Tech Training: Remote Tools

There are four remote tools we use to assist clients with computer issues. This tutorial provides a description, brief instructions for use, and a discussion of the capabilities and limitations of each tool.

Browse the Network

A computer's search feature, by default, searches for files and folders stored locally (on the hard disk). If you know the right syntax, you can instruct the computer to use its network connection to locate network resources (shared folders, drives, or printers on networked computers/servers) instead.

This tool is useful for accessing documents, files, and folders. It treats the network share as an external drive, much like a thumb drive. It does not control the external computer's operating system in any way. So it does not allow for installation of software, removal of malware, or profile-specific customizations. Work is done behind the scenes, and the client is free to use the computer while you work.

- Mac syntax = Go > Connect to server > //computername/sharename
- Windows syntax = Start > \\computername\ OR \\computername\sharename
  a. The first two backslashes tell Windows to search on the network instead of locally
  b. ComputerName tells Windows which computer/server to search for
  c. \ShareName (optional) provides Windows the exact name of the shared folder, drive, or printer. While optional for visible shares, it is required for hidden shares.
  d. A dollar sign in the share name instructs Windows to hide the share

\\computername yields these results. The computer (CsSrv2 in this case) returns only visible shares.
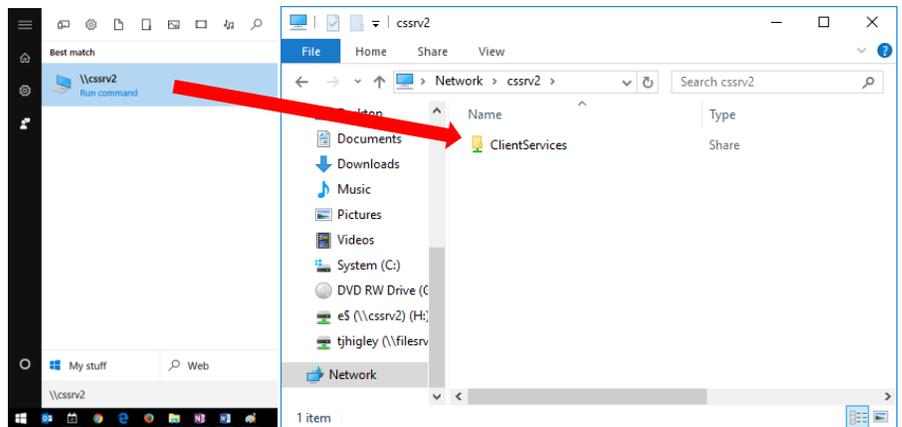
Adding \sharename yields different results. CsSrv2 returns the contents of the share named cs$ (hidden using dollar sign).

NOTE: The ClientServices folder appears in both. They are different shares, but one resides inside the other and is accessible both ways.
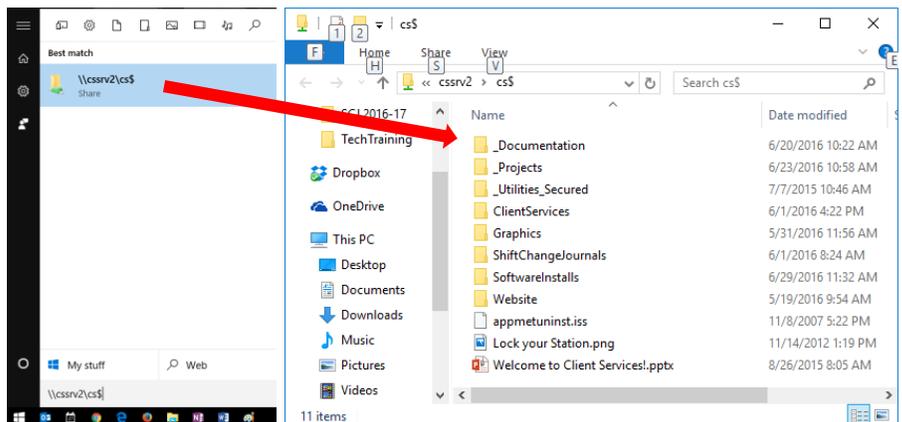
Computer Management

Windows, by default, includes several utilities used to configure Windows. Computer Management provides access to a subset of these utilities in a single console. It adds remote capabilities which makes Computer Management a remote tool.

This tool is useful for configuring Windows. It sends instructions to Windows on the remote computer to reconfigure itself, but only for the handful of utilities it includes. It does not allow for installation of software, removal of malware, or profile-specific customizations. Work is done behind the scenes, and the client is free to use the computer while you work.

- Start > Computer Management
- Right-click Computer Management (Local) and select 'Connect to another computer'

Utilities of Interest:

- Event Viewer – system logs
- Shares – create, modify, and disable shares
- Local Users and Groups – add or remove users from groups which assign varying permissions
- Device Manager – install/update drivers
- Disk Management – format disks, assign drive letters
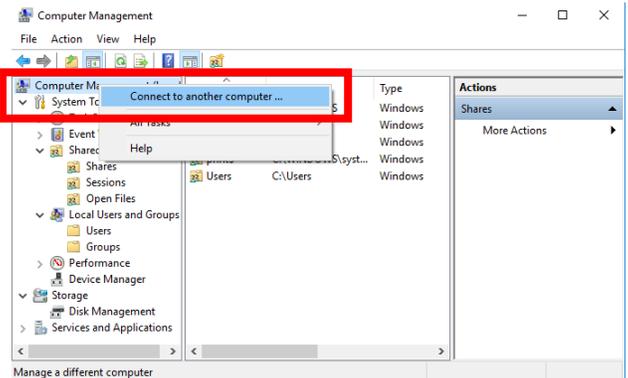
Remote Desktop Connection

Use RDC to log onto and fully control Windows on a remote computer. RDC uses your keyboard, mouse, and display as input/output devices sending instructions to the remote computer. If logged on, the client will be prompted to approve your logon.

This tool is useful for installing software, removing malware, configuring Windows, and other computer-wide changes. You are logged on as you, not the client, so it is NOT useful for profile-specific customizations including resetting browsers to defaults. You take possession of the computer, so the client is unable to use the computer while you work. They are prompted to approve your logon.

- Start > Remote Desktop Connection
- Connect
  NOTE: RDC is called Terminal Services when used on a server. This is the system currently used on the Guest computers.
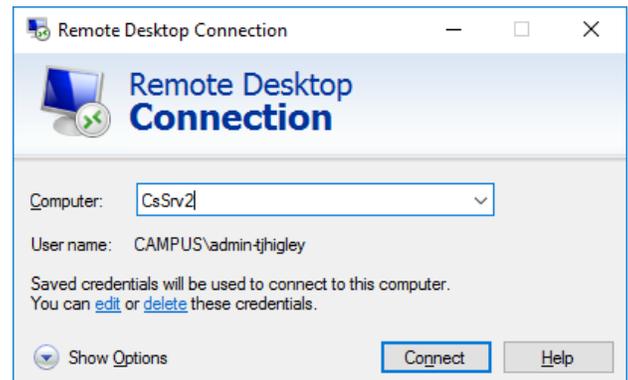
Bomgar

Bomgar is a remote screen-sharing product that allows us to see what our clients see. It is a client/server solution, meaning that installation of the Bomgar Client on the client's device is necessary. The Bomgar Client then communicates with the Bomgar Server piece to share the client's mouse, keyboard, and display.

Bomgar works with Windows, iOS, Android, iPhone, iPad, and other devices. It works on- and off-campus. The client must install the Bomgar Client and approve your request for remote access. Since the client is logged on,

not you, you have the same permissions to modify the device as the client does. On Taylor-owned computers, this usually means full privileges.

This tool is useful for installing software, removing malware, configuring the operating system, and making profile-specific customizations. Since we share use of the mouse and keyboard, the client can take control of the device. This is helpful in asking them to show us what they were doing when the problem occurred.

See the Bomgar tutorial for more info: http://4040.taylor.edu/tutorials/techtraining/tt_bomgar.pdf