



## STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO RENAME ACTIVE DIRECTORY DOMAIN NAME

Few of the blog readers asked me on few occasions if they can change the AD domain name to the different domain name. Answer is yes you can, but you need to aware of the issues it can occur as well. Otherwise you will be end up in a mess with non-functioning infrastructure. Idea of this post is to demonstrate how to rename AD and also to point out some issues you may face with a domain rename.

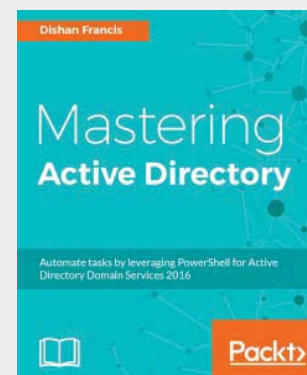
Following are the critical points you need to consider before AD rename.

1. Forest Function Level – Forest Function level must be windows server 2003 or higher to perform AD rename.
2. Location of the Domain – in forest it can have different level of domains. Those can be either complete different domains or child domains. If you going to change the location of the dc in the forest you must need to create trust relationships between domains to keep the connectivity.
3. DNS Zone – DNS Zone files must be created for the new domain name prior to the rename process in relevant DNS servers.
4. Folder Path Change – if DFS folder services or roaming profiles are setup, those paths must change in to server-based share or network share.
5. Computer Name Change – Once the domain is renamed the computers host names will also renamed. So if those are configured to use by applications or systems make sure you prepare to do those changes.
6. Reboots – Systems will need to reboot twice to apply the name changes including workstations. So be prepare for the downtime and service interruptions.

## MASTERING ACTIVE DIRECTORY

### Mastering Active Directory

July 2, 2017



This is my 14th year in IT. During that time, I was working with different companies. I was working on different positions. [...]

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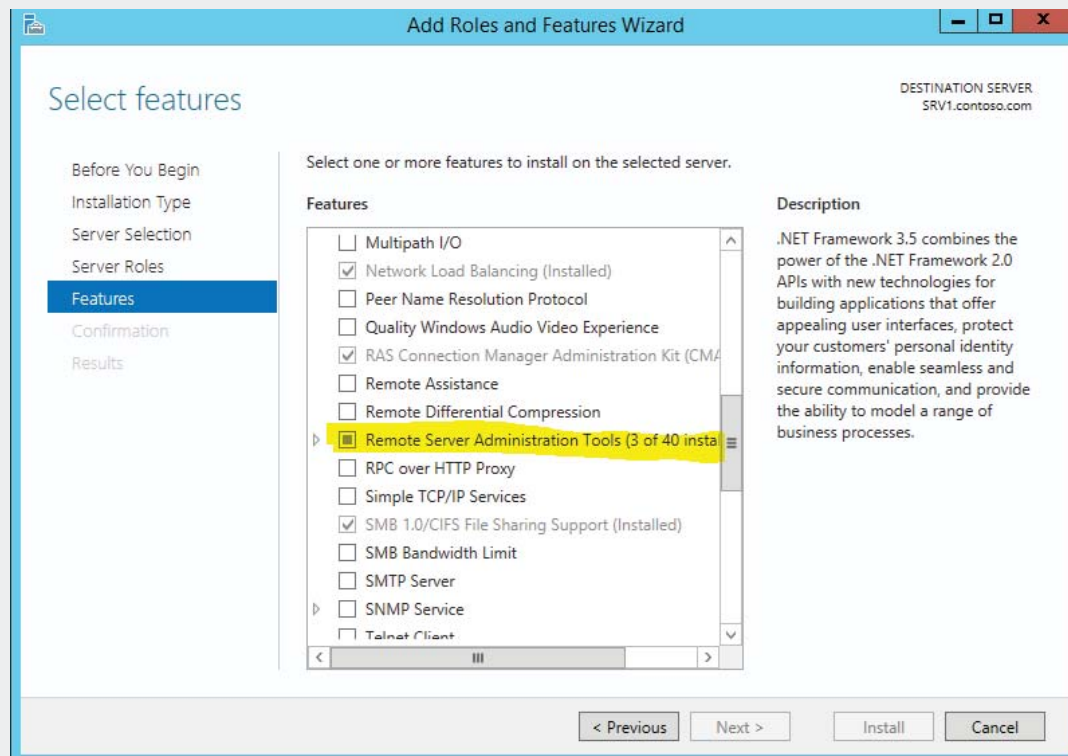


7. Exchange Server Incompatibility – Exchange server 2003 is the only supported version for AD rename. All other versions are not supported for this. Also there can be other applications in environment which can be not supported with rename. Make sure you access these risks.
8. Certificate Authority (CA) – if CA is used make sure you prepare it according to <https://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc816587>

Once your infrastructure is ready, to perform the rename process we need an administrative computer or server. It must be a member of domain and should not a DC. It must have “Remote Server Administration Tools” installed. For windows 2012 server it can be add as feature via server manager. For windows 8 or later can download it from <http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=28972>

In demo, I am going to rename contoso.com domain to canitpro.local domain. It is runs with windows server 2012 R2.

I have prepare a server which runs windows server 2012 R2 as member server to perform the rename. You can install Remote Server Administration Tools by Server manager > Add roles and features. Make sure you select AD DS and AD LDS tools under the RSAT.



Before we start the rename make sure forest domain activities are stopped. Such as adding new DC, changing forest configuration etc.

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## ABOUT ME



Dishan M. Francis

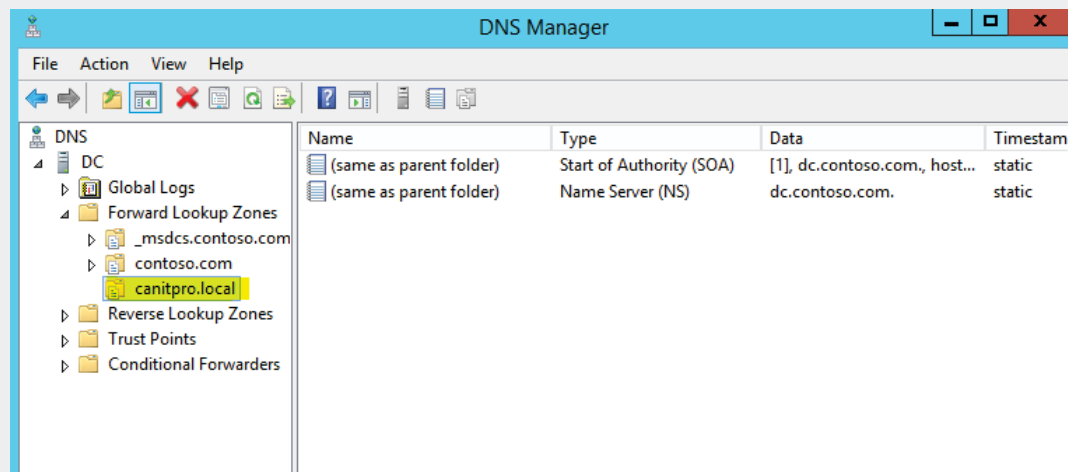
MVP, MBCS, CCNP, CCNA, ITIL v3 Cert, MCITP Enterprise Administrator Windows Server 2008,

MCSA(2008,2012), MCP

I'm a Technology Consultant at Frontier Technology Limited. with 10 years' experience in the planning, design, and implementation of network technologies. Background includes hands-on experience with multi-platform, LAN/WAN environments.

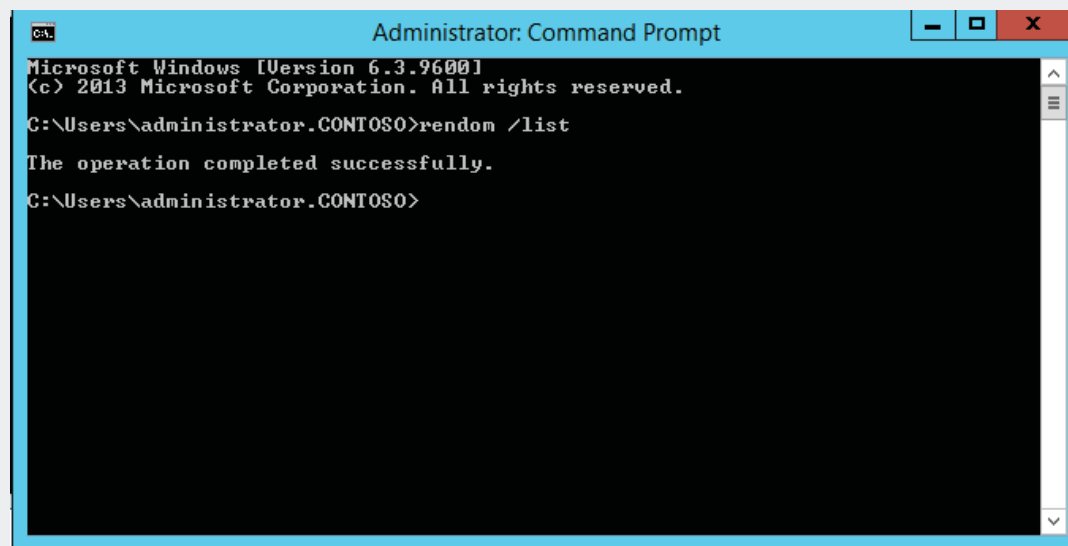
Demonstrated record of success in troubleshooting Servers, increasing efficiency, and optimizing the access and utilization of shared information. Specialist in extending technology services from corporate headquarters to field operations. Professionally certified in a wide range of networking technologies. This blog will use to share the experience, knowledge gain over the years and be

Also I went ahead and create the relevant DNS zone for new domain name in primary DNS server. (in my blog you can find complete dns article which explain about DNS zone setup)



Then in the member server log in as domain admin and open the command prompt with admin rights.

First we need to create a report which explains the current forest setup. To do that type `rdnsm /list` and press enter.



This will create an xml file with name `Domainlist.xml` in the path above command is executed. In my demo its `C:\Users\Administrator.CONTOSO`

a help for the others in the field. This is non-profit web site and for any inquiry about post or subject matter please feel free to contact me on [rebeladm@live.com](mailto:rebeladm@live.com)



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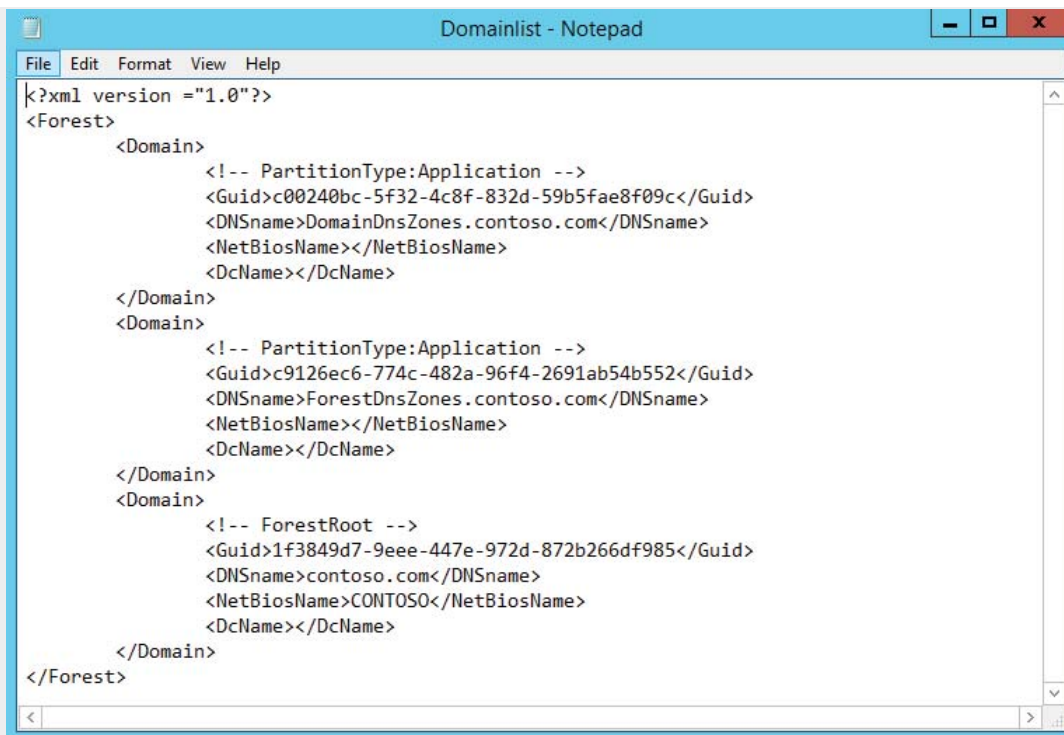
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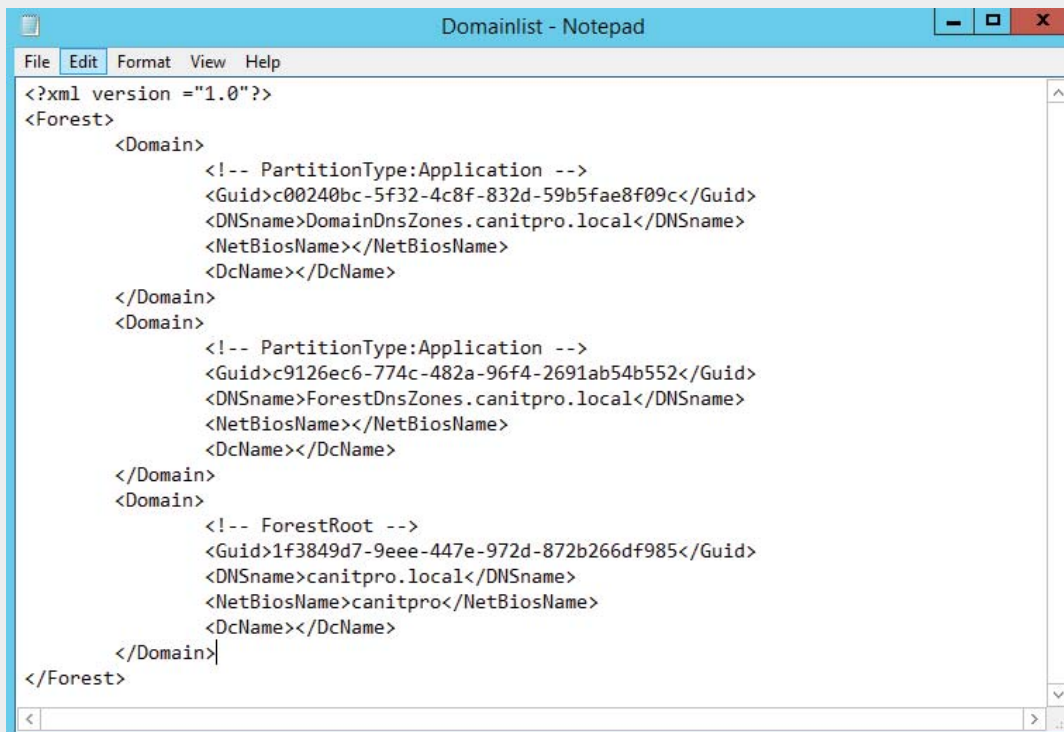


```

Domainlist - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
<?xml version="1.0"?>
<Forest>
  <Domain>
    <!-- PartitionType:Application -->
    <Guid>c00240bc-5f32-4c8f-832d-59b5fae8f09c</Guid>
    <DNSname>DomainDnsZones.contoso.com</DNSname>
    <NetBiosName></NetBiosName>
    <DcName></DcName>
  </Domain>
  <Domain>
    <!-- PartitionType:Application -->
    <Guid>c9126ec6-774c-482a-96f4-2691ab54b552</Guid>
    <DNSname>ForestDnsZones.contoso.com</DNSname>
    <NetBiosName></NetBiosName>
    <DcName></DcName>
  </Domain>
  <Domain>
    <!-- ForestRoot -->
    <Guid>1f3849d7-9eee-447e-972d-872b266df985</Guid>
    <DNSname>contoso.com</DNSname>
    <NetBiosName>CONTOSO</NetBiosName>
    <DcName></DcName>
  </Domain>
</Forest>

```

To proceed it need to be edited to match with the new domain name. Make sure you save the file after edits.



```

Domainlist - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
<?xml version="1.0"?>
<Forest>
  <Domain>
    <!-- PartitionType:Application -->
    <Guid>c00240bc-5f32-4c8f-832d-59b5fae8f09c</Guid>
    <DNSname>DomainDnsZones.canitpro.local</DNSname>
    <NetBiosName></NetBiosName>
    <DcName></DcName>
  </Domain>
  <Domain>
    <!-- PartitionType:Application -->
    <Guid>c9126ec6-774c-482a-96f4-2691ab54b552</Guid>
    <DNSname>ForestDnsZones.canitpro.local</DNSname>
    <NetBiosName></NetBiosName>
    <DcName></DcName>
  </Domain>
  <Domain>
    <!-- ForestRoot -->
    <Guid>1f3849d7-9eee-447e-972d-872b266df985</Guid>
    <DNSname>canitpro.local</DNSname>
    <NetBiosName>canitpro</NetBiosName>
    <DcName></DcName>
  </Domain>
</Forest>

```

Then type `rendom /upload` command from same folder path.

```
C:\Users\administrator.CONTOSO>rendom /upload
The operation completed successfully.
C:\Users\administrator.CONTOSO>
```

To check the domain readiness before the rename process type `rendom /prepare`

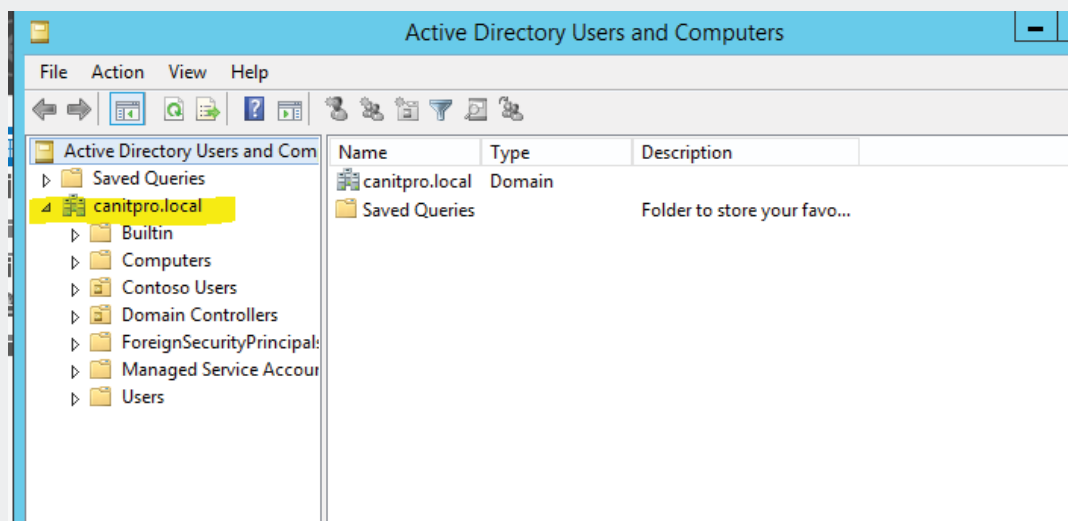
```
C:\Users\administrator.CONTOSO>rendom /prepare
Waiting for DCs to reply.
Waiting for DCs to reply.
DC.contoso.com was prepared successfully
1 server contacted, 0 servers returned Errors

The operation completed successfully.
C:\Users\administrator.CONTOSO>_
```

Once its pass with no errors, execute `rendom /execute` to proceed with rename. It will reboot all domain controllers automatically.

```
C:\Users\administrator.CONTOSO>rendom /execute
Waiting for DCs to reply.
Waiting for DCs to reply.
The script was executed successfully on DC.contoso.com
1 server contacted, 0 servers returned Errors

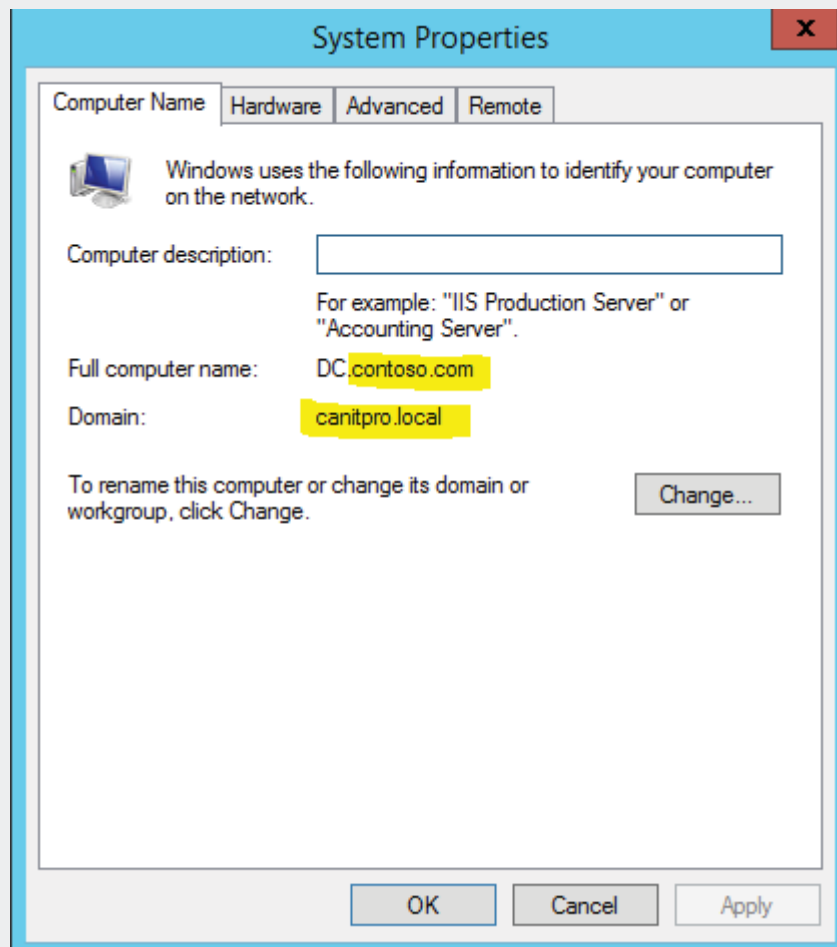
The operation completed successfully.
C:\Users\administrator.CONTOSO>
```



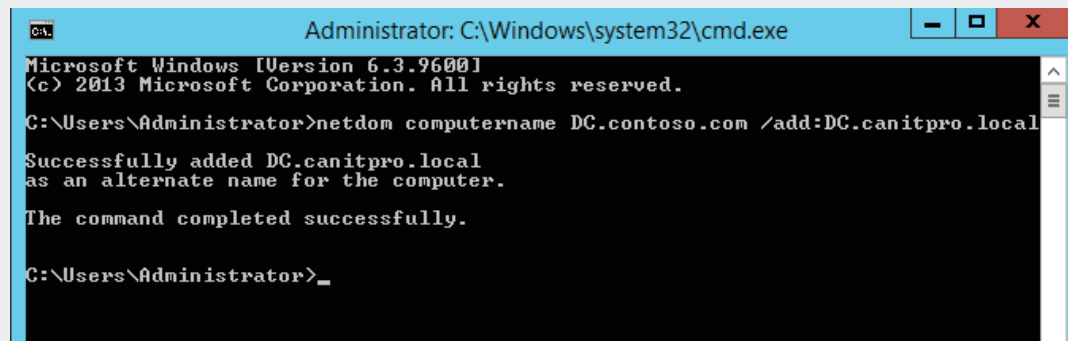
All workstations and servers will need to reboot twice to apply changes. Username

and password will not change, but the domain name will be new one.

With rename process domain controllers will not be renamed. Those need to change manually.



It can do using command `netdom computername DC.contoso.com /add:DC.canitpro.local`

The image shows a Windows command prompt window titled 'Administrator: C:\Windows\system32\cmd.exe'. The prompt shows the command `netdom computername DC.contoso.com /add:DC.canitpro.local` being executed. The output of the command is: `Successfully added DC.canitpro.local as an alternate name for the computer. The command completed successfully.`

Then type `netdom computername DC.contoso.com /makeprimary:DC.canitpro.local` once complete, reboot the DC.

```
Administrator: C:\Windows\system32\cmd.exe
Microsoft Windows [Version 6.3.9600]
(c) 2013 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

C:\Users\Administrator>netdom computername DC.contoso.com /add:DC.canitpro.local

Successfully added DC.canitpro.local
as an alternate name for the computer.

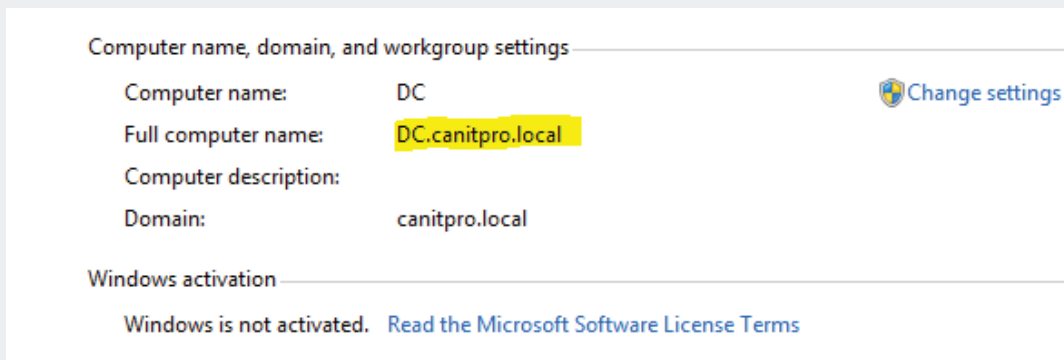
The command completed successfully.

C:\Users\Administrator>netdom computername DC.contoso.com /makeprimary:DC.canitp
ro.local
Successfully made DC.canitpro.local
the primary name for the computer. The computer must be rebooted for this name
change to take effect. Until then this computer may not be able to authenticate
users and other computers, and may not be authenticated by other computers in
the forest. The specified new name was removed from the list of alternate
computer names. The primary computer name will be set to the specified new
name after the reboot.

The command completed successfully.

C:\Users\Administrator>
```

We can see it's changed after reboot.



Computer name, domain, and workgroup settings

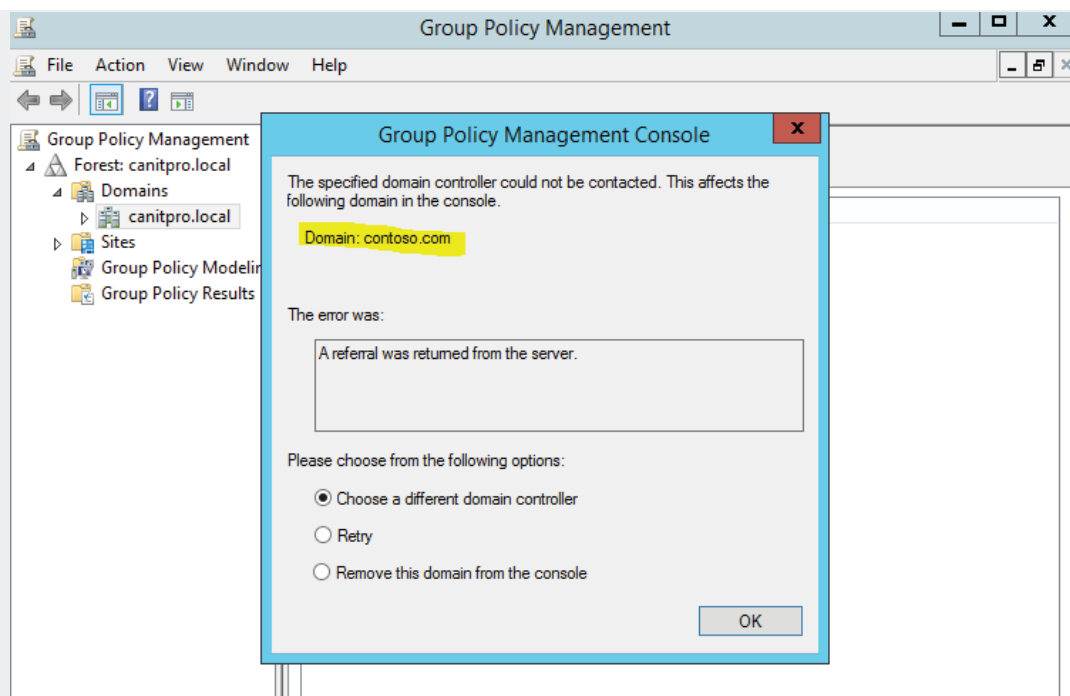
Computer name:	DC	<a href="#">Change settings</a>
Full computer name:	DC.canitpro.local	
Computer description:		
Domain:	canitpro.local	

Windows activation

Windows is not activated. [Read the Microsoft Software License Terms](#)

The next thing we need to fix is the group policies. It's still uses the old domain name.





To fix this type and enter `gpfixup /olddns:contoso.com /newdns:canitpro.local`

```
Administrator: C:\Windows\system32\cmd.exe
Microsoft Windows [Version 6.3.9600]
(c) 2013 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

C:\Users\Administrator>gpfixup /olddns:contoso.com /newdns:canitpro.local
Group Policy fix up utility Version 1.1 (Microsoft)

Start fixing group policy (GroupPolicyContainer) objects:
.....
Start fixing site group policy links:
-
Start fixing non-site group policy links:
----
gpfixup tool executed with success.
C:\Users\Administrator>
```

Then run `gpfixup /oldnb:CONTOSO /newnb:canitpro`

```
C:\Users\Administrator>gpfixup /oldnb:CONTOSO /newnb:canitpro
Group Policy fix up utility Version 1.1 (Microsoft)

Start fixing group policy (GroupPolicyContainer) objects:
--
gpfixup tool executed with success.
C:\Users\Administrator>
```

We done with that too. The only thing we need to run is `rendom /end` to stop the rename process and unfreeze the DC activity.



```
C:\Users\Administrator>rendom /end  
The operation completed successfully.  
C:\Users\Administrator>
```

This ends the rename process and we have a dc now with a new domain name.

If you have any question about this feel free to contact me on [rebeladm@live.com](mailto:rebeladm@live.com)

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## 35 COMMENTS



lam nguyen

December 21, 2015 at 7:54 pm

nice post. thanks for your time

REPLY

[Serg](#)