

# **Active Directory Health Check an Introduction**

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One of the most critical and challenging aspects of today's networked computing environments is ensuring that all network services are functioning optimally. The CTCS Systems Network Health Checks proactively examine your network resources to determine the health of your environment and that all resources are readily available and performing as expected.

Why should you perform a Microsoft® Active Directory® Health Check?

A directory service is the main switchboard of a network operating system. It manages the Identities and brokers the relationships between distributed resources so that they can work together. Further, a directory service is a place to store information about corporate and organisational assets such as applications, files, printers, and users. It provides a consistent method for naming, describing, locating, accessing, managing, and securing information about the resources.

Microsoft Active Directory was designed to be feature-rich, flexible, and scalable. Active Directory requires a considerable investment of time during the initial planning and design stages as well as throughout the life of the network. As the networking environment changes, it is critical to ensure that Active Directory continues to function as required.

Some of the areas of Active Directory that often require attention include:

1. Schema or Global Catalog replications do not occur optimally, causing intermittent directory problems and Exchange issues
2. FSMO roles and Global Catalogs are not distributed effectively, causing unnecessary traffic
3. DDNS updates and zone transfers do not occur correctly, causing network services to be unavailable.
4. Site topology map does not match physical topology, causing inefficient logins and directory lookups.

The CTCS Active Directory Health Check helps verify that your Microsoft directory service is healthy, and that you have good practices in place, so your directory service is reliable and robust.

## The Active Directory Health Check

The CTCS Active Directory Health Check examines your current Microsoft Directory service environment, detects any deficiencies or problems, and provides appropriate recommendations.

This health check covers the following areas:

1. Service pack and hot fix status – We assess your currently installed service packs and hot fixes to determine if there are any deficiencies.
2. Active Directory replication status – Are your AD objects replicating correctly? We assess your Active Directory replication and any related issues.
3. DNS status – We examine aspects of your DNS environment (DDNS registrations, zone transfers, etc.) to determine if there are any issues relating to DNS.
4. Site topology – We assess your site topology to determine if it matches your physical topology for efficient AD replications and logins.
5. Global Catalog distribution – Are your Global Catalogs located where they should be in your network? Do you have enough GCs, yet not too many that they create inefficiencies?
6. We assess and determine if your Global Catalog distribution is optimal for your environment.
7. Schema health – We assess your AD schema and determine if there are any inconsistencies within your schema.
8. FSMO role distribution – We will determine if your FSMO roles are properly distributed in your AD environment.
9. Backup and recovery procedures – We help determine if you are backing up your AD properly, and if you have appropriate AD recovery procedures in place.
10. Fault tolerance / High availability capacity – We assess your environment for AD fault tolerance and high availability.

At the end of the Active Directory Health Check, CTCS Systems will present a complete report of its findings, grading your Active Directory service on the aspects we examined during the health check.

This report will point out where you are meeting your objectives and where you are deficient. It will also provide a list of recommendations to bring any deficiencies into alignment with your goals.

Analysis and recommendations are based upon National Institute of Standards and Technology guidelines, manufacturer recommendations, and CTCS Systems best practices.

Each Health Check Customised to Your Specific Needs

The CTCS Systems Active Directory Health Check is designed provide maximum value With a minimum investment of time and money.

Depending on the size and complexity of your network, the Active Directory Health Check requires between 2 to 5 days of services. CTCS Systems will provide a detailed Scope of Work, which will outline estimated costs and timeframe based on your specific needs and requirements