PCmover® *Enterprise vs Microsoft*® *USMT*

Comparison Overview

The Microsoft User State Migration Tool (USMT) is a set of command-line utilities provided as part of the Windows Application Deployment Kit (ADK). USMT uses an asynchronous, two-step export/import process to capture and transfer domain and local user accounts, selected settings, and user data to a destination PC.

It is important to note that USMT does not migrate applications, which impacts three key OPEX factors: technician migration efforts, end-user downtime, and post-migration demands on the service desk for remediation of missing settings and data. Should older or nonstandard software be part of the migration need, media replacement costs may also require consideration.

USMT does not offer the ability to migrate to or from Azure Active Directory (AAD)-based accounts and is therefore unsuitable for organizations exploring or using Windows Autopilot.

USMT offers the ability to migrate only a very limited set of what comprises the full experience or "Compete User Personality" of an end-user, including domain and local accounts, user profile settings, settings from a limited set of supported applications, and user files and folders that are explicitly specified based on a combination of location file extension. Without any provision for a full, unbounded scan of the source environment, there is a high likelihood of user data loss and consequent post-migration service desk engagement.

USMT functionality is based on migration rules configured in XML files. While USMT can be run without these directives, in practice the effect is rarely useful for a production migration. The necessary customization of USMT for a production effort requires the manual development of XML "migration rule" files by your software development resources, and ongoing engagement of those resources to manage these XML rules as needs change. Additionally, most organizations require multiple configurations to accommodate the needs of different user groups. A software developer, for example, typically requires a much more complex migration effort than an accounting employee. Multiple rule file sets -- again, manually developed and managed -- will be required. Most large organizations find that, from a resourcing perspective, USMT simply does not scale.

USMT does not include any type of GUI and is specifically recommended by Microsoft NOT to be used in a case where end-user interaction is required. If your migration effort includes a desire for self-service migration by Remote Users, USMT is unsuitable.

USMT offers only an asynchronous export/import process. The data specified in the XML rule files is first exported from the original environment to a "Migration Store" and then, in a second step, imported into the new environment. Selection of a Migration Store type, location, and size demands a significant upfront effort before even the first migration can be performed, and the sole option for asynchronous operation excessively complicates use cases where one simply needs to migrate from an old PC to a new PC, such as break-fix

or small-batch attrition (such as ongoing leased-PC replacement); and this too makes USMT unsuitable for self-service Remote User migration.

Microsoft does not offer an official support channel for USMT; any configuration or execution challenges must be resolved through the use of community support or third-party consultants. Microsoft previously offered the Windows Easy Transfer tool, which also moved only files and select settings. But this tool has been deprecated and is not available for Windows 10.
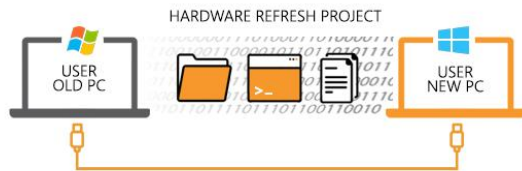
PCmover Enterprise is the most comprehensive solution for any migration challenge, offering the ability to migrate the complete user personality from an old Windows environment to a new one. This could be an operating system refresh where you intend to reuse the same PC but to reimage and redeploy it, or a hardware refresh where you are deploying an entirely new PC.

The goal of a complete user personality migration is to ensure that the new environment looks and acts as closely to the original environment as possible by transferring applications, all application settings, all user profile data and settings, and all user-data files and folders. PCmover Enterprise will, by default, scan the entire source environment for user data wherever it may reside, including non-profile folders and additional local volumes from partitions or secondary disk drives, without the need to specify file types or locations explicitly. This eliminates the risk of data loss or the need for reconfiguration and, thus, the need for post-migration remediation by the service desk.

PCmover Enterprise supports any source-destination combination of local, domain, and AAD accounts. Account type and user account name are not required to be identical. To offer some examples: you can easily migrate from a traditional ADD account to an ADD account as part of an AAD-Intune-Autopilot migration project; or from a local account on a user's personal PC to a domain account (BYOD); migrate dozens of accounts from a kiosk, conference room, or other shared PC to a new PC in a single transfer; or migrate while changing both domain membership and account name (mergers and acquisitions).

If a migration does not go as planned, PCmover Enterprise offers a convenient one-click undo option to return the new environment to its original configuration, and also does not modify the source environment in any way.

The PCmover Enterprise GUI Wizard interface offers a simple path for non-technical users but also advanced selection capability for technicians or advanced users for real-time migration adjustments.

PCmover Enterprise is also useful in a break-fix environment, offering a dedicated workflow to extract information from an offline Windows installation. For example, if a user breaks a laptop screen, your technician can extract the disk, mount it on the replacement laptop, and use the PCmover Image & Drive Assistant workflow to migrate the complete user personality with the same effect as if the source PC were fully functional..

PCmover Enterprise offers both synchronous and asynchronous transfer methods. Direct Transfer, the synchronous method, involves running PCmover on two PCs simultaneously. The PCs are connected either via network (LAN or Wifi), directly with an Ethernet or Thunderbolt 3 cable connection between the two PCs, or directly with one of Laplink's proprietary high-security, high-throughput USB2 or USB3 cables. File-Based Transfer, the asynchronous method, consists first of an export of migration information from the old environment to an encrypted file that may be placed on any external storage, such as a file share or USB flash drive. This file is then imported into the new environment. Unlike Direct Transfer, this method supports the OS refresh scenario where you intend to reuse the same PC.

File-Based Transfer was also specifically designed to support zero-touch integration with your existing ITAM or job scheduling system. As part of your OS Deployment process or migration project, you can use SCCM, Intune, Altiris, Ivanti Landesk, or even Windows Scheduled Tasks or PowerShell Remoting to launch and run PCmover automatically on the original environment, in zero-touch zero-UI fashion that requires no user interaction, to extract the migration data. You will then complete the migration to the new environment either manually or again in zero-touch fashion as part of a fully automated process. PCmover Enterprise makes automation even easier by its portability: you do not need to install PCmover on the environments involved in a transfer. Simply extract the PCmover files by running the setup routine on any workstation, and then copy the entire PCmover folder to a network share or USB flash drive to run on the client machines. For remote deployment, simply distribute PCmover Enterprise as a compressed set of files; there is no need to create and manage a Win32 application package.

The PCmover Policy Manager, a separate application that is included with PCmover Enterprise, offers a simple GUI to create configuration files, called PCmover Policies, that can perform highly advanced and granular configuration ability beyond what is offered in the GUI. This includes over one hundred advanced configuration options for every part of the migration process, such as advanced file filtering, folder redirection, user account mapping, disk mapping, application whitelisting or blacklisting, and complete control over the GUI where you have the ability to create a light- or zero-touch migration environment by making decisions in advance and then turning off any or all of the GUI.

PCmover Enterprise Features & Advantages

- Migration of the complete user personality including applications, application and user profile settings, and user data files and folders, wherever they may reside, by default
- Easy-to-use migration wizard to guide you through the migration process
- No local install required
- Support for local, domain, and Azure Active Directory accounts
- Extensive customizable reporting and email alert capability for project management, auditing, or billback
- Live, synchronous transfer process between two PCs connected by LAN or direct cable (Ethernet, Thunderbolt, or Laplink USB)
- Asynchronous file-based export/import transfer process for same-PC-reuse and large-scale automation
- Full support for virtualized environments including P2V, V2P, and V2V migrations
- Migration from an offline Windows environment (physical disk or mountable image)

- Same-PC migration between accounts
- Policy Manager module to create highly granular migration configurations for your specific needs, including:
    o Embed license information to prevent unauthorized use and minimize keystrokes
    o Light - and zero-touch migration support by disabling any or all of the GUI
    o Create whitelists / blacklists for applications
    o Create and enforce IT migration rules through file and folder filtering and redirection
- Onboarding and training available
- Premium support available
- Software maintenance available
- Custom development available for specific features and corporate branding

Features	PCmover Enterprise	USMT
Transfers selected applications	✓	
Transfers user profiles	✓	✓
Transfer Application Settings	✓	Limited
Transfer User Data	✓	Manually specified locations and extensions
Synchronous "Live" Transfer	✓	
Asynchronous Export/Import Transfer	✓	
Direct Cable Connectivity Support	✓	✓
GUI Interface, no coding required	✓	
Interactive Transfer Support	✓	
Policy-defined transfer support	✓	
P2V, V2P, V2V support	✓	
Migration from offline Windows disk or image	✓	
Migration alerts and reports	✓	
Support available	✓	
Onboarding and training available	✓	
Custom development and branding available	✓	

If you have any questions or would like to receive your complimentary trial license of PCmover Enterprise, please contact corpsales@laplink.com for more information.