Moab

Why are spaces in user/group names causing problems?

Issue: One or more users are unable to run jobs, and are seeing authentication errors, usually for a group "doman_users", or possibly for a user name with an underscore.

Cause: When Linux authenticates to Windows, there are often spaces in user and/or group names. Linux typically handles this by changing the space to an underscore in the local system, but when Linux attempts to authenticate using that underscore character, the user/group is rejected by Windows.

Solution: To resolve this issue, Linux must be configured, within the authenticion, to actually translate spaces to underscores, and back. There are a two different ways to accomplish this, depending on the type of authentication being used.

If using Winbind:

When using "winbind", the way to accomplish this is a setting in the Samba configuration (typically /etc/samba/smb.conf). That setting should be in the "global" section, and will look like this:

        winbind normalize names = yes

if using sssd:

When using "sssd", a similar option is available to address this. Any character can be chosen to replace the space, but most prefer the underscore. To implement this, in the "sssd.conf" file, under the [sssd] section, this line would be added:

normalize_space "_"

Note that this is never a Moab issue. Moab requires Linux, and spaces are not valid in Linux user or group names, so the problem does need to be addressed during the user/group authentication. If both of the above configuration files are present, it might be a good idea to make the change both places.

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