



Deploying Alertus Desktop

This page describes how to package and deploy Alertus Desktop clients so they can be installed throughout your organization.

Packaging

Packaging is the process of consolidating the 2 required and 1 optional Alertus Desktop files into one self executing file. The primary use case to do this is if you intended to allow people from your organization to download the client (perhaps from your website) and let them install it on their personal computers. An additional use case is if distributing multiple files in an automated deployment is problematic and creating a single executable.

How to for Windows & Mac



Main article: [Packaging Alertus Desktop With IExpress](#)

For the Windows version of Alertus Desktop, you can use the built-in windows utility IExpress to create a single file setup package (.exe). See [Using IExpress](#) for complete instructions



Main article: [Packaging Alertus Desktop For Mac](#)

For the Mac version of Alertus Desktop, you can download a simple utility from the Alertus Portal site that will allow you to bundle the files into a single .dmg. See [Packaging Alertus Desktop For Mac](#) for complete instructions.

Deployment Methods



If you are using Alertus Desktop deployed as an image or in a central image lab there are additional [deployment steps to take](#).

Alertus supports the following 3 ways to distribute the Alertus Desktop application to your organization's computers:

1. [Using enterprise desktop management software](#) (recommended)
2. [Using an Image file](#)
3. [Allowing Users to Download the application From Your Website](#)



Method 1: Automated Install Using Enterprise Desktop Management Software

This deployment method requires that your organization's computers are managed by enterprise desktop utility software such as LanDesk, Alteris, Apple Remote Desktop, Microsoft SMS, etc. If available it is the preferred way to install and update the software. The client can be automatically pushed out to all computers and installed silently if desired.

Windows Version Notes



The Alertus Desktop client is installed on Microsoft Windows based computers using a standard MSI installer file along with a required xml configuration file and a recommended logo image file. This format provides flexibility such that it can be manually installed by a user or installed using all types of desktop management tool.

In order to automate the installation process, the MSI file is invoked via the command line. Typically, this type of install is driven by some sort of type of Enterprise Desktop Management solution. Relevant command line options are discussed below.



When defining the installation job in your Enterprise Desktop Manager, make sure it copies all the necessary files (i.e. the MSI, the .gif files, and the .config) to the same directory on the target computer before starting the install. The customized config files must be located in the same directory as the MSI when it's executed in order to have them overwrite the default ones.

Quiet / Passive Mode

In order to automate the process, one of the following command line switches must be used. This does not require the user to specify an installation location or accept the license agreement.

- /quiet - Quiet Mode, no user interaction or any progress indicators shown.
- /passive - Passive Mode, no user interaction but shows a progress bar.

```
msiexec /I alertus-desktopalert.msi /quiet
```



-OR-

```
msiexec /I alertus-desktopalert.msi /passive
```

Start Menu Shortcuts

If you do not want a start menu shortcuts to be created, then install with STARTMENU=false.

Note: this option requires version 2.4.4.39 (August 2009).

```
msiexec /I alertus-desktopalert.msi STARTMENU=false
```

Run Application Automatically After Installation

By default, once the application is installed it will start to run. this can cause false positives in reporting if your install method is one that runs as the System User (SCCM or similar.) In this case, you would not want to run the client immediately after installation, but should rather let its first run happen on the next user login after installation. If you do not want the application to start automatically you must install with RUNAPP=false

Note: this option requires version 2.5.5.55 (10-6-09)

```
msiexec /I alertus-desktopalert.msi RUNAPP=false
```

Force Reregister

This option can be used when upgrading clients if you want them to be assigned new IDs. DO NOT USE THIS OPTION UNLESS SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTED TO BY ALERTUS SUPPORT.

```
msiexec /I alertus-desktopalert.msi FORCEREREGISTER=true
```

Enable Logging

Use this command line to install with logging (useful for troubleshooting install problems):

```
msiexec /I alertus-desktopalert.msi /log installlog.txt
```



Mac Version Notes



The Mac version of Alertus Desktop uses the Mac standard .pkg format.

It is capable of being installed using Apple Remote Desktop & from the command line. When installed from the command line, Alertus Desktop is not started automatically. This is intentional to prevent it from loading at the login screen which is considered "bad form". It will start once the user logs in.

Command Line Syntax:

```
sudo installer -pkg alertus-desktop-osx-#.#.##.##.pkg -target /
```

If you want to start Alertus Desktop from a command line script, then just run:

```
open /Applications/Alertus\ Desktop.app
```

Method 2: Using an Image File

The application can also be installed by updating a master image file. Since each Alertus Desktop client is assigned a unique ID upon installation, please follow these additional steps to ensure each installed instance is assigned a unique ID and so that it can properly register itself with the server.

To use an image file perform the following steps:

1. Modify the Alertus Desktop configuration file and set the [ReservedComputerName](#) option to the name of the Image's computer name. This property prevents the software from registering with the Alertus Server until after the computer name has been changed. **NOTE: This option is currently only supported on the Windows client. Support for this option will be included in the 3.0 release of Alertus Desktop for Mac. Prior to that release, you must clear the ID files (listed below) any time the Alertus Desktop client on the image host checks in to the Alertus Server**
2. Manually install the Alertus Desktop client software on the image



3. Finally, delete the files (specifically uuid and aapid) generated by the installer in the appropriate directory below:

- Windows XP - C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\Alertus Technologies\Desktop Alert
- Windows Vista - C:\ProgramData\Alertus Technologies\Desktop Alert
- Windows 7 - C:\ProgramData\Alertus Technologies\Desktop Alert
- Apple OSX - /Library/Application Support/Alertus Technologies/Desktop Alert

To verify: run the Alertus Desktop Notification program on your image computer. Make certain that, after running, that no files are created in the above listed directories.

Now you can deploy or utilize your image file. We strongly recommend testing this on a small subset of computers before deploying across your organization.

Method 3: Allowing Users to Download the application From Your Website

While this approach seems the easiest it is also the most problematic for numerous reasons:

- Requires users to manually install the client
- It is difficult to determine which users have or have not installed the application
- **Since the Alertus Desktop software does not have auto update functionality, the application must be re-installed each time an update is released.**
- Generally requires additional IT support to troubleshoot and resolve problems

Since the Alertus Desktop client requires multiple files to install (the installer (msi or pkg), config files, and image files), distributing the client as a zip file would require the end-users to first extract the zip file before launching the installer. To make the process easier for your users to install, we recommend you package Alertus Desktop as a single file. See the section above for more info on this. Once the user runs the installer a Wizard will launch guiding them through the installation process. Once complete the client will automatically connect and register itself with the server.

Also, if you plan on distributing this application to users outside your organization's network you must first ensure that your Alertus server is accessible externally.

Special Cases

Deep Freeze

For Deep Freeze or other similar steady state technologies, you must install the Alertus Desktop in the thawed state and allow it to run and check in to the Alertus server to negotiate an identity before refreezing. This checkin process should take less than one minute once the client is able to communicate with the Alertus server.



If your Deep Freeze or similar installation is a central image based system, please instead follow the instructions for Method 2, image based deployment.

Virtual Desktop Environments

Since virtual desktop and central drive image systems can often have capabilities and features not usually present in a physical machine setting, you may need some additional configuration. We recommend testing on a small scale to make sure neither too few nor too many Alertus devices are configured. Please contact Alertus Support for assistance if necessary.