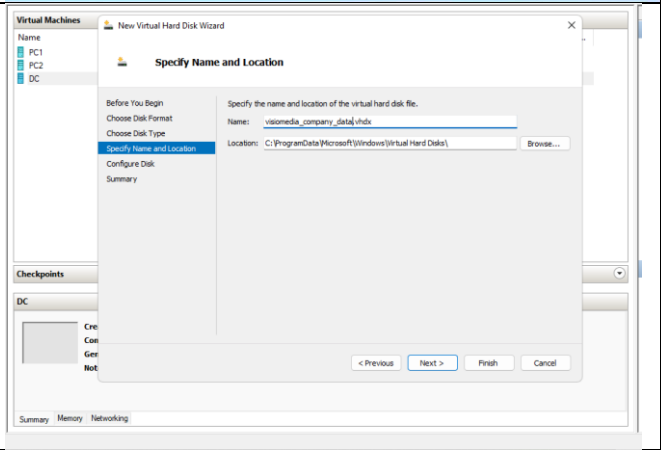
User creation script worked



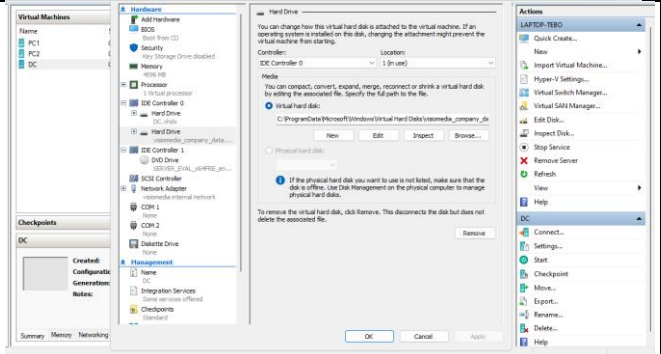
Verify creation of users



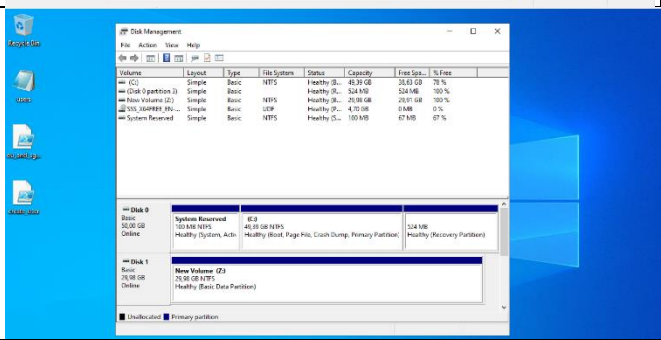
Create storage disk



Adding hard disk to my DC

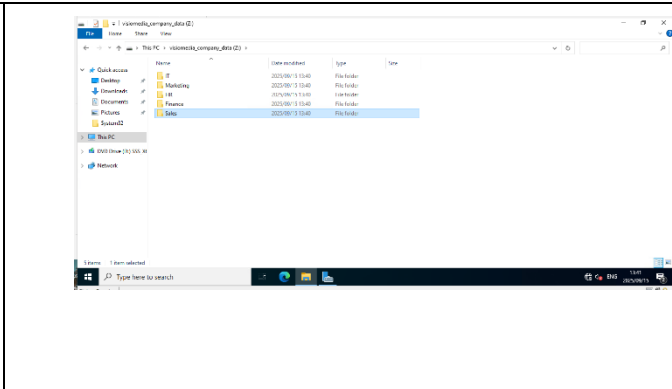


Initialize the disk



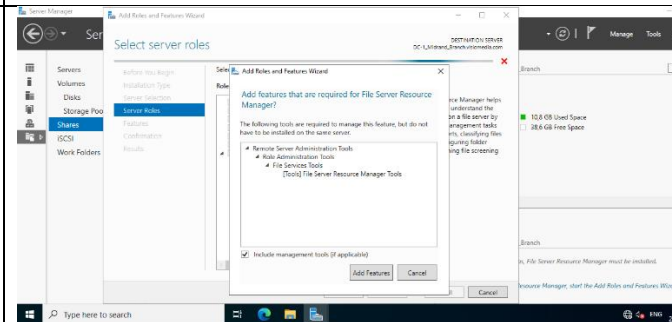
Creating folders

Created folders for IT, Sales, Finance, Marketing, and HR to store departmental files.



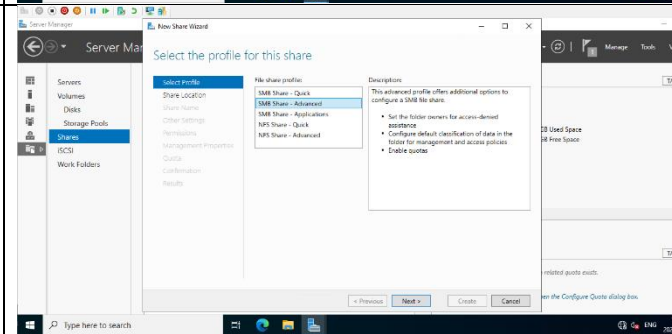
Install file server

Enabled the File Server role to support SMB shares.

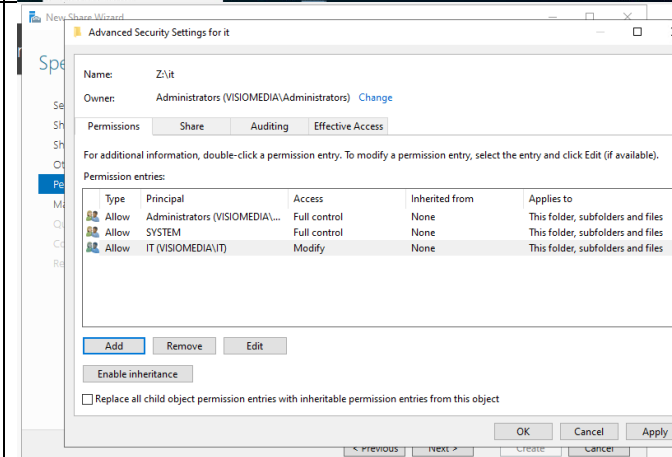


Configure shares

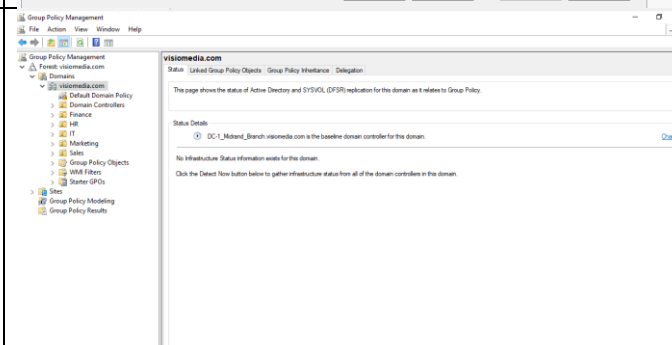
Each folder was shared over SMB and assigned NTFS permissions so only the respective department and administrators could access it.



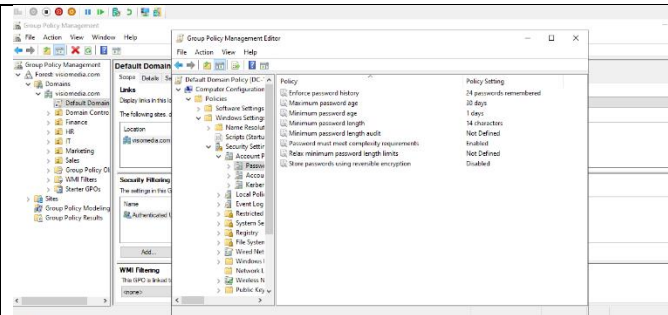
Allow certain access to authorized users



Group Policy Management



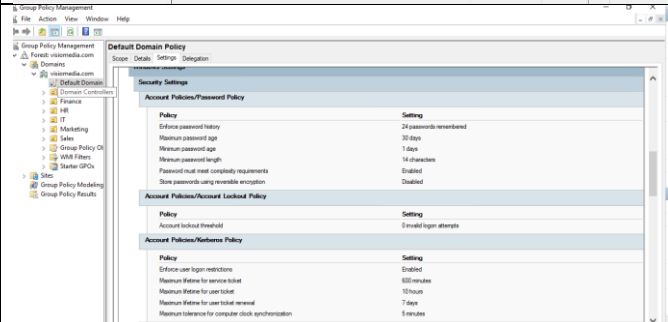
Set default policies



Default Policies overview

Enforced baseline organization-wide rules:

- Minimum 12-character password
- Complexity required
- Password expiry every 90 days
- Account lockout after 5 failed attempts (15 min)
- Guest account disabled
- Enable auditing for logon/logoff and changes
- Windows Updates forced automatically



GPOs for the rest of my department

Finance GPO

Deny execute access to removable disks
Deny read access to removable disks
Deny write access to removable disks
Drive mapping applied

IT GPO

Added administrators to roaming profiles
Drive mapping applied

Marketing GPO

Block access to Microsoft Store
Disable OneDrive for storage
Drive mapping applied

HR GPO

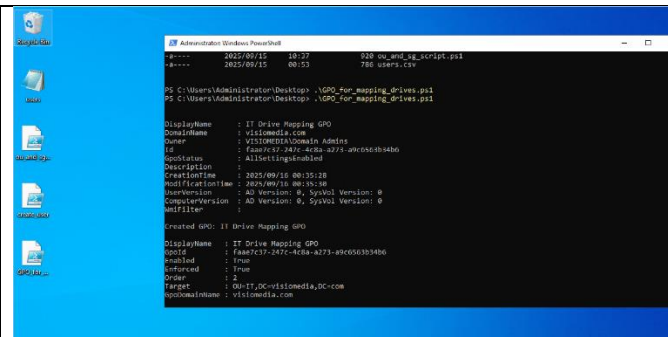
Sleep timeout (on battery)
Unattended sleep timeout (on battery)
Attended sleep timeout (plugged in)
Drive mapping applied

Sales GPO

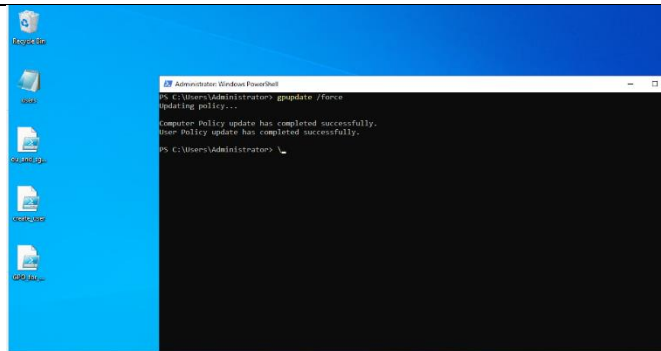
Prevent deleting browsing history
Disable InPrivate browsing
Drive mapping applied

Creating Maps for Disks

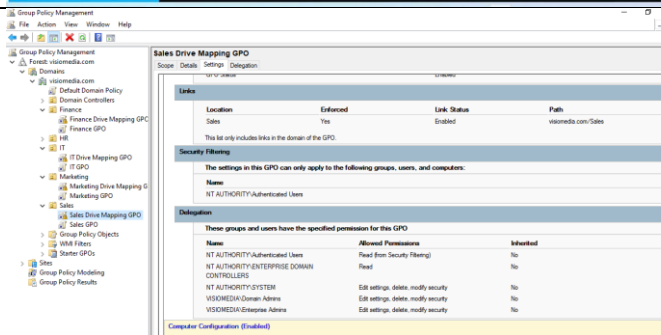
Created a script that built GPOs for each department to map their SMB shares to dedicated drive letters



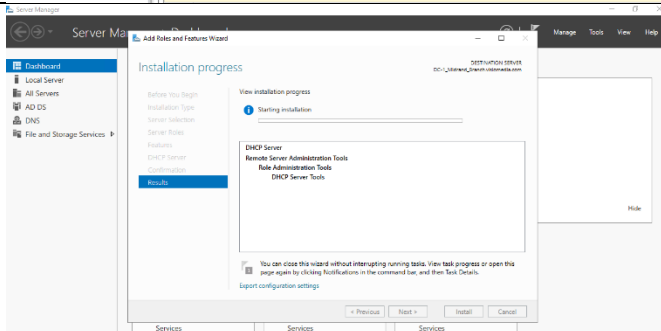
Ensure GPOs are updated
Ran gpupdate /force on clients and confirmed that mapped drives appeared automatically for users in the correct OU.



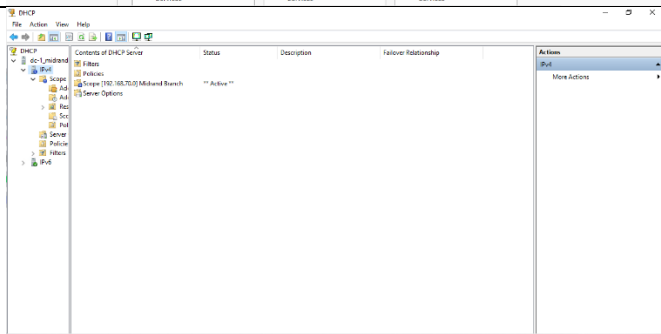
Verify GPO mapping was created



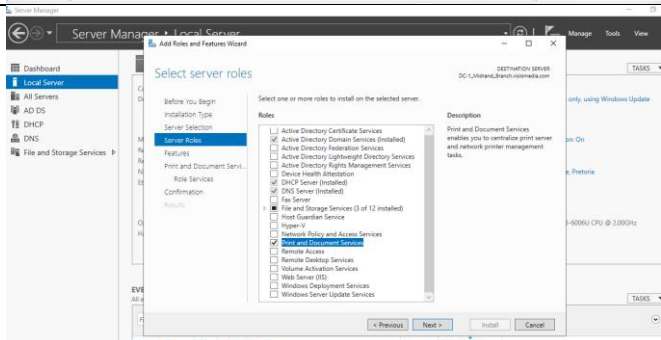
Installing DHCP server
Added the DHCP role to the DC.



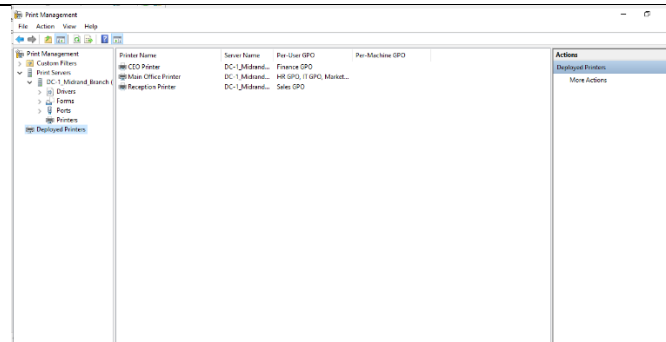
Set scope
Defined a scope for client IP addresses. Reserved addresses were set aside for the DC and network printers to prevent conflicts.



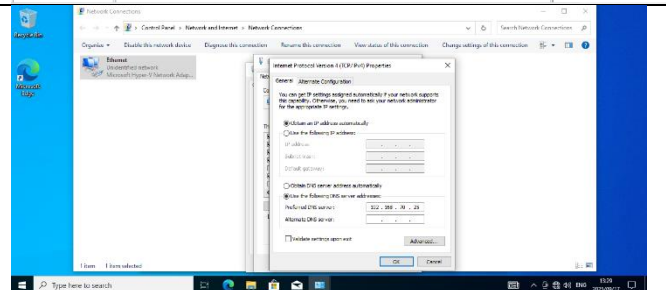
Install print server



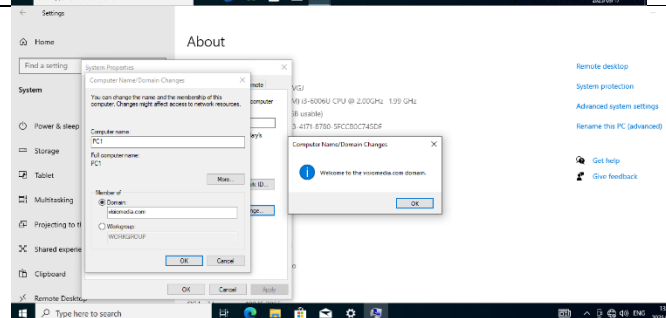
Configure printers and
deploy them on GPOs
Printers were deployed through GPOs so
users in specific OUs had access
automatically.



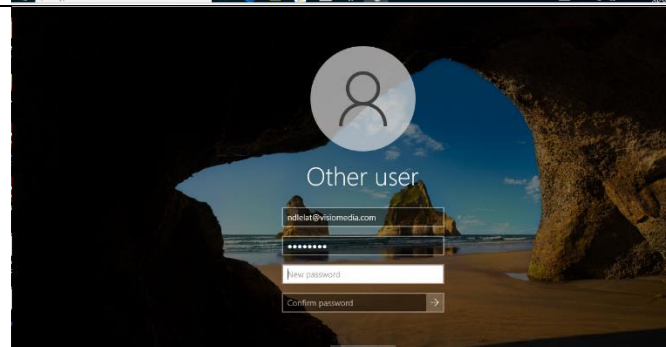
Point PC1 DNS to DC



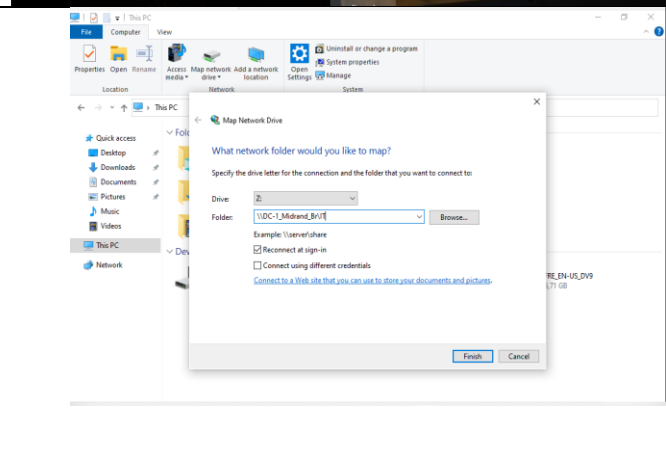
Rename PC1 and join to
domain



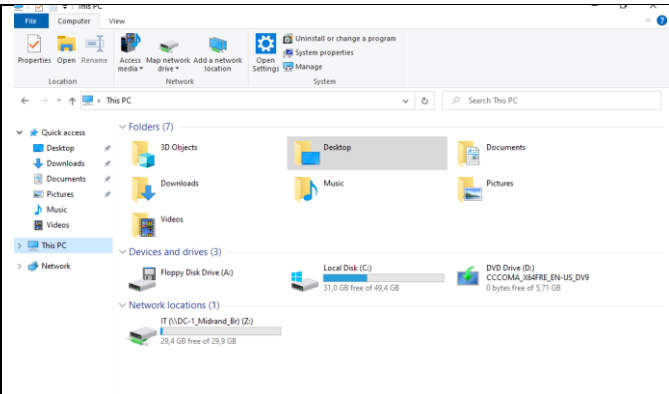
Signing in with domain users



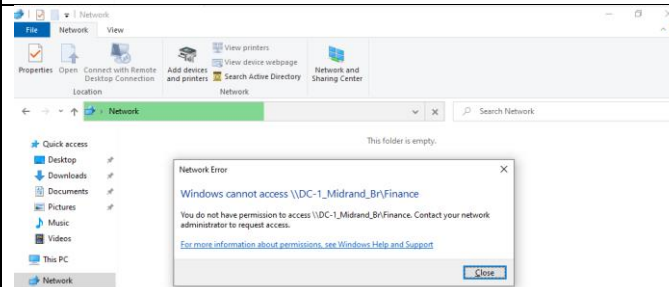
Map the disk



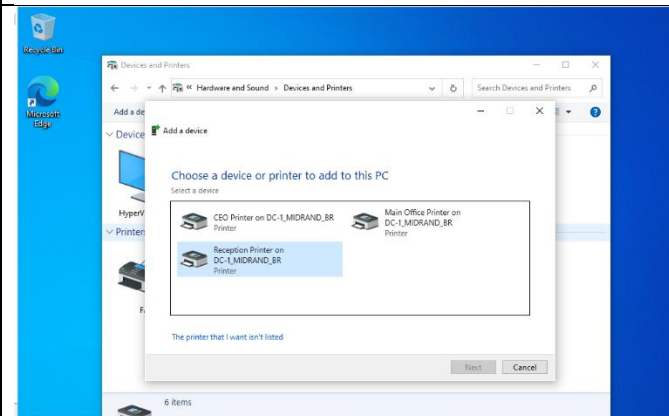
Verify the disk was added



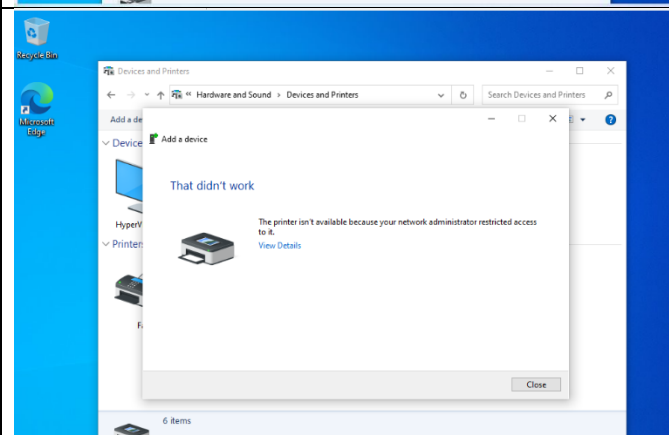
Verify that it denies those without authorization



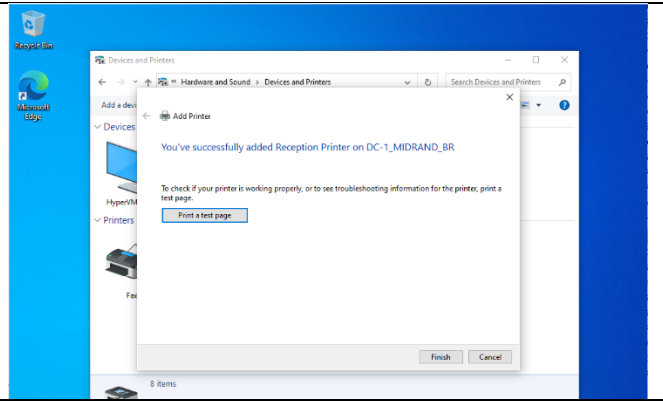
Adding Printers



Verify Printer rules are applied



Verify Printer allows access to those who are authorized



Project Summary

This project successfully built a Windows Server domain environment with a focus on Active Directory structure, GPO enforcement, and resource management. The domain controller was set up with OUs and Security Groups for multiple departments, and PowerShell was used to automate repetitive tasks such as creating users and drive mappings. File shares and printers were configured with appropriate access restrictions, and DHCP was deployed to provide consistent IP addressing with reservations for critical devices.

Group Policy Objects (GPOs) formed the core of the project — enforcing both organization-wide security baselines (password policies, auditing, Windows Updates) and department-specific rules tailored to IT, Finance, HR, Marketing, and Sales. Testing from a domain-joined client confirmed that users received mapped drives, printers, and policy restrictions automatically, while unauthorized access was blocked.

Overall, the project demonstrated how automation and GPOs can simplify management while maintaining a secure and organized Windows Server environment.

Improvements & Next Steps

There are several areas where this project could be improved or expanded:

Add Redundancy

- Deploy a second Domain Controller for fault tolerance.
- Configure DHCP failover for high availability.

Advanced GPOs

- Add software deployment via GPO (example: install apps automatically for departments).
- Apply stricter firewall and security baselines using Microsoft Security Baseline templates.

Monitoring & Auditing

- Enable centralized event log forwarding.
- Configure audit policies to monitor file access and administrative changes more closely.

Backup & Recovery

- Automate system state backups for Active Directory.
- Test restore scenarios to ensure recovery in case of corruption.

User Experience Enhancements

- Add folder redirection or roaming profiles to centralize user data.
- Configure logon/logoff scripts for additional automation.

Migration Practice (Future Goal)

- Simulate migrating ADDS roles to another DC.
- Test FSMO role transfers and AD restores.