



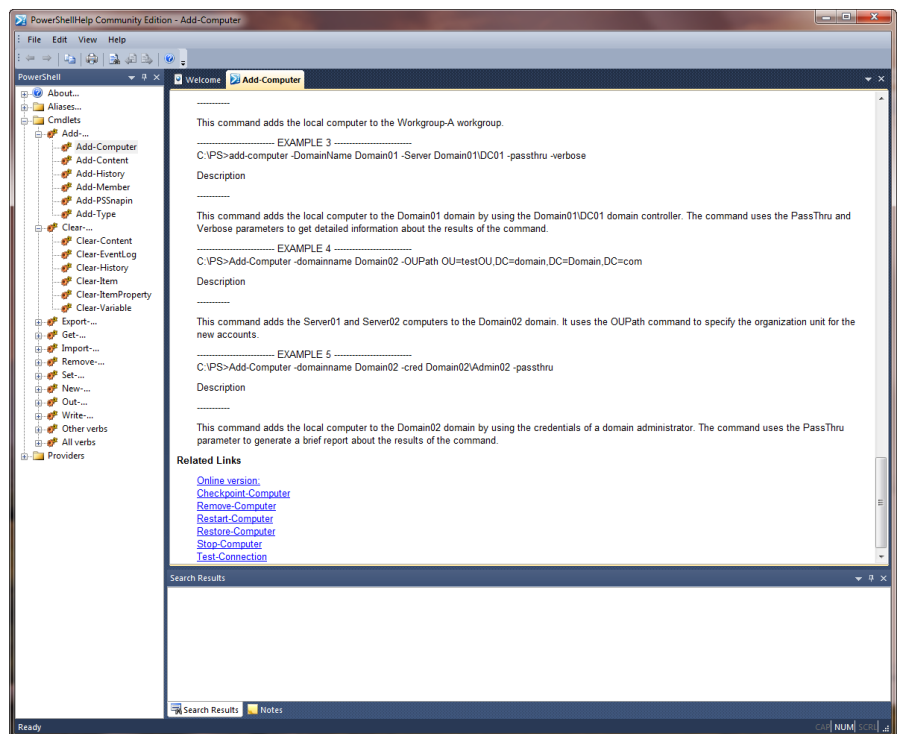
Quick Guide

With Powershell V2.0's increased number of built-in cmdlets you need all the help you can get. Add to that the number of available snapins on a variety of platforms and you need a serious tool for the job.

SAPIEN Powershell Help 2.0

Powershell has a built-in help, which comes in really handy at times. You can just type help <command> and it displays the information right there in the console. However, if you need to do research or some more extensive reading the console really is not the right tool for the job. The CHM file provided by Microsoft with Powershell V2 is a bit better but still not ideal. It's a closed file and there is no option of adding other Microsoft or third party snapin information to it.

The new version of our Powershell help tool allows you to do exactly that: Add any xml help file from other vendors and also scan and add the about files from them. The content is extracted and reformatted into HTML and presented in a more readable fashion than a text based console could provide. This new version of our popular Powershell Help no longer requires a running instance of Powershell, which makes startup



quite a bit faster and removes the dependency on installed snapins. All the help content and about files of PowerShell V2 are pre-imported, but you can re-import the content at any time if there are updates or you need it in a different language.

Most importantly this allows you

to import PowerShell help files for snapins that cannot be installed on your machine. Let's say you write PowerShell scripts for some server technology that only runs on Windows 2008 64-bit, but your desktop computer is your trusted XP 32-bit workhorse. You can never reference that help content in your local



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Powershell instance, you need a constant remote connection to get to that information.

With our Powershell Help you can simply import the xml help file on your machine and it is merged with all the other information.

Now let's have a look at all the features in this new version:

Cmdlet and About files

Just as in PrimalScript 2009's built in Object Explorer, cmdlets are shown grouped by popular verbs. The content itself is automatically reformatted into a more readable HTML format on import even though About files still use a fixed font. Since these files where specifically formatted for a console window this just makes for a better reading experience.

As the content is imported from the original Powershell xml help files, the actual text is the same as if you would use a "help <topic> -full" command from the console.

Hyperlinks

The Cmdlet help topics all contain a section "Related Links". SAPIEN's Powershell Help automatically hyperlinks these to their corresponding topics,

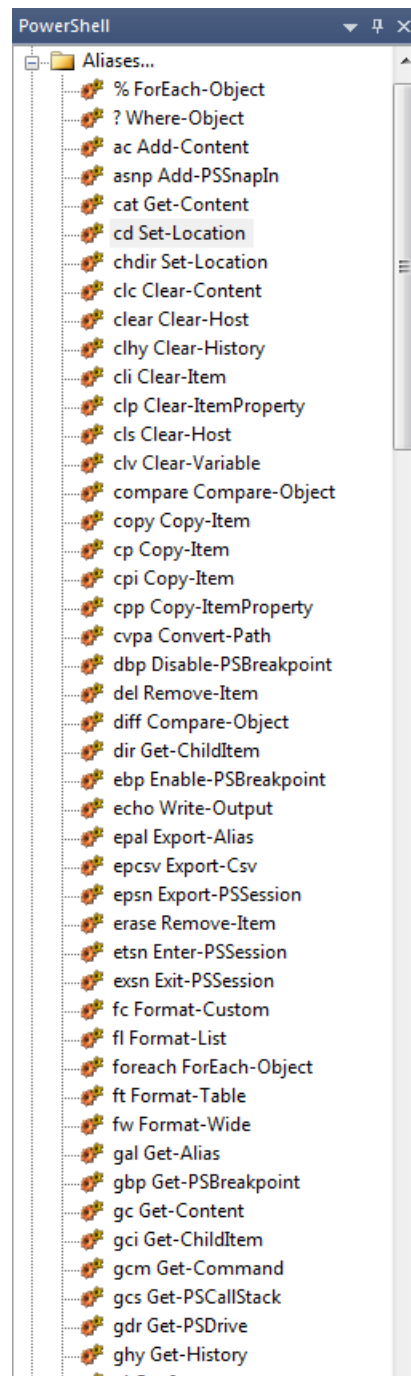
whether they are other cmdlets, web pages or about articles. About articles are hyperlinked even within their text, so every sample or mention of a cmdlet or shown URL becomes a clickable link. Since this happens automatically on import, this also applies to any content you import yourself.

Navigating viewed content

While browsing documentation or help files you sometimes follow down the wrong path when following hyperlinked pages and you may need to retrace your steps. Our PowerShell Help keeps track of the topics you visit and allows you to follow the trail back to the original item you were reading.

Alias list

The left hand tree which provides an organized view of the available content also contains a section for the aliases available in Powershell V2. These aliases are already shown with their equivalent cmdlet right there in the list, so most of the times you can just glance at it to know what an alias does. You can of course click on any one of them at any time to navigate to the cmdlet.



Online links

Microsoft provides online links in the "Related Links" section of

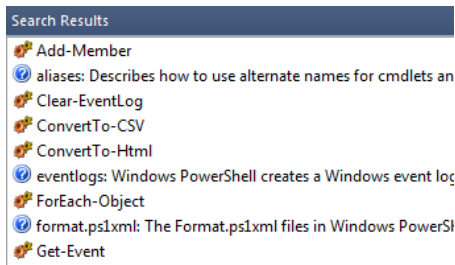


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virtually all cmdlets, acknowledging that the information on your computer maybe not be up-to-date or enhanced at a later time. Powershell Help can follow these links by simply clicking on them. An embedded instance of Microsoft Internet Explorer is used to display the online content in a separate tab.

Full text search

No help tool really is of much use without search capabilities. If you are working on a script handling event logs it is quite handy to have the option of see-



ing all related content. The standard case and whole word matching options are available as well as an option to include or exclude about content from your search.

Easy result navigation

The results of your search are shown in a docked window on the bottom, alphabetically ordered by title and shown with

their respective category icon. Just as in PrimalScript you can of course right click and make this into a full size view window or simply undock it if you like.

Dedicated keyboard shortcuts, toolbar buttons and menu commands make it easy to move up and down the list of search results.

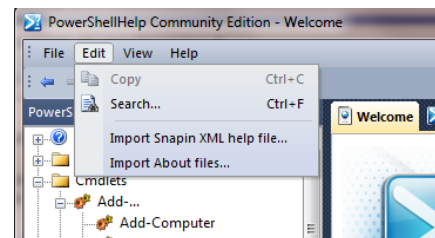
Taking notes

Documentation is not always complete or comprehensive enough. Sometimes a condensed version of what you learned or a sample for using a cmdlet would be handy to keep around. In your textbooks you used highlighters and sticky notes to do that. In Powershell Help you can simply add any text to the notes for any particular topic. There is no need to load or save anything. Just type or paste into the Notes window and it will be stored and automatically retrieved and displayed again if you re-visit the topic.

Importing external content

As mentioned before, Powershell Help makes it really easy to import xml help files for any snapin you may have. If the snapin's help file work from the Powershell console you shouldn't

have any trouble importing it. Just click on "Edit" and "Import Snapin XML Help File..." and select the file.



About files are always imported in a batch fashion. Choose a folder containing files named about_*.txt from "Edit" and "Import About Files..." and they should all appear in the list. No restart required.

Comments or Suggestions?

SAPIEN PowerShell Help is a community tool, so there is no dedicated technical support for it. Nonetheless we would like to hear from you, so please head over to

<http://support.sapien.com> and visit the free tools support forum. Let us know what we can do to improve this tool or tell us what you think.

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