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HOW TO TIME TRAVEL WITH TIME MACHINE® TARGETING WINDOWS SERVICE ACCOUNTS

TIME MACHINE AND WINDOWS SERVICE ACCOUNTS

Managed service accounts and virtual accounts are two new types of accounts introduced in Windows Server® 2008 R2 and Windows® 7 to enhance the service isolation and manageability of network applications such as Microsoft Exchange, SQL Server and Internet Information Services (IIS). These service accounts are simple to configure and use but are typically shared among multiple applications and services and cannot be managed on a domain level.

If you configure the application to use a domain account, you can isolate the privileges for the application, but you need to manually manage passwords or create a custom solution for managing these passwords. Many server applications use this strategy to enhance security, but this strategy requires additional administration and complexity.

Typically, we advise customers to set up the local or domain account then change the SQL Server Windows service "Log On As" property to this user. However, Time Machine is perfectly capable of setting a virtual clock on this Windows Service Account as seen in the screen capture below.

```
Listing all virtual clocks:

ACCOUNT/pid                    CLOCK INFORMATION
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------
(U) NT SERVICE\MSSQLSERVER          Sun Sep 29 2019 21:21:37
                                    (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
                                    Virtual date and time in system's time zone.
                                    Clock runs in normal speed.
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------


C:\Users\Administrator>sqlcmd -d "AdventureWorks2014" -Q "select getdate()"


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2019-09-29 21:21:47.970

(1 rows affected)
```

The user *NT SERVICE\MSSQLSERVER* is the fully qualified service account that SQL Server 2014 uses after installation. It can be changed at any time but testing shows no ill effects to the database server when a virtual clock is set on this service account.

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WP104_LM20200622