

Corporate Product Review: ESET



Excerpt from

Review of IT Security Suites for Corporate Users, 2009

Language: English

May 2009

Last revision date: 2009-05-28

www.av-comparatives.org



ESET

Test Software:

ESET Smart Security	→	Overall Endpoint Protection
ESET NOD32 Antivirus for Windows Server	→	File Server Protection
ESET NOD32 Antivirus for Exchange	→	Exchange Server Mail Protection
ESET Remote Administrator Console	→	Administration

Installation Procedure:

Downloading the Products:

The manufacturer’s page has been structured neatly and coherently and it is possible to download the software without registration.

The time taken for downloads were as follows:

essbe_nt32_enu.msi
(35 MB) ⇒ 23 sec. (1.52MB/sec.)

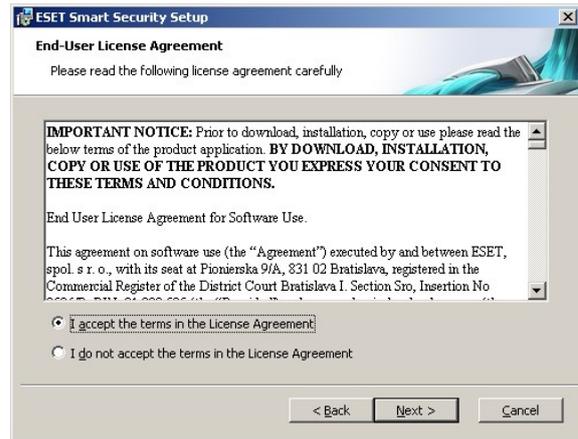
era_server_nt32_enu.msi
(22.2 MB) ⇒ 18 sec. (1.23MB/sec.)

era_console_nt32_enu.msi
(14.3 MB) ⇒ 12 sec. (1.19MB/sec.)

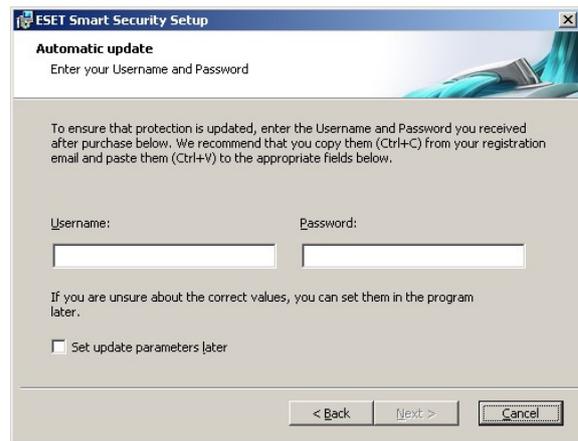
Installing the Products:

To begin with, you should take the manual and study it thoroughly. You can save yourself plenty of effort if you learn about the requirements of the Clients beforehand.

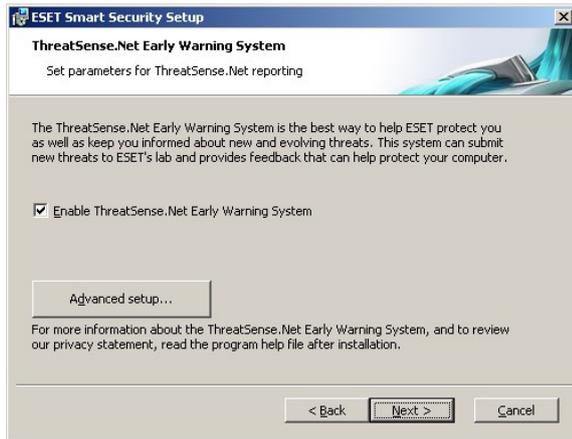
We begin with the installation of ESET Smart Security.



The default settings are a pleasant surprise for us at this stage.



You can specify the registration information at the time of setup itself or you can enter these in the program subsequently.

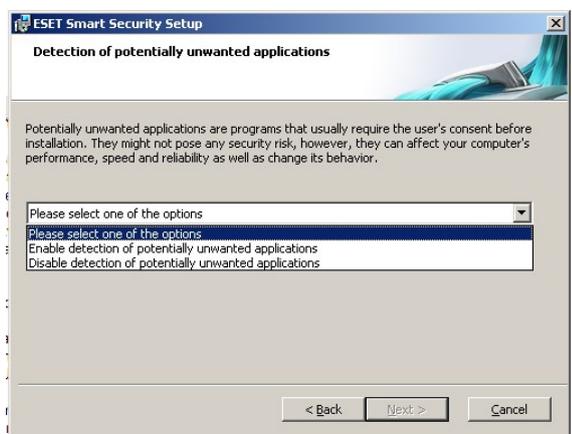
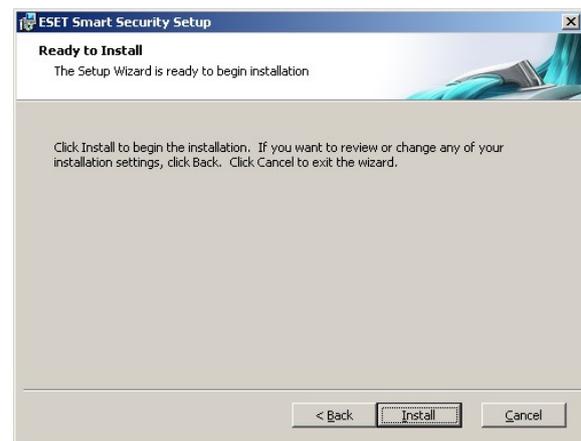


You can define certain rudimentary installation protection settings at this stage.



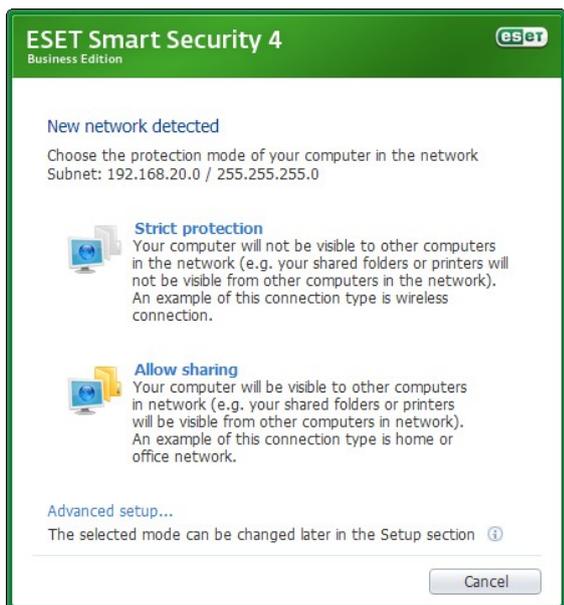
ThreatSense.Net integration is enabled by default. Every organization should make a decision regarding the data that is exchanged automatically, especially in high-end security environments.

For the test carried out by us we enabled this protection.



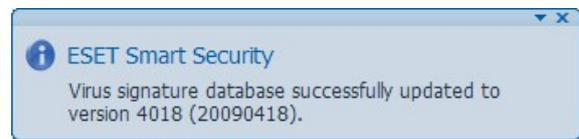


The Smart Security suite welcomes you after the installation has been completed. There is no reboot required.



The Network Security screen is the next one displayed.

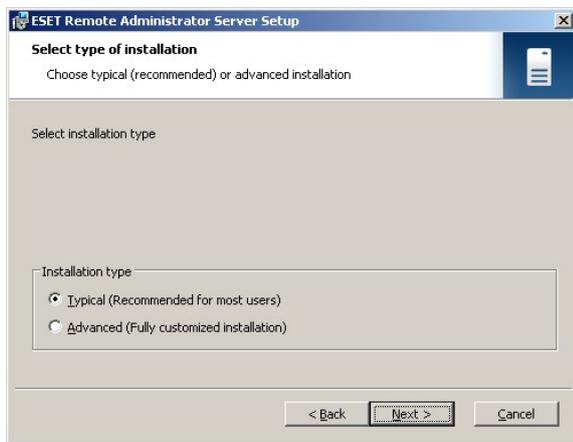
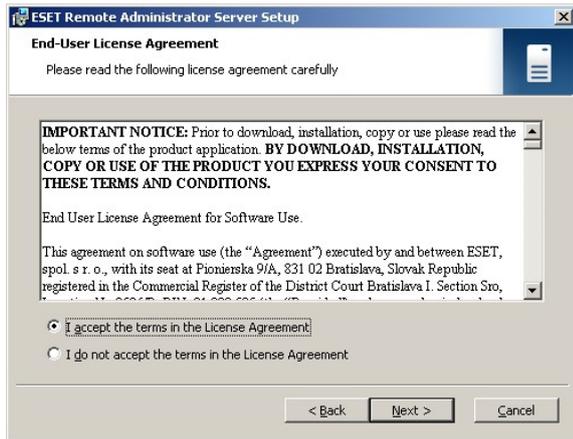
One potential issue we saw during testing is the firewall disables connections when prompting the administrator to set the protection level for the network. The administrator will need to set this manually. We think a better solution would be to configure this automatically during installation.



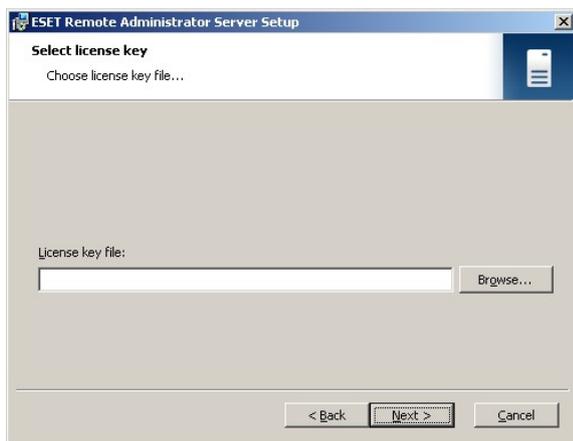
Messages appear on the taskbar and provide information regarding the status of the product.

We shall continue with the installation of the administrator console.

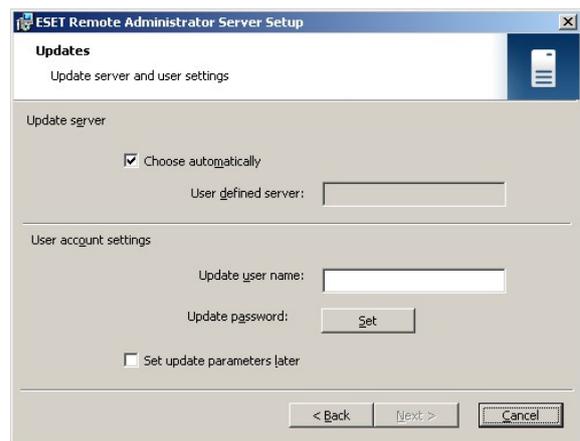




Here, too, we use the default settings for the purpose of our test.



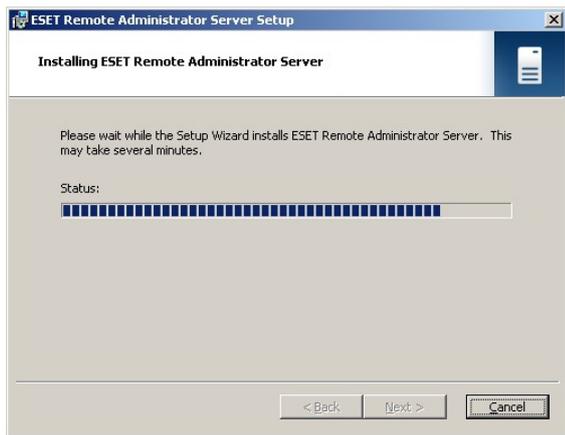
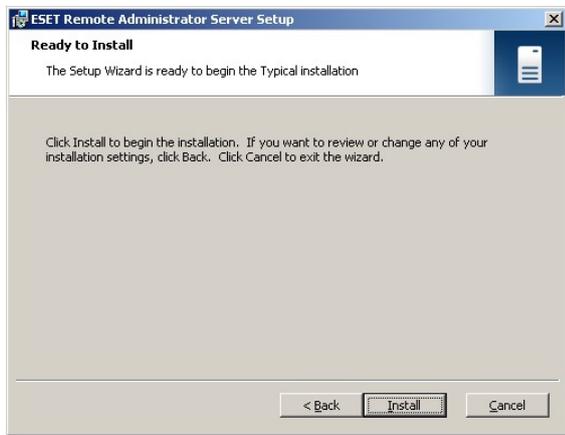
As in the case of Smart Security, you can specify the license file here.

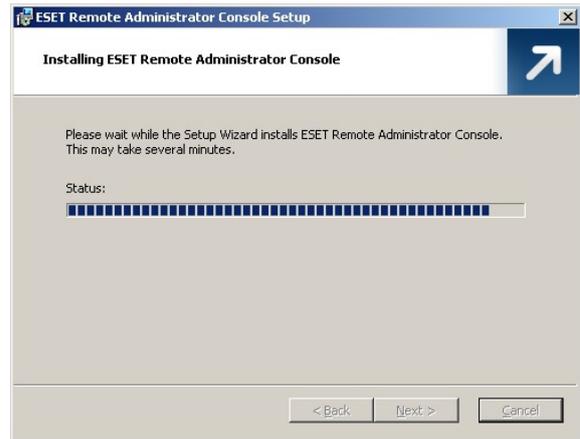
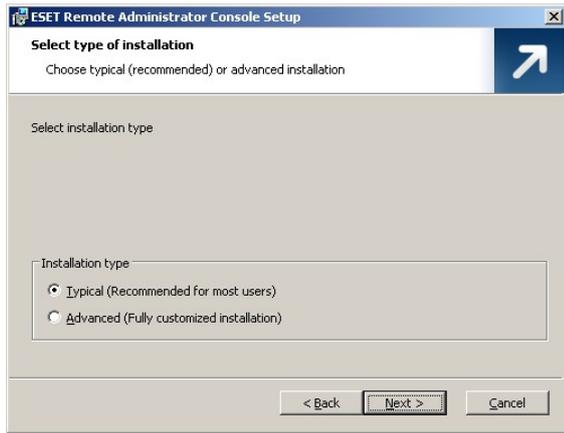


You can locate the update server in the next step and enter the required registration information.

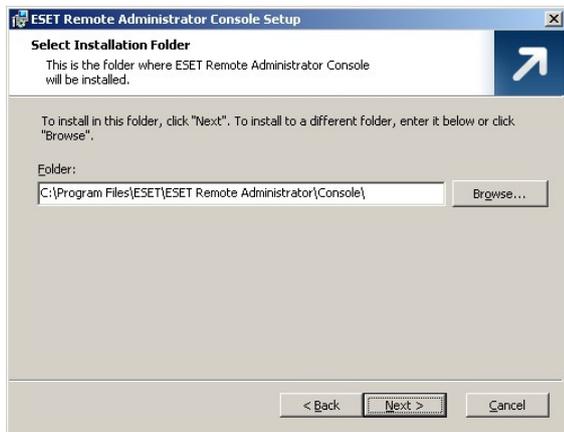


The installation of the remote administrator console is started immediately after completing the installation of the Remote Administrator Server:

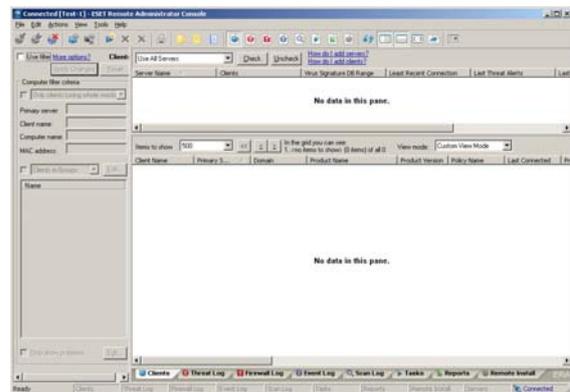
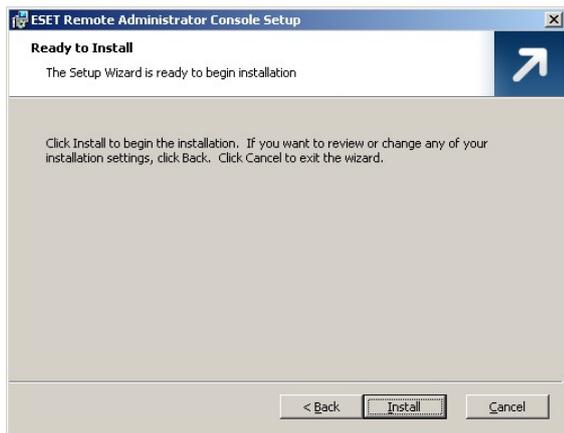




For the purpose of this test we used the default settings.



The remote administration console is started immediately after the installation is complete without a need to reboot.

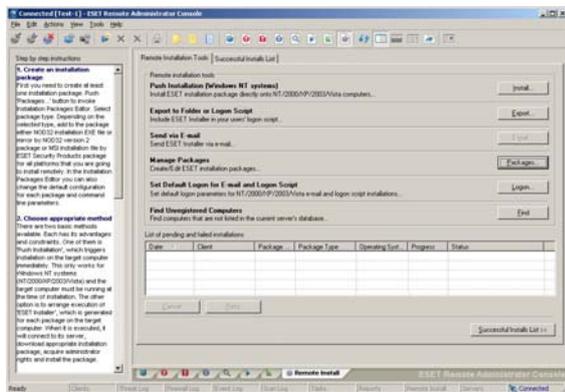


After confirming certain standard queries installation commences.

What you would like to have here is an automatic Connect to the remote administrator servers. However, this has to be done manually.

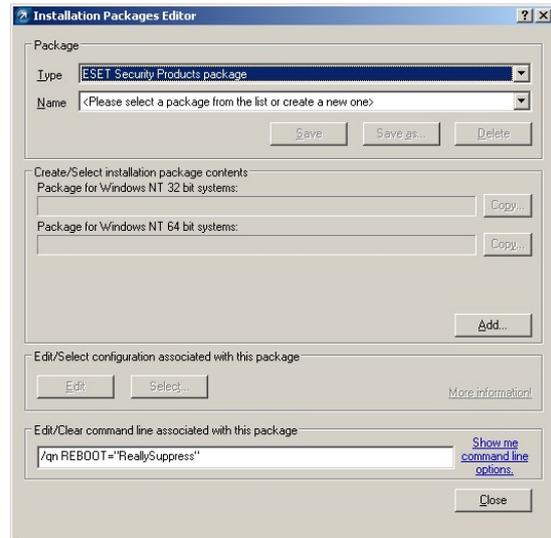


After establishing the link to the server, you proceed by clicking on the remote installation tab.

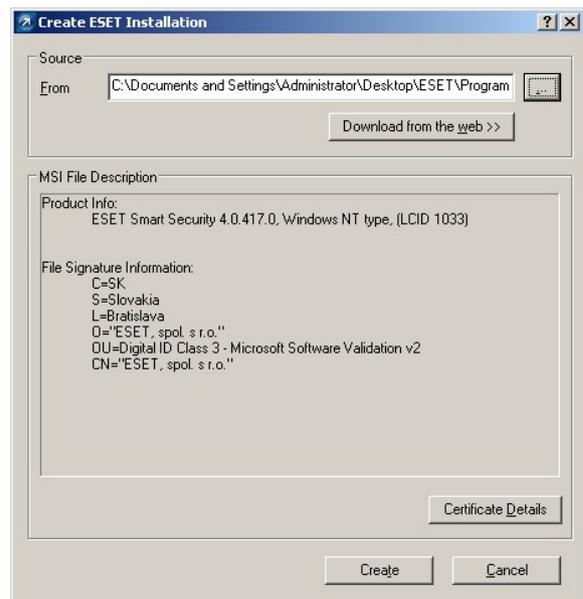


The variety of available options for remote installations is a good feature provided here.

We select the push method for our test. This option provides the push installation wizard. You can notice immediately that there are no limitations regarding the available configuration options.

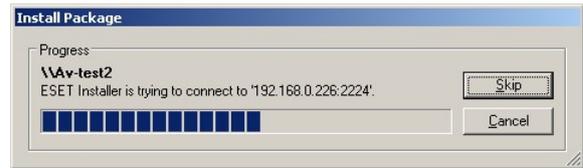
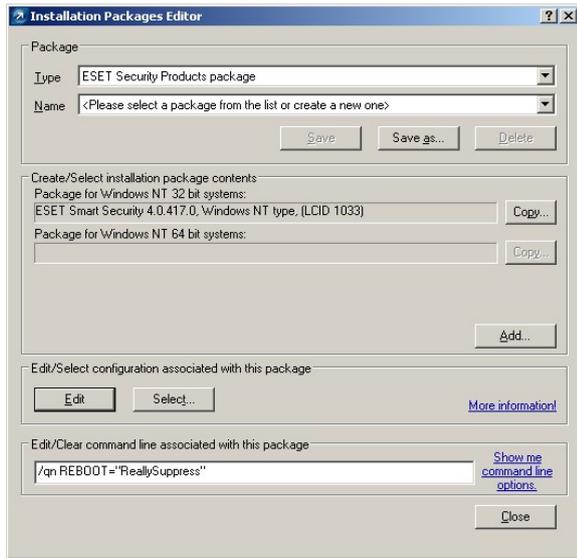


First, you have to set up an installation package. You have the option to fetch the package directly from the local PC or to download it via the Internet.



You can display all the necessary information about the MSI file selected using the MSI file description window.

You can assign readymade configurations to various packages. The flexibility and configuration options are particularly remarkable and noteworthy here.



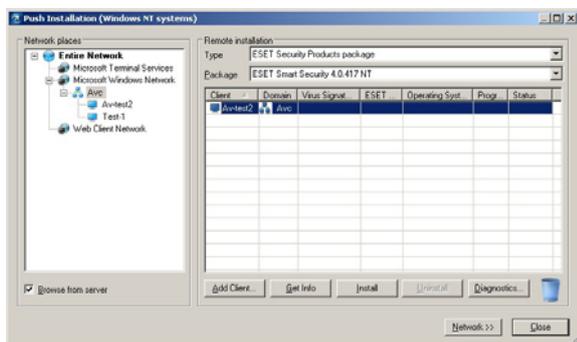
There is a very elegant status display while the packages are being installed on the clients.

However, after the installation has been completed successfully, there is no option to select the update or to execute it.



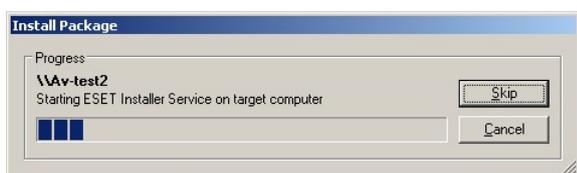
The packages are saved on the server after confirming the same.

You notice even with this list that ESET is ideally suited for very large networks.



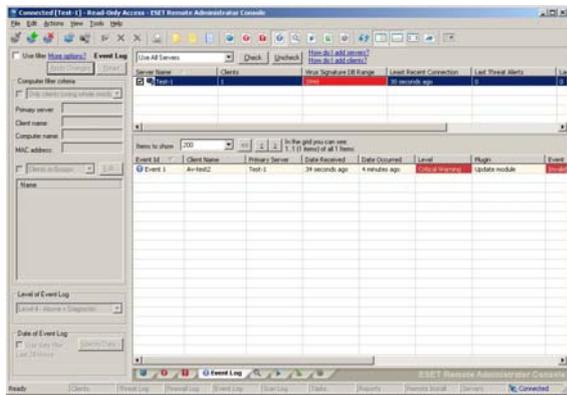
The default settings for the clients select the ESET's Internet servers as the standard update server and not the management server defined in the network. You should change this setting since it is not desirable to fetch the signatures of each client separately from the Internet.

The greatest weakness of the ESET suite is undoubtedly the administration console, which has been designed in a very cumbersome and unwieldy manner. This console has the worst logging feature amongst all the products tested and there is no feature provided for real-time status updates. What is worse is that the status updates are sent from the Clients to the console 5 minutes after they are called up. You have, in fact, an update button provided, but this function is executed rather sluggishly.



In contrast, the filter options and display settings are exemplary – when it comes to networks containing many thousands of computers – this is where the options pro-

vided by ESET are definitely to be ranked at the topmost level.



Summary:

Manufacturer's website

(www.eset.com):

The website has been designed elegantly. The site complies with prevalent Internet standards.

The website itself gives you a clear overview of the current threats.

Over and above this, the site offers removal tools free of charge for current threats.

The trial versions of the products are fully functional and run for 30 days.

Moreover, the website offers an on-line virus scanner and cleaner free of charge as well as a free process analysis tool (ESET SysInspector), which analyzes all running Windows processes and prepares a report of the same and removes them via Service Scripts.

The news relating to security on the website deals with general topics and is interesting to read.

The Installation Procedure:

The installation wizard has been structured clearly and various settings can be configured at the time of installation itself.

The installation wizard does not detect the OS automatically and uses the same policies for the server OS and the Client OS. This is a problem especially with network protection. As a result, you can quickly

make the server inaccessible for the rest of the network. However, if the administrator wants to assure this does not happen and wants different installation packages to the servers and client OS, he can do so by changing the installation configurations.

The individual wizards for the management server and the remote administrator console respectively invoke the subsequent wizards, owing to which you do not need to look for the next module required for the installation.

The user passwords for various modules can be specified separately and independently. There is little Microsoft Active Directory support provided and, thus, though you can assign various tasks to different users, you cannot create any groups, which somewhat imposes limitations on the customization of responsibilities in complex and large environments.

The Administrator Console:

The real work begins after starting the remote administrator console. The options for remote installation are highly diverse and would practically meet any requirement. You need to define many settings before you can begin with the remote installation. It is a good thing, that ESET provides truly detailed documentation. It is absolutely essential to study the manual for this purpose.

The user navigation in the administrator console is not very intuitive at first and takes some time to get used to.

What must be highlighted is the excellent facility for filtering and grouping. The remote administrator console is designed for administering very large networks having more than 100,000 users and beyond. ESET illustrates its real strength when dealing with networks of such large proportions.

Application Areas:

The ESET suite demonstrates its real strengths when even the smallest detail and most insignificant settings need to be configured and administered for many thousands of users.

The XML Configuration File structure lets the Admin customize every small detail even in the most complex environments and implement them across the entire structure.

When you are dealing with small to medium-sized networks, the configuration procedure might seem too cumbersome at first, but the installation package comes with a default recommended ESET configuration, which can be customized to make it work in every network.

It is helpful to plan the entire process of implementation to the finest detail, but majority of the configuration settings can be changed easily after the installation too.

AV Clients:

The Clients have been kept lean and offer all the required information and functions for the user.

Authorization settings can be adjusted to reduce the user privileges to a minimum.

The Client does not consume too much of the system resources.

Conclusion:

No other product offers as many customization features as ESET. Some preparation is required in order to execute remote installation on the Client computers. You cannot go very far by using merely the default settings, but they help speed up the deployment.

The implementation of ESET in a corporate network becomes a major project and requires detailed planning.

The menu navigation and somewhat crowded console looks complicated. You need to make sure to read the documentation before you start remote installation.

In our case it became necessary for the first and only time during the corporate tests to call up the hotline.

The policy editors are the most powerful amongst all the products that we tested. The unbelievable diversity and versatility of the settings throws light on the strengths of the suite. The ESET suite is best suited for very large networks and the most complex environments. You are definitely well-armed with ESET when it comes to providing an enterprise tool for security for the entire security department. Nonetheless, you must not underestimate the administration effort called for. The product could do well with simpler menu navigation.

Overall, you can say that ESET has enormous potential and makes an excellent proposal.

Pros and Cons:

- + Extremely diverse and versatile settings
- + Excellent options for remote installation
- + Client installation is very fast
- + Very good grouping functions
- + Excellent filtering options
- + Very suitable for the largest rollouts
- + Website offers many services free of charge

- Status updates in the console are cluttered and clumsy
- Console navigation is not comfortable and user-friendly
- Remote installation calls for extensive preparatory work
- Inadequate Microsoft Active Directory support

Application Areas:

Small Networks (0-50 Users)	Medium Networks (50-500 Users)	Large Networks (500-? Users)
★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Brief Summary:

Installation Wizard	★ ★ ★ ★
User Navigation	★ ★ ★ ★
Administrator console	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Default Values	★ ★ ★
MS Active Directory Support	★ ★ ★ ★
Database Support	★ ★ ★
Remote Installation	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Website	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Manual	★ ★ ★

Copyright and Disclaimer

This publication is Copyright © 2009 by AV-Comparatives e.V. ®. Any use of the results, etc., in whole or in part, is ONLY permitted with the explicit written approval of the Management Board of AV-Comparatives e.V., prior to their publication. AV-Comparatives e.V. and its appointed representatives carrying out the tests cannot be held liable for any damage or loss, which might occur, as a result of, or in connection with, the use of the information provided in this document. We have taken every possible care to ensure the correctness of the basic data, but no liability can be taken for the correctness of the test results by any representative of AV-Comparatives e.V. We do not give any guarantee for the correctness, completeness, or suitability for a specific purpose of any of the information /content provided at any given time. No one else involved in creating, producing or delivering test results shall be liable for any indirect, special or consequential damage, or loss of profits, arising out of, or related to, the use or inability to use, the services provided by the website, test documents or any related data. AV-Comparatives e.V. is a registered Austrian non-profit organization.

Please visit our website for more information about AV-Comparatives and the testing methodologies deployed.

AV-Comparatives e.V. (May 2009)

To get the full review including also other corporate products, please visit
<http://www.av-comparatives.org/comparativesreviews/corporate-reviews>