

Mcsa 70 687 Cert Guide

Configuring Microsoft Windows 8

MCSA 70-687 Cert Guide: Configuring Microsoft Windows 8 - Your Pathway to Expert Windows Administration

The MCSA 70-687 certification, "Configuring Microsoft Windows 8," is a stepping stone for IT professionals aiming to master Windows 8 administration. This guide equips you with the necessary knowledge to install, configure, and manage Windows 8 operating systems efficiently, making you a valuable asset in any IT environment. *Why Choose the MCSA 70-687 Certification?* • **Industry Recognition:** The MCSA 70-687 certification is widely recognized by employers, showcasing your expertise in Windows 8 administration. • *Enhanced Skills:* The certification program helps you gain practical skills in installing, configuring, and managing Windows 8 operating systems, including troubleshooting common issues. • *Career Advancement:* The certification opens doors to advanced IT roles like System Administrator, Network Administrator, and IT Support Specialist. • Competitive Edge: Having the MCSA 70-687 certification differentiates you from other candidates and makes you more competitive in the

job market. • **Improved Efficiency:** You'll learn to streamline tasks, manage resources effectively, and improve overall system performance.

Understanding the MCSA 70-687 Exam Structure

The MCSA 70-687 exam is a performance-based exam, meaning you'll need to demonstrate practical skills in a simulated environment. Here's a breakdown of the exam objectives:

Exam Objective	Percentage of Exam	Description
Install and Configure Windows 8	20-25%	This section covers the installation process, system configurations, and basic troubleshooting.
Manage Storage and Devices	20-25%	Focuses on disk management, volume creation, and configuring devices such as printers and scanners.
Manage User Accounts and Security	20-25%	This area includes creating user accounts, assigning permissions, and implementing security policies.
Configure Networking and Remote Access	20-25%	Examines networking concepts, setting up network connections, and enabling remote access features.
Troubleshoot and Maintain Windows 8	10-15%	This section covers common troubleshooting scenarios, diagnosing system errors, and performing basic system maintenance.

Mastering the Core Skills: A Detailed Guide

1. Installing and Configuring Windows 8

- **Installation Methods:** Understand the different installation methods for Windows 8, including clean installations, upgrades, and

in-place upgrades. Learn the steps involved in each process and the necessary prerequisites. • **Customization Options:** Explore the various customization options available during installation, such as partitioning disks, choosing language settings, and setting up network connections. • **Basic System Configuration:** Become familiar with essential system settings like changing user accounts, managing time and date settings, and configuring regional options. •

Troubleshooting Installation Issues: Gain expertise in resolving common installation errors, such as boot errors, missing drivers, and corrupted files.

2. Managing Storage and Devices

• **Disk Management:** Learn to partition and format disks, create and manage volumes, and set up RAID configurations. • **Device Drivers:** Understand the importance of device drivers, how to identify and install the correct drivers, and troubleshoot driver-related issues. • Printers and Scanners: Master the process of adding printers and scanners, configuring network printers, and resolving printing issues. • **Peripheral Device Management:** Get acquainted with managing other devices, including USB drives, external hard drives, and network drives.

3. Managing User Accounts and Security

• **User Account Types:** Learn the different user account types in Windows 8 (Administrator, Standard User, Guest), their respective privileges, and how to manage them. • **Group Policy:** Understand how to implement and manage Group Policy settings, which allow you to enforce security policies and configure system settings across multiple computers. • *Security Features:* Become familiar with

Windows 8 security features such as BitLocker Drive Encryption, Windows Firewall, and User Account Control (UAC). • *Managing Permissions*: Learn how to assign permissions to users and groups, allowing them to access specific files, folders, and resources.

4. Configuring Networking and Remote Access

• **Network Concepts**: Understand the basics of networking, including IP addressing, subnet masks, and network protocols. • *Network Configuration*: Master the process of configuring network connections, setting up wireless networks, and troubleshooting network connectivity issues. • Remote Desktop Services: Learn how to enable and configure Remote Desktop Services, allowing users to connect to and control a computer remotely. • **Remote Access Options**: Explore other remote access options like VPN connections, allowing users to connect securely to a private network.

5. Troubleshooting and Maintaining Windows 8

• *Common Error Messages*: Understand how to interpret common error messages and identify the root cause of system errors. • *System Event Logs*: Learn to analyze system event logs to diagnose and resolve issues. • **Performance Optimization**: Discover how to optimize system performance by managing processes, cleaning up disk space, and configuring system settings. • **System Recovery**: Understand how to create and restore system images, reset Windows 8 to factory defaults, and recover from data loss.

Real-World Applications of the MCSA 70-687 Certification

The knowledge and skills gained through the MCSA 70-687 certification are invaluable in various real-world scenarios: •

Troubleshooting network connectivity issues: You can diagnose and fix network connectivity issues by applying your understanding of networking concepts and troubleshooting techniques. • *Securing company computers:* By implementing security policies and configuring security features, you can protect sensitive data and ensure company network security. • **Setting up remote access for employees:** You can provide secure access to company resources from remote locations using your expertise in Remote Desktop Services and VPN connections. • **Managing user accounts and permissions:** You can efficiently manage user accounts, assign permissions based on roles, and ensure data security within an organization. • **Optimizing system performance:** By applying your knowledge of performance optimization techniques, you can improve system performance, reduce downtime, and enhance user experience.

Beyond the Certification: Continuing Your IT Journey

While the MCSA 70-687 certification is a great starting point, the IT landscape is constantly evolving. To stay relevant and advance your career, consider these paths: • **Pursuing higher-level certifications:** You can advance your skills by pursuing higher-level certifications like the MCSE (Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert) or other vendor certifications. • Developing specialized skills: Consider specializing in

areas like cloud computing, cybersecurity, or data management. • Staying updated with industry trends: Keep up with the latest technologies and industry best practices through online resources, conferences, and professional development programs.

5 Advanced FAQs

1. What are the prerequisites for the MCSA 70-687 exam? There are no specific prerequisites, but a strong foundation in computer networking, operating systems, and basic troubleshooting is recommended. 2. How can I prepare for the MCSA 70-687 exam? You can prepare by studying the exam objectives, taking practice tests, and attending training courses. 3. **What are the benefits of having the MCSA 70-687 certification?** The certification can lead to career advancement, salary increases, and enhanced job opportunities. 4. How long is the MCSA 70-687 certification valid? The certification remains valid for 2 years, after which you must recertify. 5. **What are some popular resources for learning about Windows 8 administration?** Microsoft Learning, Microsoft TechNet, and online courses are valuable resources for learning about Windows 8 administration.

Conclusion

The MCSA 70-687 certification is a valuable investment for IT professionals aiming to master Windows 8 administration. By investing time and effort in acquiring this certification, you will gain the necessary knowledge and skills to become a sought-after IT professional. Remember, the journey doesn't end with the certification. Continuous learning and adaptation are key to success in the ever-evolving IT landscape.

Mastering Windows 8 Deployment and Configuration: Your Comprehensive MCSA 70-687 Cert Guide

So, you're looking to conquer the Microsoft 70-687 exam and earn your MCSA: Windows 8 certification? Fantastic choice! This certification is a solid stepping stone for IT professionals, proving your proficiency in installing, configuring, and maintaining Windows 8. Think of this as your ultimate roadmap, a detailed guide designed to walk you through everything you need to know to ace the 70-687 exam, officially titled "Configuring Microsoft Windows 8." In this comprehensive guide, we're not just going to list objectives; we're going to dive deep, offering practical insights, relatable explanations, and a human-like touch. We understand that staring at exam objectives can be a bit dry, so we'll aim for an engaging and conversational tone, making the learning process more enjoyable and effective. Whether you're a seasoned IT pro looking to validate your skills or someone new to the Windows deployment arena, this guide is for you. We'll cover essential aspects like deploying Windows 8, configuring core features, managing and troubleshooting, and so much more. Let's get started on your journey to MCSA success!

Why the MCSA: Windows 8 Certification Matters

Before we dive into the nitty-gritty of configuring Windows 8, let's briefly touch upon why this certification is still valuable. While

Windows 10 and 11 are the current stars of the show, many organizations still rely on Windows 8.1 for various reasons, from legacy application compatibility to specific hardware requirements. Possessing the MCSA: Windows 8 certification demonstrates your ability to manage and support this widely used operating system, making you a valuable asset to any IT department. It showcases a foundational understanding of enterprise desktop management that translates well to newer Windows versions.

Understanding the 70-687 Exam

Objectives: The Blueprint for Success

The Microsoft 70-687 exam is structured around several key areas, each representing a crucial skill set for a Windows 8 administrator. These objectives are your blueprint for success. Let's break them down and explore what each entails.

Deploying and Upgrading Microsoft Windows 8 (18%)

This section is all about getting Windows 8 onto a machine, whether it's a brand-new installation or an upgrade from an older operating system. It's the first critical step in any Windows deployment scenario.

Choosing the Right Deployment Method

Microsoft offers various deployment methods, and understanding when to use each is key. You'll need to be familiar with:

1. **Image-based deployment:** This involves capturing an image of a

configured Windows 8 installation and deploying it to multiple machines. Tools like the Windows Deployment Services (WDS) and Microsoft Deployment Toolkit (MDT) are your best friends here. We'll touch on their roles and how they streamline the process of creating and deploying custom images.

2. **Bare-metal deployment:** Installing Windows 8 directly onto a blank hard drive. This often involves bootable media like USB drives or DVDs.
3. **Upgrade scenarios:** Migrating from older Windows versions (like Windows 7) to Windows 8. You'll learn about in-place upgrades versus migration scenarios where user data and settings are transferred.

Automating the Deployment Process

Manual deployments are time-consuming and prone to errors. The 70-687 exam emphasizes automation. You'll need to understand:

1. **Unattended installations:** Using answer files (like `unattend.xml`) to automate the setup process, including partitioning, user account creation, and product key entry. This is a cornerstone of efficient enterprise deployment.
2. **Sysprep (System Preparation Tool):** This vital tool generalizes a Windows installation, making it ready for imaging and deployment. Understanding its parameters and when to use it is crucial for creating repeatable deployments.
3. **WDS and MDT:** As mentioned, these are powerful tools for automating image creation, management, and deployment. We'll delve into their core functionalities.

Preparing for Deployment

Before you even think about deploying, preparation is paramount. This includes:

1. **Hardware and software compatibility:** Ensuring that the target hardware meets Windows 8 requirements and that essential applications are compatible.
2. **Network infrastructure readiness:** Making sure your network can support the deployment process, especially for network-based installations.
3. **Driver management:** Having the correct drivers for the hardware is essential for a smooth installation and optimal performance.

Installing and Configuring Windows 8 (35%)

Once you've mastered deployment, the next logical step is understanding the installation process itself and configuring the core components of Windows 8. This section forms the largest chunk of the exam, so pay close attention!

Performing Clean and Upgrade Installations

You'll need to be proficient in performing both clean installs (starting from scratch) and upgrades from previous Windows versions. This involves:

1. **Understanding installation media:** Whether it's a USB drive, DVD, or network boot, you need to know how to boot from it and initiate the installation.
2. **Disk partitioning:** Creating, modifying, and managing partitions

on your hard drives. This includes understanding different partition styles like MBR and GPT, and the implications for bootability.

3. **Product activation:** Ensuring Windows is properly activated using product keys or other activation methods.

Configuring User Interfaces and User Experience

Windows 8 introduced a distinct user interface (UI) with the Start screen and Charms bar. You'll need to know how to configure these:

1. **Start screen customization:** Pinning and unpinning apps, resizing tiles, and organizing them into groups.
2. **Desktop customization:** Traditional desktop settings, including themes, wallpapers, and screen resolution.
3. **Personalization settings:** Colors, sounds, and other aesthetic preferences.
4. **Lock screen and user accounts:** Configuring security settings and different types of user accounts (local, Microsoft accounts, domain accounts).

Configuring and Managing Storage

Efficient storage management is crucial for any operating system. This includes:

1. **Disk management:** Creating, formatting, and managing hard drives, including understanding file systems like NTFS.
2. **File history and backup:** Setting up automated backups to protect user data.
3. **Disk quotas:** Limiting the amount of disk space users can consume.
4. **Storage Spaces:** A powerful feature in Windows 8 for pooling multiple drives into a single virtual drive, offering resiliency and

capacity.

Configuring and Managing Network Connectivity

Network connectivity is the lifeblood of any modern IT environment. You'll need a solid understanding of:

1. **IP addressing:** Configuring static and dynamic IP addresses, including IPv4 and IPv6.
2. **Network adapters:** Managing network interface cards and their settings.
3. **Wireless networking:** Connecting to and securing wireless networks.
4. **Network troubleshooting tools:** Using tools like `ipconfig`, `ping`, and `tracert` to diagnose network issues.
5. **Network profiles:** Understanding the differences between Public, Private, and Domain network profiles and their security implications.

Configuring and Managing Devices and Printers

Ensuring hardware functions correctly is a core IT responsibility.

1. **Device installation and management:** Installing and updating device drivers.
2. **Troubleshooting device issues:** Using Device Manager to diagnose and resolve problems.
3. **Printer installation and configuration:** Adding and managing local and network printers.

Configuring Microsoft Windows 8 Applications (15%)

With the operating system itself configured, it's time to ensure your applications run smoothly.

Managing and Configuring Applications

This involves understanding how applications are installed, updated, and managed within Windows 8.

1. **Installing and uninstalling applications:** From traditional desktop applications to Windows Store apps.
2. **Application compatibility:** Ensuring older applications work correctly on Windows 8.
3. **Running applications in different compatibility modes:** A valuable troubleshooting technique.
4. **Windows Store app management:** Understanding how to install, update, and manage apps downloaded from the Windows Store.

Configuring Internet Explorer 10/11

Internet Explorer was the default browser in Windows 8, and configuring it securely and efficiently was a key task.

1. **Security settings:** Understanding zones, trusted sites, and ActiveX controls.
2. **Privacy settings:** Managing cookies, pop-ups, and tracking protection.
3. **Compatibility View:** A critical feature for older websites.

Managing and Troubleshooting Microsoft Windows 8 (22%)

Even the best-configured systems can encounter issues. This section focuses on proactive management and reactive troubleshooting.

Monitoring System Performance

Keeping an eye on your system's health is crucial.

1. **Task Manager:** Understanding its various tabs for monitoring processes, performance, and resource usage.
2. **Performance Monitor:** A more advanced tool for collecting and analyzing performance data.
3. **Resource Monitor:** Providing real-time system resource usage information.

Troubleshooting Boot, Shutdown, and Application Failures

These are common pain points for any IT professional.

1. **Safe Mode:** A diagnostic startup mode for troubleshooting.
2. **System Restore:** Rolling back your system to a previous stable state.
3. **Event Viewer:** Analyzing system and application logs to identify the root cause of problems.
4. **Troubleshooting startup issues:** Using tools like Startup Repair and Boot Configuration Data (BCD) editor.

Troubleshooting Network and Hardware Issues

As covered in previous sections, network and hardware problems are common. This section reinforces your ability to diagnose and resolve

them.

1. **Network diagnostics:** Re-emphasizing the use of network tools.
2. **Device troubleshooting:** Back to Device Manager and driver updates.

Troubleshooting Security Issues

Security is paramount. You'll need to know how to address security-related problems.

1. **Malware and virus infections:** Basic steps for identification and removal.
2. **User account and permissions issues:** Ensuring users have appropriate access without granting excessive privileges.

Implementing Security for Microsoft Windows 8 (10%)

Security isn't just about troubleshooting; it's about proactive implementation.

Configuring Windows Firewall

A fundamental security tool.

1. **Inbound and outbound rules:** Understanding how to configure them to control network traffic.
2. **Predefined rules:** Utilizing built-in rules for common applications.

Configuring User Account Control (UAC)

UAC helps prevent unauthorized changes to your system.

1. **Understanding UAC levels:** How different settings affect user prompts.
2. **Configuring UAC behavior:** Customizing how UAC prompts users.

Configuring Security Policies

Group Policy Objects (GPOs) are essential for managing security in an enterprise environment.

1. **Local Security Policy:** Configuring security settings on a single machine.
2. **Understanding GPO basics:** Although the MCSA: Windows 8 focuses on client-side configuration, a basic understanding of how GPOs apply these policies is beneficial.

Configuring BitLocker Drive Encryption

Protecting sensitive data on lost or stolen devices is critical.

1. **Enabling and managing BitLocker:** Understanding the different recovery options (TPM, USB key, password).

Putting it All Together: Your Study Strategy

Now that you have a clear understanding of the exam objectives, let's talk about how to effectively prepare.

Hands-On Practice is Key

The 70-687 exam is heavily practical. You absolutely must get your hands dirty with Windows 8. Set up a lab environment using:

1. **Virtual machines:** VMware Workstation, Oracle VirtualBox, or Hyper-V are excellent choices for creating virtual machines where you can install and experiment with Windows 8 without affecting your primary operating system.
2. **Physical hardware:** If you have older machines, consider installing Windows 8 on them to experience the real-world hardware interaction.

Replicate the scenarios described in the exam objectives. Install, configure, break, and fix. The more you practice, the more confident you'll become.

Leverage Microsoft Resources

Microsoft provides official study guides and learning paths for their certifications. These are invaluable resources.

1. **Microsoft Learn:** Explore the learning paths and modules related to Windows 8 client administration.
2. **Official Microsoft Documentation:** The TechNet library (though some content might be archived) still holds a wealth of information.

Consider Practice Exams

Once you feel you've covered the material, take practice exams. These will:

1. **Identify your weak areas:** They highlight topics you need to revisit.
2. **Familiarize you with the exam format:** The types of questions and their difficulty.
3. **Build confidence:** Successfully completing practice exams can

significantly boost your morale.

Join Online Communities

Engage with other IT professionals studying for the same certification. Online forums and communities can be a great source of support, tips, and troubleshooting advice.

Beyond the Exam: The Value of MCSA: Windows 8 Skills

While the MCSA: Windows 8 certification itself might be a stepping stone, the skills you acquire are timeless. Understanding the fundamentals of Windows deployment, configuration, and troubleshooting is transferable to newer operating systems. The principles of imaging, automation, security hardening, and problem-solving are core competencies for any IT professional managing desktop environments. So, as you embark on your MCSA 70-687 journey, remember that you're not just studying for a test; you're building a foundation of essential IT skills that will serve you well throughout your career. Good luck, and happy configuring!

Understanding MCSA 70-687 and Configuring Microsoft Windows 8: A Comprehensive Guide

The MCSA 70-687 certification, formally known as the Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate certification for Windows 8, plays a pivotal role for IT professionals aiming to master foundational

Microsoft operating system administration. This certification validates expertise in deploying, configuring, managing, and troubleshooting Windows 8 environments—critical skills in today’s enterprise IT landscapes where legacy systems still coexist with modern deployment models.

Overview of MCSA 70-687 and Its Relevance to Windows 8 Configuration

The MCSA 70-687 certification is designed for IT practitioners who support organizations running Windows 8 and its hybrid environments. It focuses on core competencies including system deployment, user and group management, device configuration, network setup, and security hardening. Mastery of these areas enables professionals to efficiently configure Windows 8 systems to meet business demands while ensuring stability and performance. Microsoft’s Windows 8 represented a significant evolution in user interface and system architecture, introducing the Metro design language, improved security features, and enhanced touch-optimized workflows. Configuring Windows 8 effectively requires a deep understanding of its unique components—from local accounts and Active Directory integration to local and network storage management. The MCSA 70-687 certification ensures candidates develop practical, hands-on skills aligned with real-world deployment scenarios, making them valuable assets in both small and large-scale IT deployments.

Key Insights into Windows 8 Configuration

Best Practices

Configuring Windows 8 properly begins with strategic planning around user roles and access control. Administrators must configure user accounts, either local or domain-based, and apply group policies to enforce security and operational standards. Customizing system settings—such as desktop appearance, privacy controls, and network preferences—ensures optimal user experience and compliance with organizational policies. Network configuration is equally crucial. Setting up DHCP, DNS, and domain services correctly enables seamless connectivity and resource access. Properly configuring proxy settings, file sharing, and printer sharing facilitates efficient collaboration across Windows 8 devices. Additionally, managing storage—whether through local drives, removable media, or network locations—ensures data integrity and availability. Security configuration cannot be overlooked. Enabling BitLocker encryption, configuring Windows Firewall rules, and applying regular updates are essential steps to protect systems from emerging threats. The certification syllabus emphasizes these areas to ensure administrators can maintain secure, resilient Windows 8 environments.

Applications and Benefits of Mastering MCSA 70-687 for IT Professionals

Professionals certified under MCSA 70-687 gain the expertise needed to support diverse IT environments, particularly in organizations undergoing digital transformation or maintaining legacy Windows 8 infrastructures. This certification empowers individuals to efficiently deploy Windows 8 machines in enterprise, education, healthcare, and

government sectors—environments where stability and compliance are paramount. Beyond technical proficiency, the certification enhances career prospects by demonstrating commitment to industry standards and continuous learning. IT teams led by certified professionals often experience improved system uptime, faster incident resolution, and better alignment with security best practices. This directly contributes to organizational efficiency and reduced operational risk. Moreover, the hands-on nature of the MCSA 70-687 curriculum bridges theoretical knowledge with practical application, preparing administrators to handle real-world challenges such as troubleshooting system boot issues, resolving connectivity problems, and optimizing performance on Windows 8 devices.

Looking Ahead: The Future of Windows 8 and Its Certification Path

While Microsoft has shifted focus toward Windows 10 and newer operating systems, the MCSA 70-687 certification remains relevant for organizations maintaining legacy Windows 8 deployments or using hybrid setups during migration phases. Its foundational knowledge continues to support infrastructure stability and teaches principles transferable to newer Windows versions. Looking forward, the role of Windows 8 may diminish in mainstream adoption, but the skills acquired through MCSA 70-687 remain valuable for understanding operating system architecture, security frameworks, and enterprise infrastructure management. As IT environments grow more complex, professionals equipped with this certification will be well-positioned to transition smoothly to newer platforms while maintaining mastery of core Windows concepts. In summary, the MCSA 70-687 certification offers a robust framework for configuring and managing Microsoft

Windows 8 systems, providing IT professionals with the expertise needed to maintain secure, efficient, and scalable environments. Its emphasis on practical, real-world skills ensures that certified individuals remain indispensable in evolving technology landscapes.

Mastering Windows 8 Administration: A Deep Dive into MCSA 70-687 Certification

In the ever-evolving landscape of IT certifications, mastering operating system administration remains a cornerstone for professionals seeking to validate their skills and advance their careers. For those focused on Microsoft technologies, the Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate (MCSA) program has long been a benchmark. The MCSA 70-687 certification, specifically titled "Configuring Microsoft Windows 8," represents a crucial step for IT professionals aiming to demonstrate their proficiency in deploying, configuring, and managing this widely used operating system. While Windows 8 might seem like a legacy system to some, the foundational principles and configuration techniques covered in this exam remain highly relevant for troubleshooting, maintaining, and understanding the evolution of Windows administration.

This comprehensive guide will delve into the MCSA 70-687 certification, exploring its significance, the core competencies it assesses, and strategies for successful preparation. We'll analyze the key objectives of the exam, discuss essential study materials and resources, and highlight the practical skills you'll acquire that are transferable to modern Windows environments. Whether you're a

junior system administrator, a help desk technician looking to expand your responsibilities, or an IT professional seeking to broaden your skillset, understanding the intricacies of Windows 8 configuration through the lens of the 70-687 exam offers valuable insights and a solid foundation.

Why MCSA 70-687 Still Matters in the Modern IT Landscape

While newer versions of Windows, such as Windows 10 and Windows 11, have taken center stage, the MCSA 70-687 certification retains its importance for several compelling reasons. Firstly, a significant number of legacy systems still operate on Windows 8, particularly in specialized industries or older corporate environments. The ability to effectively manage, secure, and troubleshoot these systems is a critical skill for many IT departments. Understanding the architecture and configuration of Windows 8 provides a historical perspective that can illuminate the evolution of Windows administration practices and highlight why certain features were introduced or modified in later versions. Furthermore, the core concepts tested in the 70-687 exam – such as user and group management, file system permissions, network configuration, and security principles – are fundamental to all Windows operating systems. Proficiency in these areas is directly transferable to managing Windows 10 and Windows 11 environments. Therefore, pursuing the MCSA 70-687 can be a strategic move to build a robust understanding of Windows administration from the ground up, even if your immediate goal is to work with the latest releases.

Core Competencies Assessed in MCSA 70-687

The MCSA 70-687 exam is designed to evaluate a candidate's ability to perform a range of essential Windows 8 administration tasks. The objectives are typically divided into several key domains, each focusing on specific areas of configuration and management. These domains often include:

1. Deploying and Upgrading Windows 8

This section focuses on the initial setup and transition to Windows 8. It covers various deployment methods, including clean installations, image-based deployments using tools like the Microsoft Deployment Toolkit (MDT) or Windows Deployment Services (WDS), and in-place upgrades from previous Windows versions. Understanding different deployment scenarios, unattended installations with answer files (unattend.xml), and post-installation configurations are crucial here. The ability to efficiently deploy operating systems across an organization is a foundational skill for any system administrator.

2. Configuring Local and Network Installation

This involves setting up Windows 8 on individual machines and integrating them into a network environment. Key topics include disk partitioning, setting up user accounts and profiles, configuring network connectivity (TCP/IP settings, DNS, DHCP), and managing local storage. Understanding file system structures, such as NTFS, and its associated permissions is also a significant part of this domain. Effective network configuration ensures seamless communication and resource access.

3. Configuring Hardware and Devices

Ensuring that Windows 8 can properly interact with hardware components is vital for system stability and performance. This objective covers driver installation and management, configuring device settings, troubleshooting hardware conflicts, and understanding power management features. Familiarity with Device Manager and its functionalities is essential. Proper hardware configuration minimizes performance bottlenecks and ensures all peripherals function as expected.

4. Configuring and Troubleshooting the User Interface and Desktop Environment

Windows 8 introduced a significant shift in its user interface with the introduction of the Start screen and Charms bar, alongside the traditional desktop. This domain assesses the ability to customize the user experience, configure desktop settings, manage Start screen tiles, and troubleshoot common UI issues. Understanding user profiles, folder redirection, and application compatibility is also part of this objective. A well-configured user interface enhances productivity and user satisfaction.

5. Configuring and Troubleshooting Storage

Efficiently managing storage is paramount for any operating system. This objective delves into configuring hard disk drives, partitions, and volumes. It includes understanding different file systems, setting up and managing BitLocker for drive encryption, configuring storage spaces for enhanced data resilience, and troubleshooting disk-related problems. Effective storage management ensures data integrity and accessibility.

6. Configuring and Troubleshooting Network Settings

This is a broad and critical area. It encompasses setting up and managing network connections, configuring IP addressing, DNS, and DHCP clients. Advanced topics include managing network shares, configuring firewalls, understanding network discovery, and troubleshooting common network connectivity issues. Proficiency in this area is fundamental for any networked environment.

7. Configuring and Troubleshooting Access to Resources

Controlling access to files, folders, and other network resources is a core security function. This objective covers configuring NTFS permissions, share permissions, and user account control (UAC). It also involves managing group memberships, understanding the principle of least privilege, and troubleshooting access denied errors. Secure access management is crucial for protecting sensitive data.

8. Configuring and Troubleshooting Mobile Computing Features

Windows 8 offered enhanced features for mobile devices. This domain assesses the ability to configure and manage power options, wireless networking, and VPN connections for mobile users. Understanding features like Offline Files and Sync Center is also relevant here. With the increasing prevalence of mobile workforces, these skills are highly sought after.

9. Configuring and Troubleshooting Application Installation and Management

Ensuring applications run smoothly is a key responsibility. This objective covers installing, uninstalling, and updating applications. It

also involves troubleshooting application compatibility issues, managing application virtualization (if applicable), and understanding Group Policy settings that affect application behavior. Reliable application management is essential for business operations.

10. Configuring and Troubleshooting System Performance and Maintenance

Maintaining optimal system performance and ensuring long-term stability are critical. This domain covers performance monitoring, using tools like Task Manager and Performance Monitor, managing startup programs, optimizing disk space, and scheduling maintenance tasks such as disk defragmentation and system updates. Understanding Windows Update and its role in system health is also key. Proactive system maintenance prevents downtime and extends hardware lifespan.

11. Configuring and Troubleshooting Security Features

Security is paramount in any IT environment. This objective covers configuring Windows Firewall, User Account Control (UAC), Windows Defender, and managing local security policies. Understanding encryption methods like BitLocker, and implementing best practices for securing user accounts and data are essential. A strong understanding of security configurations protects against threats.

Preparing for the MCSA 70-687 Exam

Success in the MCSA 70-687 exam requires a structured and comprehensive approach to preparation. Several resources and strategies can significantly improve your chances of passing.

Official Microsoft Training and Certification Resources

Microsoft Learn (formerly Microsoft Virtual Academy and Microsoft Docs) is the definitive source for official training materials. Look for courses specifically designed for the MCSA Windows 8 certification. These often include instructor-led training, self-paced online modules, and hands-on labs. Microsoft's official exam page for 70-687 will provide the most up-to-date exam objectives and recommended study materials.

Third-Party Study Guides and Practice Exams

Numerous reputable publishers offer in-depth study guides for the MCSA 70-687 exam. These books typically break down the exam objectives into manageable chapters, providing detailed explanations and practical examples. Investing in high-quality practice exams is also highly recommended. These simulated tests help you gauge your readiness, identify weak areas, and become familiar with the exam format and question types. Platforms like Udemy, Coursera, and specialized certification training providers offer valuable courses and practice tests.

Hands-On Experience and Lab Environments

Theoretical knowledge is crucial, but practical application is where true understanding is forged. Set up a lab environment where you can install and configure Windows 8. This can be done using virtual machines (e.g., VMware Workstation, Oracle VirtualBox, Hyper-V). Experiment with all the configuration settings covered in the exam objectives. Practice deploying Windows 8, creating user accounts, configuring network shares, setting up permissions, troubleshooting common issues, and implementing security features. The more you

practice, the more confident you'll become.

Study Groups and Online Forums

Engaging with other individuals preparing for the same certification can be highly beneficial. Online forums, study groups, and communities dedicated to Microsoft certifications offer a platform to ask questions, share insights, and learn from the experiences of others. Discussing complex topics and troubleshooting scenarios with peers can deepen your understanding.

Focus on the "Why" and the "How"

Beyond memorizing commands and settings, strive to understand the underlying principles and the rationale behind specific configurations. Why is NTFS permissions structured in a certain way? What are the security implications of a particular network setting? Understanding the "why" behind the "how" will enable you to adapt your knowledge to new scenarios and troubleshoot effectively, even when faced with unfamiliar problems.

The Value of MCSA 70-687 Certification

Earning the MCSA 70-687 certification signifies that you possess a strong foundation in Windows 8 administration. This translates into tangible career benefits:

1. **Enhanced Employability:** In organizations still utilizing Windows 8, this certification makes you a valuable asset.
2. **Career Advancement:** It can open doors to roles such as System Administrator, Desktop Support Specialist, or IT Technician.

3. **Foundation for Higher Certifications:** The skills learned are transferable and serve as a stepping stone to more advanced Microsoft certifications, such as MCSA: Windows Server or MCSE certifications.
4. **Improved Troubleshooting Skills:** A deep understanding of Windows 8 configuration directly translates into more efficient and effective troubleshooting of issues across various Windows platforms.
5. **Cost Savings for Organizations:** Professionals with this certification can contribute to more efficient system management, reducing downtime and optimizing resource utilization, ultimately saving companies money.

Conclusion

The MCSA 70-687 "Configuring Microsoft Windows 8" certification, while focused on a specific operating system version, offers a comprehensive curriculum that builds essential skills for any IT professional working with Microsoft Windows environments. The foundational knowledge gained in deploying, configuring, securing, and troubleshooting Windows 8 is directly applicable to modern Windows operating systems. By diligently preparing, leveraging official and third-party resources, and focusing on hands-on practice, individuals can successfully achieve this certification, enhance their technical expertise, and position themselves for career growth in the dynamic field of IT administration.

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Questions & Answers About mcsa 70 687 cert guide configuring microsoft windows 8

No	Question	Answer
1	What are the key areas covered in the MCSA 70-687 certification guide for Windows 8?	The MCSA 70-687 exam guide focuses on configuring Windows 8 clients, including installation and upgrades, hardware and software configuration, configuration of cloud services, and maintenance of Windows 8 systems.
2	Is the MCSA 70-687 certification still relevant with newer Windows versions available?	While Windows 8 is an older operating system, the fundamental concepts of Windows client configuration tested in 70-687 are foundational. Many principles apply to newer versions, and it can still be a stepping stone for foundational knowledge.

3	What kind of skills will I gain by studying the MCSA 70-687 guide?	You'll develop skills in deploying, installing, and configuring Windows 8, managing user accounts and permissions, configuring network settings, securing the operating system, and troubleshooting common issues.
4	What are the prerequisites for taking the MCSA 70-687 exam?	There are no official prerequisites for the 70-687 exam. However, prior experience with Windows operating systems and basic IT knowledge is highly recommended for success.
5	Where can I find reliable study materials for the MCSA 70-687 certification?	Official Microsoft Press books, reputable online training platforms like Udemy or Coursera, and practice exam providers are excellent resources for MCSA 70-687 study materials.
6	How challenging is the MCSA 70-687 exam compared to other IT certifications?	The 70-687 exam is generally considered to be of moderate difficulty. It requires a solid understanding of Windows 8 configuration and administration concepts.
7	What are the different exam options for achieving an MCSA Windows 8 certification?	To achieve the MCSA: Windows 8 certification, you typically need to pass two exams: 70-687 (Configuring Windows 8) and 70-688 (Managing and Maintaining Windows 8).
8	What's the difference between MCSA 70-687 and 70-688?	70-687 focuses on the initial installation and configuration of Windows 8, while 70-688 delves into ongoing management, maintenance, and optimization of the operating system.
9	How much time should I dedicate to studying for the MCSA 70-687 exam?	Study time varies greatly based on individual experience. A common range is 40-80 hours of dedicated study and practice, including hands-on labs.

10	What are some common troubleshooting scenarios covered in MCSA 70-687 study guides?	Common scenarios include boot problems, network connectivity issues, application failures, user profile problems, and performance optimization challenges within Windows 8.
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