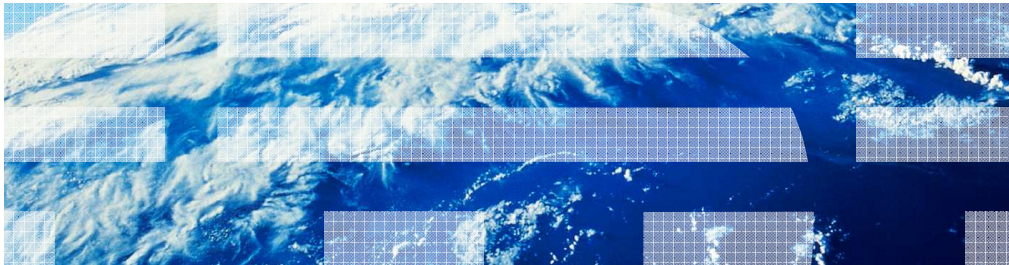


IBM WebSphere Application Server V8.5

IBM Support Assistant data collector



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This presentation describes support for the IBM Support Assistant data collector tool included in IBM WebSphere Application Server V8.5

IBM Support Assistant data collector is referred to as ISA DC through out this presentation.

Section

Overview

What will the IBM Support Assistant data collector do for you?

What is IBM Support Assistant data collector (ISA DC)?

- Locates and collects key problem determination data in a timely manner
- Increases the efficiency of getting problem determination data to IBM Support
- Gathers information about the environment and adds it to the service request
- Shortens time to resolution

Customization

Automated data collections are specific to products and symptoms
Automated version of many MustGathers

Efficiency

Less time spent between a support analyst and the system operator
Reduces the effort to send the collected data to IBM support

Repeatability

Repeatable process with similar inputs without fear of human error

Simplicity

Executable by operators not familiar with the nature of the working product

To resolve software issues, analyzing key data is essential but it is often hard to locate and collect in a timely manner

The IBM Support Assistant Data Collector for WebSphere® Application Server is a tool that gathers data from your application server system for problem determination purposes. It replaces the collector tool, which is deprecated.

ISA DC provides automatic collection of data for the various categories of problems encountered by WebSphere Application Server. Information pertinent to a type of problem is collected to help identify the origin of the problem under investigation. The tool assists you by reducing the amount of time it takes to reproduce a problem with the proper Reliability Availability and Serviceability (RAS) tracing levels set, and by reducing the effort required to send the appropriate log information to IBM Support.

Proactive collection of diagnostic data can help resolve service requests faster. It is much faster to run an automated collection than to ask a human operator to follow a few dozen steps in a troubleshooting document. There is less time spent between a support analyst and the system operator regarding questions on the various steps. Automated data collections can be repeated with similar inputs without fear of human error. This also leads to fewer "repeat collections," as results from a trusted collection script will produce the same information every time.

Usage scenarios

IBM Support Assistant Data Collector is used in these scenarios.

Starting IBM Support Assistant data collector

- Windows®
 - run the `app_server_root/bin/isadc.bat` command
- Linux, AIX®, HP-UX, Solaris, IBM i, or z/OS® environment
 - run the `app_server_root/bin/isadc.sh` command
- You can optionally run the tool from a profile bin directory
 - `profile_root/bin/isadc.bat` or `profile_root/bin/isadc.sh`
- Requires the user ID for which you configured your WebSphere Server instance

ISA DC is automatically installed with WebSphere Application Server V8.5, so you can run the tool without additional installation or configuration steps

ISA DC runs in console mode by starting the launch script from the command line

For Windows, go to the bin directory in the WebSphere Application Server home and run `isadc.bat`.

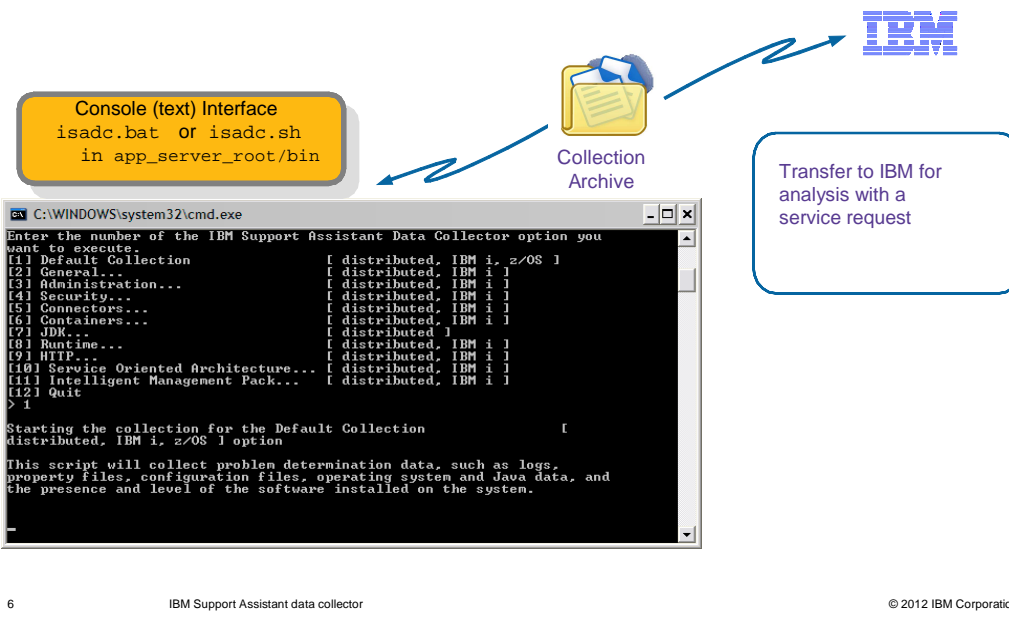
For UNIX and Linux, you can start ISA DC from the bin directory in WebSphere Application Server home by running `./isadc.sh`

You can optionally run the tool from a profile bin directory, instead of the application server bin directory..

ISA DC collections require that your logged in the system as the user ID for which you configured your WebSphere Server instance.

If you are not able to provide root or administrator access to the user to run the collection scripts, make sure that the user ID has administrator privileges for your WebSphere Server and is able to process commands: `startServer`, `stopServer`, and `WSADMIN`, for example.

Collect data and send to IBM for analysis



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IBM Support Assistant data collector

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Once you begin the data collection, you are guided through a series of steps.

Depending on what problem you encountered, you will need to select the corresponding data collector option, such as administration console, security, JSSE, SDK hang, out of memory and so on.

Depending on what collection you selected, you are prompted several times to provide relevant information. A script might require additional configuration information: information about the sequence of events leading up to the problem you are dealing with, or for your preferences regarding how it complete the collection.

At each step, the choices are presented as numbered lists and you input the number of your selection and press the enter key. When input is required prompts are displayed at which you enter your response and press the enter key. You can find collection details for each WebSphere Application Server problem type in their corresponding MustGather documents.

At the end of the collection, you will be prompted whether you want to send the collection to IBM Support. You have a choice between HTTPS, which is secure, and FTP for the data transfer.

Data collection using response files

- Create a response file that contains the answers to all the questions for a certain collection

```
Windows app_server_root/bin/isadc.bat -record response_filename
Linux | AIX | HP-UX | Solaris | IBM i | z/OS app_server_root/bin/isadc.sh -record response_filename
```

- Run data collection in silent mode using the response file from the previous session

```
Windows app_server_root/bin/isadc.bat -silent response_filename
Linux | AIX | HP-UX | Solaris | IBM i | z/OS app_server_root/bin/isadc.sh -silent response_filename
```

- Add pauses to a response file
 - PauseScriptTime=number of seconds a script pauses
 - PauseScript=user-defined message
- Sensitive information can be stored in response files

The tool has a silent collection capability for recording your responses from a console mode session in a file and uses the file to drive subsequent instances of the same collection script. When running in this mode, you are taken to an ordinary interactive session, where you supply the responses to the script prompts. In addition to influencing the current collection, however, your responses are also saved in the file that you named. When the interactive session completes, the response file can be reused to start the same script without the need for explicit user input.

Use this command to create a response file that contains the answers to all the questions for a certain run through the data collector: `isadc.sh -record response_file name`.

Use these command to provide the response file when starting the tool: `isadc.sh -silent response_filename`.

The response file is a plain text file. You can edit it to change the responses as needed. The file looks very much like a Java properties file with a series of key-value pairs. The comments start with '#'. You can add pauses to a response file using one of the following two keys:

1. `PauseScriptTime=X`, where X is a positive integer representing the number of seconds a script pauses. If anything other than a positive integer is found, an error message is written to both the console and the log, followed by a message telling you to hit the enter key when they are ready for the script to proceed.
2. `PauseScript=user-defined message` - this string is printed to the console, along with a message to hit the enter key when you are ready for the script to proceed.

When using response files, remember that sensitive information, such as user names and passwords, might be stored in these files. It is important that you manage these files in a manner that prevents unauthorized access to sensitive information.

References

- IBM Support Assistant
 - <http://www.ibm.com/software/support/isa>
- IBM Support Assistant forum
 - <http://www.ibm.com/developerworks/forums/forum.jspa?forumID=935>

See these references for additional information about IBM Support Assistant Data Collector



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