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Disabling Windows 10 Notifications via Group Policy

May 5, 2017 by [Jeffrey Harness](#) // [10 Comments](#)

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******This procedure only works in Windows 10 build 1607 and above!******

Hello there fellow Windows 10 users!

A question that I get asked frequently by customers who are deploying Windows 10 these days is whether or not it's possible to disable specific notifications within the Action Center. The reasons for wanting to do this are many, but the most common reason is because a customer has decided to utilize a third-party security suite on their system, and they have turned off the Security Center service to keep the OS from repeatedly warning them that the Fire Wall profiles have been turned off, the Windows Defender service has been turned off, etc. Unfortunately, the OS really wants you to keep the Security Center service turned on (for good reason!), so it will periodically remind you that the service has been stopped, and recommend that you turn it back on within the Action Center. My recommendation has always been to ensure that you are using a security product that uses our COM API's to play nice with Security Center, but some super secure organizations still turn it off and rely on other security software that's installed on the Operating System.

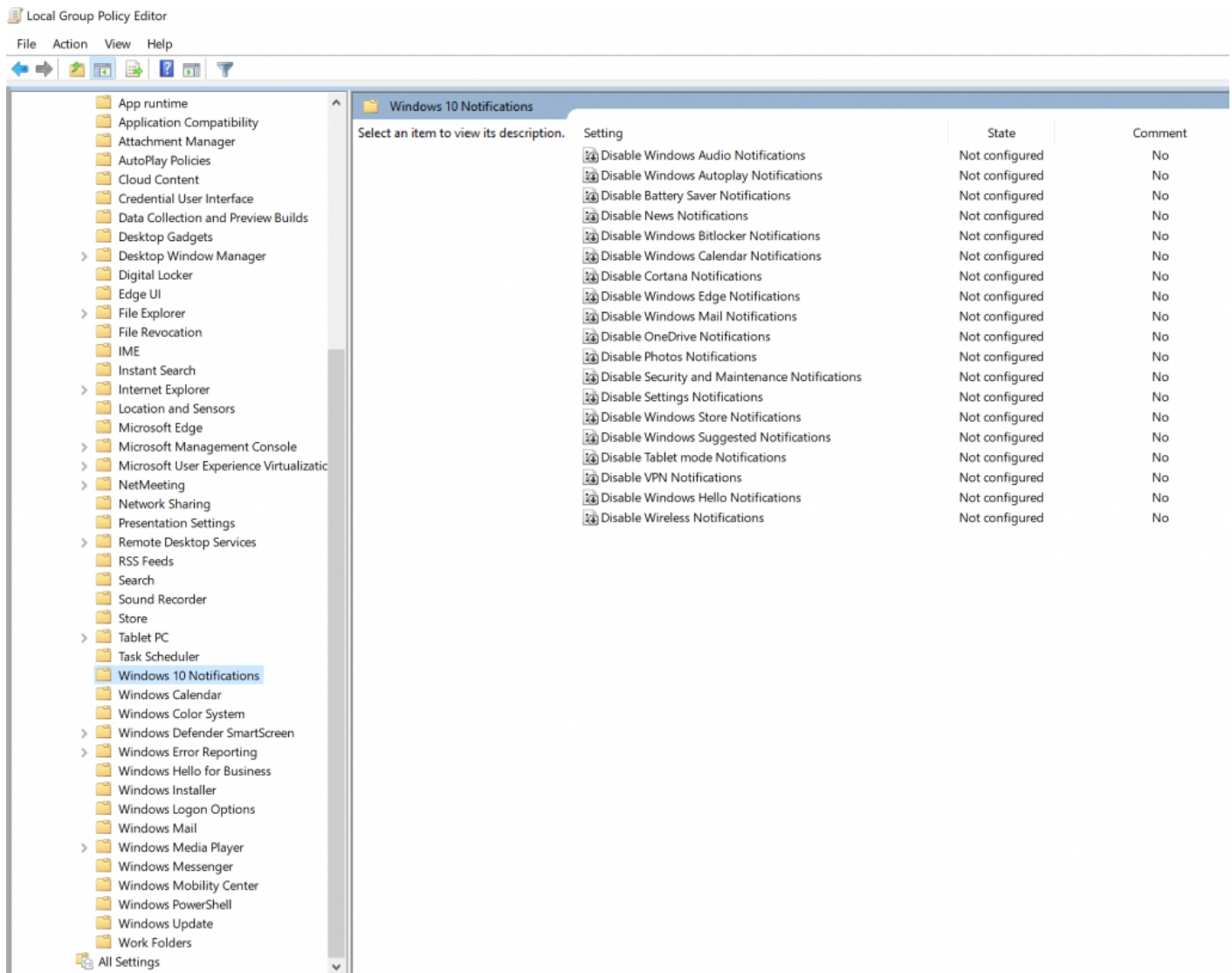
So there is our dilemma! Prior to the release of Windows build 1607 (a.k.a. the Anniversary build), it was not possible to selectively disable specific notifications from popping up within the Action Center. While Windows 7 used to have some notification registry keys for the Security Center that you could tinker with to turn off the notifications, those settings did not carry through to Windows 8/8.1/10. The 1511 and earlier builds of Windows 10 would allow you to disable SOME notifications from firing and ending up in the Action Center, but not all. In builds of Windows 10 prior to 1607, if you wanted to disable the Security Center (and may other) warnings from appearing within the Action Center, you're only option was to turn on a local or group policy setting that essentially turns off ALL notifications that may appear within the Action Center. As you may have guessed, this approach really stunk because it prohibited you from receiving other useful notifications from applications that you

may have wanted to receive notifications from... like the built-in email application, and notifications from Outlook!

Luckily, notification behavior appears to have changed significantly starting with Windows 10 build 1607. I say "appears" because I stumbled across the new behavior while performing process traces for a completely unrelated issue that I was troubleshooting! I have yet to find any documentation that refers to these changes, but the behavior has definitely changed in the favor of customers who wish to have the ability to selectively disable specific notifications across the board for all users.

So how does this new behavior help us selectively disable notifications? I'm glad you asked! Windows 10 build 1607 and above appears to now store the notification configuration data for each user within the following registry key: **HKCU\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings**. When a notification is disabled, an Enabled DWORD registry value is created within a corresponding child key, with a value set to 0. If you've ever taken a look at the notifications settings within Windows 10, you've undoubtedly seen that there are numerous built-in services and applications that we can disable notifications on, and each one of those services and applications has its own string that the OS recognizes.

Now I bet you're thinking that it would sure be nice of me to list all of these keys. Don't worry, I will below. But I can also offer you something that's potentially better, depending on how you'd like to deploy these settings. I recently worked on a Windows 10 deployment project with a customer who wished to turn off most of the default built-in notifications. They also didn't want to do it via preferences (long story). So what I ended up doing is creating a custom ADMX template for them that allowed their administrators to turn on and off the notifications for all users at will. *A download link for the template files can be found at the bottom of this article.* When the template is imported into either the local or Central policy store, you end up with an additional **User Configuration\Administrative Templates\Windows Components** GPO category that looks like this:

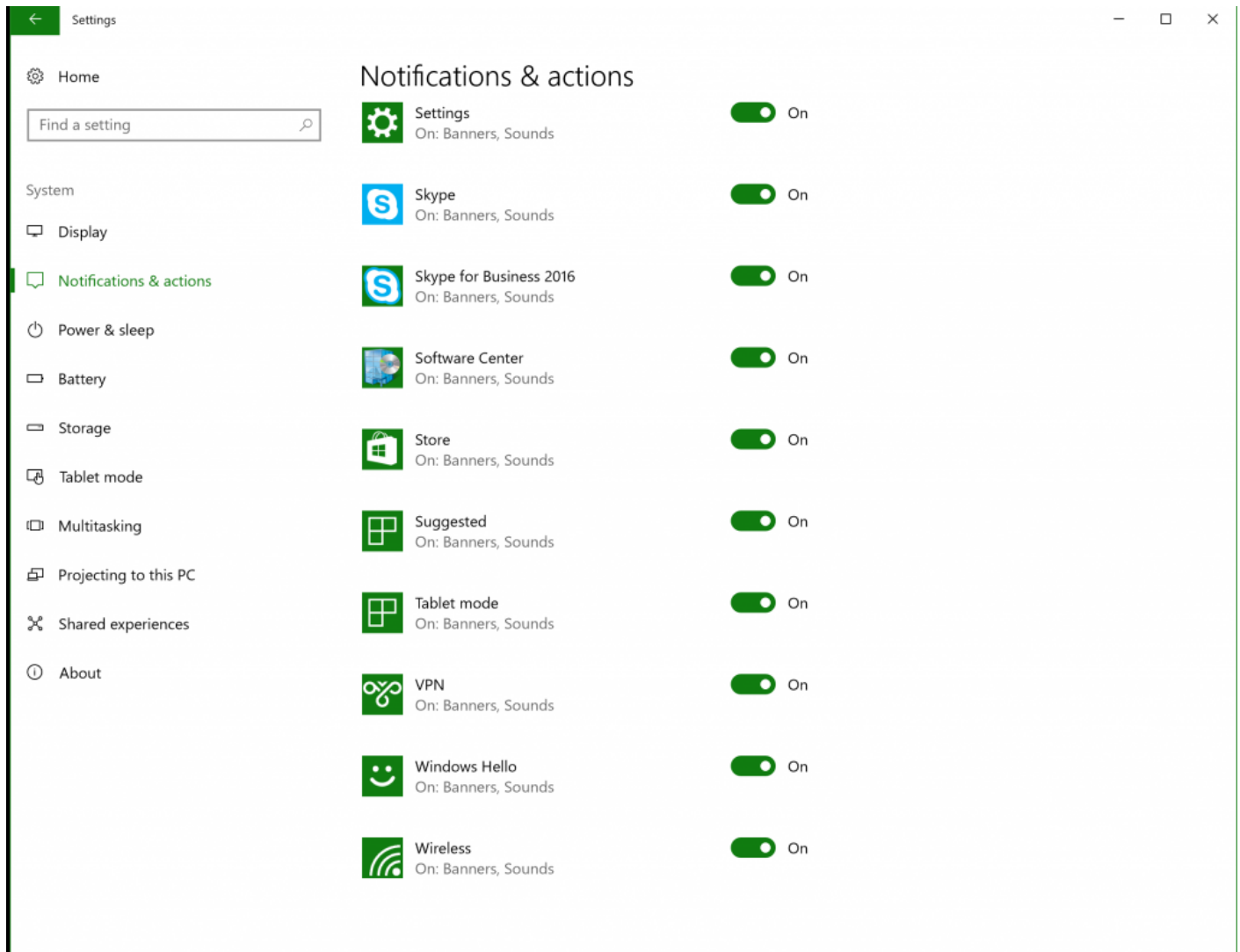


****This part is important!****

Those of you with a keen eye may have noticed that the policy settings look a bit different from other policy settings that you can define within gpedit or GPMC. There's a reason for this, and it's a reason that you need to bear in mind for any future changes that you make! The policy settings that my ADMX file lets you define are NOT managed policy settings, as the registry values that the policy creates are not located in any of the managed SOFTWARE\Policies registry keys. This means that the registry values that the ADMX file creates are considered to be preferences (different from GPP slightly), which makes sense considering that these values are usually set on a per-user basis. As of the time of the writing of this article, the notification subsystem in Windows 10 does not appear to support managed registry values, as it completely ignores any registry values that we add to HKCU\SOFTWARE\Policies key. So what does this mean if you chose to use the ADMX file to disable the notifications? It means that any notification that you chose to disable will **STAY** disabled, even if the Group Policy Object that you've created is unlinked from the system that it's applying too. If you wish to re-enable a particular notification, you'll have to do one of two things:

- If the GPO is still applying to your systems, you can easily re-enable the notification by simply modifying the above GPO settings and selecting the 'Disabled' option. This option changes the Enabled 0 value to a 1, which causes the OS to ignore the setting and enable the notification.

- If you have unlinked the policy from a system and wish to enable the notification, you'll either have to manually remove the associated registry key, or simply go into the Notifications section of the Settings app and turn the notification back on.



For those of you who don't mind creating a Group Policy Preference GPO, you could also disable the notifications by simply adding any of the below registry keys and values to your policy, and then linking the policy to the users that you wish to disable the notifications on. Since the registry keys and values that we are putting in place are considered to be preferences so far as the OS is concerned, it only makes sense to deploy the registry keys and values using GPP! If you don't need the visual cues that are provided by the ADMX file, then this method is for you.

Here are the keys and the values that will allow you to disable notifications from most of the built-in apps and services in Windows 10:

Disable Security and Maintenance Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Windows.SystemToast.SecurityAndMaintenance\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable OneDrive Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Microsoft.SkyDrive.Desktop\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Photos Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Microsoft.Windows.Photos_8wekyb3d8bbwe!App\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Store Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Microsoft.WindowsStore_8wekyb3d8bbwe!App\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Suggested Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Windows.SystemToast.Suggested\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Calendar Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\microsoft.windowscommunications apps_8wekyb3d8bbwe!microsoft.windowslive.calendar\Enabled=0 (DWORD)

Disable Cortana Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Microsoft.Windows.Cortana_cw5n1 h2txyewy!CortanaUI\Enabled=0 (DWORD)

Disable Mail Notifications:

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\microsoft.windowscommunications apps_8wekyb3d8bbwe!microsoft.windowslive.mail\Enabled=0 (DWORD)

Disable Edge Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d 8bbwe!MicrosoftEdge\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Audio Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Windows.SystemToast.AudioTrouble shooter\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Autoplay Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Windows.SystemToast.AutoPlay\Ena bled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Battery Saver Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Windows.SystemToast.BackgroundAccess\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Bitlocker Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Windows.SystemToast.BdeUnlock\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable News Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Microsoft.BingNews_8wekyb3d8bbwe!AppexNews\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Settings Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\windows.immersivecontrolpanel_cw5n1h2txyewy!microsoft.windows.immersivecontrolpanel\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Tablet Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Windows.System.Continuum\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable VPN Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Windows.SystemToast.RasToastNotifier\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Windows Hello Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Windows.SystemToast.HelloFace\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

Disable Wireless Notifications

HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Notifications\Settings\Windows.SystemToast.WiFiNetworkManager\Enabled = 0 (DWORD)

That about sums it up people! Now go out and disable notifications to you or your customer's hearts content! Until next time!

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Noam Salomon

7 months ago

Thank you, this is very helpful!



Gustavo

6 months ago

Does not work with ADMX or with Registry, i have testing in Server 2008 R2



Jeffrey Harness

1 month ago

Hi Gustavo!

The templates were designed only to work on Windows 10 build 1607 and higher. I haven't performed any testing against our Windows Server 2016 Operating System, however I suspect that quite a few of the notification options should work.

Thank you!



Dirk

5 months ago

I was looking for a tweak in order to suppress system notifications for month now.

Thanks man, you're life-saver!!!



Roland_Sanchez

4 months ago

This is super stuff. However, have you found any way to toggle the individual settings within a category? What I need is to be able to toggle the Network Firewall setting off under Security and Maintenance, and I isolated that to this key that seems to be, as best I can tell, unique to each machine?:

```
\HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Security and Maintenance\Checks\{E8433B72-5842-4d43-8645-BC2C35960837}.check.101
```



Jeffrey Harness

1 month ago

Hi Roland,

Unfortunately it's all or nothing when it comes to disabling notification within Windows 10. It would definitely be nice to find a way to make disabling notifications more granular, however to date I know of no such method or capability that will let us do that. As we release future builds of Windows 10, we may break out certain individual notifications into their own notification groups... however this will be up to the Windows 10 product group. This is really the only thing I can think of that would give us the granular capabilities that we are looking for!

Thank you!



Tim David

1 month ago

Just checked on one of my PCs and the key is the same as your example.



Jeffrey Harness

4 weeks ago

Thanks for verifying this for us, Tim!



Michael Livshin

2 months ago

Hi Jeffrey,

This looks very good. I hope it will work for our needs and will test it shortly.

Quick couple of questions for you:

1. Will your ADMX /ADML work on GPMC on the domain level or only in gpedit locally?
2. To disable Windows Defender notifications from build1607 and above (1703, 1709 and future builds) I assume I need to select "Disable Security and Maintenance" correct? Nothing else is needed?

Thank you for a very useful template!

Michael



Jeffrey Harness

1 month ago

Hello Michael,

The templates are definitely compatible with the Group Policy Management Console, so please feel free to either drop them into the C:\Windows\PolicyDefinitions folder on your GPMC machine, or throw them into your Central Policy store within Sysvol if you have one created. Windows Defender notifications are considered to

be part of the Security and Maintenance notifications group, so disabling that group should prevent a workstation from receiving notification from Windows Defender.

Please let me know if you have any other questions!

Thank you!

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