

Active Directory Migration Solutions Comparison: Quest® vs. Native Tools

This document compares Quest's Active Directory migration solutions to the Microsoft Active Directory Migration Tool (ADMT) version 3.2. Quest's portfolio offers many advantages when performing complex AD migration projects, including a number of important differentiators.

This document reflects comparison research performed in September 2022.

Key benefits of using Quest migration products for Active Directory:

- **Supports all migration scenarios** — Execute more complex migration scenarios because Quest supports trustless migrations, performs migrations to Azure-only environments, and integrates seamlessly with other Quest products for enhanced functionality.
- **Offers full project management functionality** — Take advantage of more project management capabilities with SaaS options and web-based consoles. Key differentiators are full rollback, multi-agent architecture, task-based delegation and distributed resource processing (permissions updating).
- **Provides full directory migration** — Migrate all types of objects, including users, groups, computers, volumes, printers, contacts, organizational units (OUs), network topology (sites, subnet, site links), and directory permissions.
- **Delivers extensive resource processing** — Process a much wider spectrum of resources common for enterprise configurations — SQL, Systems Management Server (SMS)/System Center Configuration Manager, Exchange and SharePoint — including a complete resource update of workstations, laptops and servers.
- **Offers efficient cleanup** — Clean up all evidence that a migration was ever performed by removing source permissions on resources post migration, including security identifier (SID) history.
- **Ensures true coexistence** — Minimize the impact to end users and administrators during migration with continuous directory synchronization.
- **Supports remote workstation end-to-end migration** — Fully process and migrate a remotely connected workstation without impacting your remote workforce.
- **Provides BitLocker support** — Successfully migrate a BitLocker-encrypted workstation seamlessly, without the need to decrypt and encrypt.

Supported migration types

Capability	QUEST	ADMT	Details
Inter-forest	●	●	QUEST non-destructively clones objects and allows you to migrate in open sets. ADMT destructively moves objects and requires you to migrate in closed sets. SID history is required.
Intra-forest	●	●	
Trustless inter-forest	●	○	QUEST can migrate without the need to create a trust. ADMT requires a trust to function.
Azure Active Directory	●	○	QUEST supports Azure AD as a source and target for directory synchronization and can migrate devices to Azure AD target environments ADMT does not support Azure AD as a source or target

Project management

Capability	QUEST	ADMT	Details
Centralized control	●	●	QUEST allows multiple servers to support the migration while maintaining centralized control. ADMT requires a single instance to maintain centralized control.
Scalable architecture	●	○	QUEST allows for multiple servers to support the migration process to meet any technical requirements. ADMT requires a single instance to maintain centralized control; scaling the architecture requires deployment of additional instances.
Software as a Service (SaaS)	●	○	QUEST has both SaaS and on-premises options. ADMT does not have a SaaS option.
Project-oriented user interface	●	○	QUEST presents a project-based user interface with web-based consoles. ADMT is a task-based user interface.
Delegation of tasks	●	○	QUEST allows for task-based delegation within the product. ADMT requires native permissions delegation in AD to delegate the migration.
Statistics	●	○	QUEST provides statistics portal display details about the migration process. ADMT does not have this feature.

Support and product updates

Capability	QUEST	ADMT	Details
24x7 product support	●	○	QUEST comes with 24x7 product support and a web-based community to help with troubleshooting and issues that might arise during the migration. ADMT support is limited to a web-based forum.
Web-based forums	●	●	
Product updates	●	○	QUEST products are frequently updated to provide additional functionality and support newer technologies and operating systems. ADMT last released an update in 2010. Microsoft states that when performing migrations of newer operating systems that you do so at your own risk and that your experience may vary.

● Full support ● Partial support ○ No support

Active Directory supported environments

Capability	QUEST	ADMT	Details
Windows 2000	●	○ ¹	<p>QUEST supports the migration to and from all supported AD environments with a Windows 2000 functional level or higher. Source and target directory functional levels can be different.</p> <p>ADMT was updated to remove version checking to support newly released Windows versions. Source and target directory functional levels must be the same.</p>
Windows Server 2003	●	●	
Windows Server 2008	●	●	
Windows Server 2008 R2	●	●	
Windows Server 2012	●	●	
Windows Server 2012 R2	●	●	
Windows Server 2016	●	●	
Windows Server 2019	●	●	
Windows Server 2022	●	●	

¹ Requires ADMT version 3.1 to support Windows 2000

Operating system support for AD migrations and Hybrid Azure AD migrations

Capability	QUEST	ADMT	Details
Server operating systems			
Windows 2008 & 2008 R2	●	●	<p>QUEST supports all modern Windows operating systems.</p> <p>ADMT states that Windows 2012 and later have not been tested for modern applications and profile migrations.</p>
Windows 2012 & 2012 R2	●	●	
Windows 2016	●	●	
Windows 2019	●	●	
Windows 2022	●	●	
Server Core OS	●	○	
Workstation operating systems			
Windows 7	●	●	<p>QUEST supports all modern Windows operating systems.</p> <p>ADMT states that it has not been updated for Windows 8.1 and newer.</p>
Windows 8 and 8.1	●	●	
Windows 10	●	●	
Windows 11	●	●	

Operating system support for Azure AD migrations

Capability	QUEST	ADMT	Details
Server operating systems			
Windows 10	●	○	<p>QUEST supports workstation migrations from AD and Hybrid Azure AD to Azure AD.</p> <p>ADMT does not support workstation migrations to or from Azure AD.</p>
Windows 11	●	○	

● Full support
 ● Partial support
 ○ No support

Directory migration

Capability	QUEST	ADMT	Details
User objects	●	●	QUEST allows you to change many attributes during the migration and can also migrate Users and Groups as Contact objects, if required for GAL Sync. ADMT limits changes to a few attributes.
Group objects	●	●	
Computer objects	●	○	QUEST can migrate computer objects to maintain group membership, if required. ADMT will migrate computer objects when the computer is moved.
Printer objects	●	○	QUEST can migrate printer objects. ADMT cannot migrate printer objects. This must be done manually.
Volume objects	●	○	QUEST can migrate volume objects. ADMT cannot migrate volume objects. This must be done manually.
Contact objects	●	○	QUEST can migrate contact objects. ADMT cannot migrate contact objects. This must be done manually.
OU objects	●	○	QUEST can migrate OU objects and their delegation (permissions). ADMT cannot migrate OUs.
Password migration	●	●	QUEST will migrate passwords without the need for any additional software. Additionally, all existing passwords will be successfully migrated without the need to mirror password policies. ADMT can optionally use Password Export Server version 3.2 and must be installed on a domain controller.
Rollback	●	●	QUEST allows for session-based undo for all sessions for both inter-forest and intra-forest migrations. ADMT only allows undo for inter-forest migrations and only for the last session run. There is no rollback option for intra-forest migrations as it is destructively moves the object.

Coexistence

Capability	QUEST	ADMT	Details
Directory synchronization	●	○	QUEST includes an attribute-level directory sync to deliver continuous replication of changes throughout the migration, with options for bi-directional attribute and password synchronization. ADMT requires multiple sessions to replicate changes during the migration, adding additional steps to the daily migration process.
Password sync	●	○	QUEST can perform near-real-time password sync independently from migration jobs. ADMT only migrates passwords in conjunction with account migration jobs.
Exchange enablement	●	○	QUEST can enable objects (mail or mailbox) in preparation for an Exchange migration. ADMT does not support this Exchange enablement.
Office 365	●	○	QUEST can synchronize several Exchange-related attributes to the authentication forest to support a direct migration of mailboxes to Office 365. ADMT does not support this function.

● Full support ● Partial support ○ No support

Resource processing details

Capability	QUEST	ADMT	Details
File system	●	●	Both QUEST and ADMT process these types of resources on servers and workstations.
Local groups	●	●	
Printers	●	●	
Registry	●	●	
Shares	●	●	
User profiles	●	●	
User rights	●	●	
Service login account	●	●	QUEST updates service login accounts as part of the resource processing task with its Resource Update Manager. ADMT requires a different process to be executed to update only the service login accounts.
Roaming profiles	●	●	QUEST can process roaming profiles where they are stored. ADMT processes roaming profiles on the workstation.
Terminal services profiles	●	○	QUEST updates terminal services profiles with its Resource Update Manager. ADMT requires you to manually reconfigure the profiles.
Scheduled tasks	●	○	QUEST updates the login for all scheduled tasks with its Resource Update Manager. ADMT does not support this function.
COM+/DCOM	●	○	QUEST updates the permissions for all COM+/DCOM objects with its Resource Update Manager. ADMT does not support this function.
IIS	●	○	QUEST updates the login for application pools with its Resource Update Manager. ADMT does not support this function.
Distributed resource updating	●	○	QUEST can be deployed on multiple hosts with its Resource Update Manager. ADMT does not support this function.
Remote processing	●	○	QUEST supports agentless (remote) resource processing. ADMT does not support this function.
Reparse point processing	●	○	QUEST can process reparse points including support for OneDrive Files On-Demand. ADMT does not support this function.
Delegation	●	○	QUEST supports an internal delegation model for task-based delegation, allowing you to delegate tasks to other migration engineers on the team. ADMT supports a native delegation model. All domain admins can use it, but it does not have task delegation.
Workstations/servers with active firewalls	●	○	QUEST supports the deployment of the agent through any existing software deployment tool. The agent pulls any resource processing tasks, so there are no firewalls to reconfigure. ADMT requires you to push the agent, which requires each firewall to be reconfigured.
Delegated task process model	●	○	QUEST completes all tasks for the migration as executed in the security context defined by the tools configuration. ADMT requires the operator to hold the needed access to execute the task.
BitLocker-encrypted systems	●	○	QUEST completes the migration of a BitLocker-encrypted host without any additional effort needed from the migration operator. ADMT does not support this function.

Support platforms for resource processing

Capability	QUEST	ADMT	Details
Windows server	●	●	See the "Operating system support" section.
Windows workstation	●	●	See the "Operating system support" section.
Network-attached storage (NAS)/CIFS servers	●	○	QUEST supports non-Microsoft operating systems that support Windows-based permissions using the command line utility. ADMT does not support NAS/CIFS. This requires a manual process to extract, translate and reapply permissions.
Exchange 2000–2019	●	○	QUEST updates all permissions within Exchange resources with an Exchange Processing Wizard. ADMT does not support Exchange permissions. This requires a manual process to extract, translate and reapply permissions.
SQL Server	●	○	QUEST updates all permissions within SQL Servers with a SQL Processing Wizard. ADMT does not support SQL permissions. This requires a manual process to extract, translate and reapply permissions.
SharePoint server	●	○	QUEST updates all permissions within SharePoint servers with a SharePoint Processing Wizard. ADMT does not support SharePoint permissions.
SMS/System Center Operations Manager (SCOM)	●	○	QUEST updates all permissions within SMS or SCOM servers with an SMS Processing Wizard. ADMT requires manual processes for this function.
Active Directory	●	○	QUEST supports the migration and translation of the security descriptor and group membership in trusting domains. ADMT does not migrate security descriptors; all permissions must be granted manually.
Remote workstations	●	○	QUEST supports the migration of VPN-connected workstations without the need to involve support personnel. Cached accounts used to access the workstation are maintained. ADMT does not address this use case.

Cleanup

Capability	QUEST	ADMT	Details
Disable source users	●	●	QUEST supports disabling source users, cleaning up permissions and selectively cleaning up (per OU) MMAD-applied SID history. To preserve network security, the SID history attribute of objects should be cleaned up after migration.
Clean up permissions	●	●	
Clean up SID history	●	○	ADMT allows you to disable source users and clean up source permissions on resources after migration, but it does not clean up SID history.

● Full support ● Partial support ○ No support

About Quest

Quest creates software solutions that make the benefits of new technology real in an increasingly complex IT landscape. From database and systems management, to Active Directory and Microsoft 365 migration and management, and cybersecurity resilience, Quest helps customers solve their next IT challenge now. Around the globe, more than 130,000 companies and 95% of the Fortune 500 count on Quest to deliver proactive management and monitoring for the next enterprise initiative, find the next solution for complex Microsoft challenges and stay ahead of the next threat. Quest Software. Where next meets now. For more information, visit www.quest.com.

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