



STORMSHIELD



TECHNICAL NOTE

STORMSHIELD NETWORK SECURITY

AUTOMATIC BACKUPS

Product concerned: SNS 1.x, SNS 2.x, SNS 3.x, SNS 4.x

Document last updated: March 31, 2023

Reference: [sns-en-automatic_backup_technical_note](#)



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Change log

Date	Description
March 31, 2023	Section Operation modified



Introduction

Being able to count on a regular backup of your appliances is essential. Indeed, performing a periodic configuration backup (daily, weekly or monthly) makes it possible to quickly reconfigure a firewall in the event of a disaster (hardware failure, configuration error causing malfunctions, etc).

From version 1.0 of its firmware onwards, Stormshield Network's Firewalls offer the possibility of automating this backup operation in order to store output files either within the infrastructure suggested by the **Stormshield Network Cloud Backup** service or on an HTTP/HTTPS server within your infrastructure.

This feature allows the administrator to be freed from having to plan configuration backups and therefore removes the risk of forgetting to perform this operation.



Operation

Regardless of the method chosen (cloud backup or custom server), the firewall's configuration is backed up locally whenever an automatic backup is launched. The backup file, named *backup.na.enc*, is stored in the firewall's */data/Autobackup/* directory.

Storing backups in the Mystormshield.eu client area

When the cloud backup option is selected, backups are sent directly to your secure area (<https://mystormshield.eu>). The last 5 backups (daily, weekly or monthly) of your appliance will be stored and accessible in the same way.

Storing backups on a custom server

If you choose to store backups on a custom server, you can use the HTTP WebDAV extension (RFC 4918) to send files. You will need the following:

Microsoft Internet Information Services (IIS) server,

- Windows Server 2008 or higher,
- WebDAV,
- SSL,
- Digest or Basic authentication methods.

Apache server

- Operating system that supports Apache (Linux, FreeBSD, etc.),
- Apache modules: WebDAV (dav and dav_fs), SSL, Digest (auth_digest) or Basic (auth_basic) authentication.

i NOTE

If your configuration includes a proxy, even if the custom backup server is directly connected to the firewall, traffic will pass through the proxy (configured in **System > Configuration > Network configuration > Proxy server**). Ensure that the proxy is configured so that it can send backup traffic to the custom server.



Firewall configuration

Activating automatic backups

1. Select the **Backup** tab in the module **Configuration > System > Maintenance**.
2. In the screen **Configuration automatic backup**, select the checkbox **Enable automatic backup**.

Sending backups to Stormshield Network Cloud Backup

In order to enable automatic backups to the Stormshield Network Cloud backup service, activate the backup.

Configuration automatic backup

ON

Configuration: Cloud backup Customized server

▼ Advanced properties

The SN Cloud Backup feature is available on all Stormshield Network Firewalls. However, the service requires the Firewall to be under a valid maintenance contract.

Backups will then be saved in your secure-access area (<https://mystormshield.eu>) and identified by the firewall's serial number. For this feature, it is therefore not necessary to enter a login and password in the Preferences module.

Only two additional fields need to be filled in:

- **Backup frequency:** select one of the 3 frequencies offered (every day, every week or every month).
- **Password of the backup file** (optional): Indicate a password that will serve to protect the backup file. You will be asked to provide this password when this file is used for the purpose of restoring a configuration.

Sending backups to a customized HTTP/HTTPS server

In the field **Backup server selection**, select the value Customized server. Next, fill in the various fields in the module **Advanced configuration**.

1. **Backup server:** select or create directly from this field an object representing the server to which the Firewall sends its automatic backups. If the name of the server takes the form of `server.mycompany.com` (FQDN), ensure that the firewall can indeed resolve this DNS name. The field Server URL will be entered automatically according to the values entered in the fields Backup server, Server port, Communication protocol and Access path.
2. **Server port:** select or create directly from this field an object representing the listening port of the backup server (port network object).
3. **Communication protocol:** select HTTP or HTTPS (recommended) according to the protocol used on the server.



4. **Server certificate** (only if HTTPS has been selected): select the certificate of the backup server created or imported earlier in the firewall's PKI.
5. **Access path**: indicate the folder of the server in which backups will be stored.

! IMPORTANT

For firewalls in a firmware version lower than 1.2.0, this path has to be preceded by a "/". Example: /autobackup

6. **Method of sending**: select the access or authentication method used for placing the firewall's backups on the server (POST access control or Basic/Digest authentication for WebDAV).
 - The POST method does not involve any authentication. On the server side, it requires a script to process received data (saving of received files in a particular folder, etc.). This script also checks for a "control name" in the data traffic in order to process it.
 - The Basic identification method (RFC 2617) is unsecured by nature, as it sends the encrypted password in Base64 but in plaintext, making it easily interpretable as such. It is therefore not recommended for transferring credentials and data through an encrypted connection (HTTPS).
 - The Digest identification method (RFC 2617) is more secure as it is based on a "challenge/response" mechanism built around the MD5 fingerprint of the client password. Even though it can be used in HTTP traffic, you are also strongly advised to use this method through an encrypted connection (HTTPS) when transferring data.
7. **User name** (Basic or Digest methods only): indicate the required user name in order to connect to the server.
8. **Password** (Basic or Digest methods only): indicate the password of the user entered earlier.
9. **POST – control name** (POST method only): indicate the control name is the access method selected is POST.
10. **Backup frequency**: select the frequency of automatic backups (daily, weekly or monthly). The first successful backup will determine the starting point for backups at the selected frequency.
11. **Password of the backup file** (recommended): indicate a password for protecting the backup file. You will be asked to provide this password when this file is used for the purpose of restoring a configuration.



Checking the operation of automatic backups

When the settings form is validated, an automatic backup will always be made.

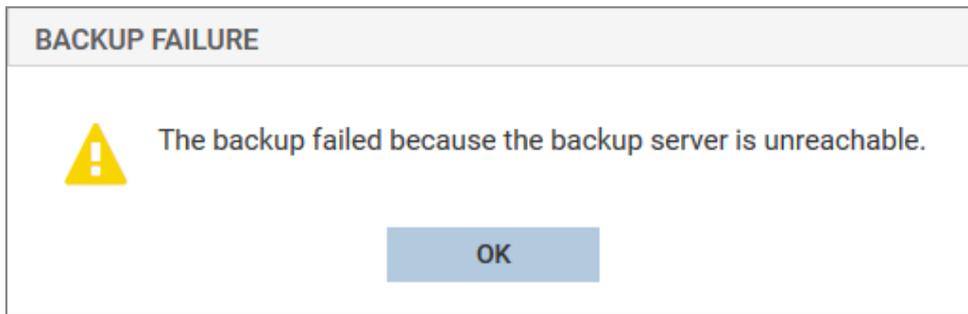
Validating settings

If the parameters entered are valid, the backup will be successful: the backup file will then be available on the destination server.

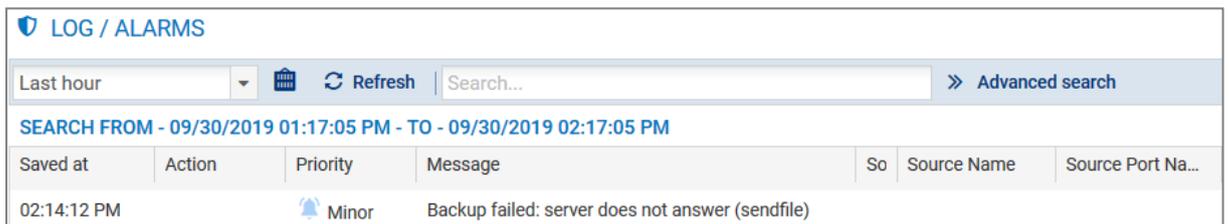
Please note that this first successful backup will determine the starting point for automatic backups at the selected frequency.

However, if any of the parameters is invalid:

- A warning message will indicate that the backup has failed:



- A message will also appear in the **Monitoring > Audit Logs > Alarms** menu:



Correct the parameter(s) in question and validate again.

Log files

When a backup is successful, logs will be saved in the file `/log/l_system`:

```
id=firewall time="2014-11-05 11:07:17" fw="V50XXA3E0000011" tz="+0100"
starttime="2014-11-05 11:07:17" pri=5 msg="Backup successful (local,
distant)" service=syseven alarmid=86
```

When a backup fails, logs will be saved in the file `/log/l_alarm`:

```
id=firewall time="2014-11-05 11:12:23" fw="V50XXA3E0000011" tz="+0100"
starttime="2014-11-05 11:12:23" pri=4 msg="Backup failed: invalid server
response (sendfile)" class=system alarmid=87
```



Example of server configuration - Linux and Apache

This example specifies the various stages of configuring an Apache server on a Linux platform, allowing identification in Digest mode through an SSL connection (server certificate generated through the firewall's PKI).

Installing Apache and its components

1. Install the various necessary components:
 - Apache Web Server,
 - *ssl* module for Apache,
 - *dav* module for Apache,
 - *dav_fs* module for Apache,
 - *auth_digest* module for Apache.
2. Create the folder for receiving automatic backups (example: `/var/www/html/autobackup`).

Creating and exporting the server certificate

1. On the firewall hosting the CA used for automatic backups, create a server certificate relating to the server hosting the backups (module **Configuration** > **Objects** > **Certificates and PKI**).
2. Next, select the certificate created and export it in PKCS12 format (menu **Download** > **Certificate as a P12 file**).

Importing the certificate on the Apache server

1. Submit the PKCS12 file on the server.
2. Use the following command to extract the private key:

```
openssl pkcs12 -in server_certificate.p12 -nocerts -nodes -out server_key.key
```

The option “-nodes” must be removed from the line if you wish for the private key to remain password-protected. However, in this case, you will be asked to provide this password every time the Apache server reboots.

3. Use the following command to extract the certificate:

```
openssl pkcs12 -in server_certificate.p12 -clcerts -nokeys -out server_certificate.crt
```

4. Move the certificate and private key to their respective folders (example: `/etc/pki/tls/certs` and `/etc/pki/tls/private`).
5. Restrict privileges on the private key to only the superuser (example: `chmod 400 /etc/pki/tls/private/server_key.key`).
6. Adapt the SSL configuration file accordingly (example: `/etc/httpd/conf.d/ssl.conf`):



```
# Server Certificate:
# Point SSLCertificateFile at a PEM encoded certificate.  If
# the certificate is encrypted, then you will be prompted for a
# pass phrase.  Note that a kill -HUP will prompt again.  A new
# certificate can be generated using the genkey(1) command.
SSLCertificateFile /etc/pki/tls/certs/server_certificate.cert

# Server Private Key:
# If the key is not combined with the certificate, use this
# directive to point at the key file.  Keep in mind that if
# you've both a RSA and a DSA private key you can configure
# both in parallel (to also allow the use of DSA ciphers, etc.)
SSLCertificateKeyFile /etc/pki/tls/private/server_key.key

# Server Certificate Chain:
# Point SSLCertificateChainFile at a file containing the
# concatenation of PEM encoded CA certificates which form the
# certificate chain for the server certificate.  Alternatively
# the referenced file can be the same as SSLCertificateFile
# when the CA certificates are directly appended to the server
# certificate for convenience.
#SSLCertificateChainFile /etc/pki/tls/certs/server-chain.crt
```

Configuring WebDAV

After having installed the dav, dav_fs and auth_digest modules:

1. Create a WebDAV configuration file for Apache (Example: `/etc/httpd/conf.d/webdav.conf`) containing the following directives:

```
# DIGEST method
Alias /autobackup /var/www/html/autobackup
<Directory "/var/www/html/autobackup">
    Dav On
    Order Allow,Deny
    Allow from all

    AuthType Digest
    AuthName "Autobackup"
    AuthUserFile "/etc/httpd/user.passwd"
    AuthDigestProvider file

    Require valid-user
</Directory>
```

In the example shown:

- The server can be contacted at the address `https://server_name/autobackup` (Alias directive pointing to the physical folder `/var/www/html/autobackup`).
- The authentication domain (Realm) is `Autobackup` (AuthName directive).
- The authentication method used is `Digest` (AuthType directive).
- The login/password pairs allowed to access this folder are stored in the file `/usr/local/www/user.passwd` (AuthUserFile directive).



2. Create the password file for Digest mode and the first account (Autobackup authentication domain and the user autobackup in the example) using the command:

```
htdigest -c /usr/local/www/user.passwd Autobackup autobackup
```

3. Enter the user's password upon the command invite.
4. Subsequently, if you wish to add other access accounts (new_account in the example), use the following command:

```
htdigest /usr/local/www/user.passwd Autobackup new_account
```

5. Start or restart the Apache server to apply all changes.



Example of server configuration - Windows 2008 Server and IIS

This example sets out the various steps in configuring an IIS server on Windows 2008 Server, allowing identification in Digest mode through an SSL connection (server certificate generated through the firewall's PKI).

Please note that in order to enable SSL in IIS, the server has to be a member of an Active Directory domain.

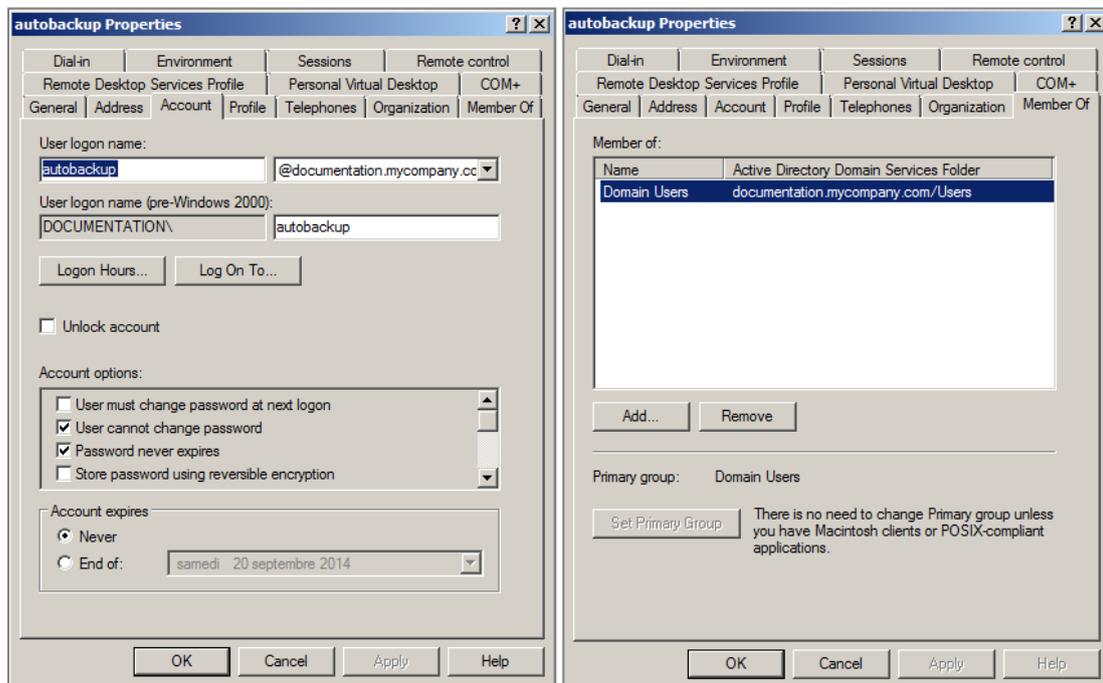
Creating the backup storage folder

Using the Windows file explorer, create the folder meant for receiving automatic backups (example: `c:\inetpub\wwwroot\autobackup`).

Creating the user account for backups

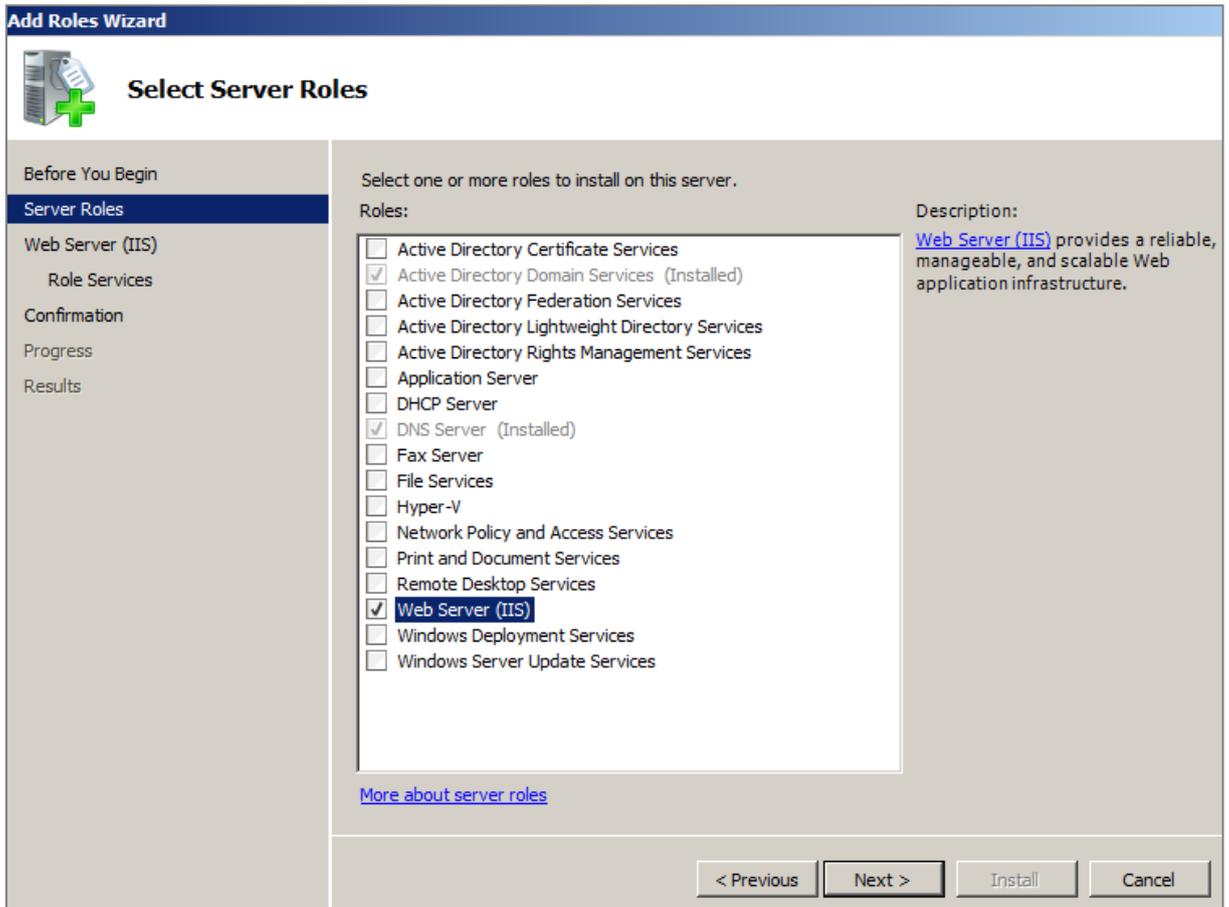
Create a dedicated user for automatic backups in the **Active Directory Users and Computers** console.

In this example, the account used is named *autobackup* and belongs to the *Autobackup Allowed Users* group specifically created for this purpose. Writing privileges on the folder dedicated to backups can be defined in the settings of the WebDAV site.



Installing IIS and its components

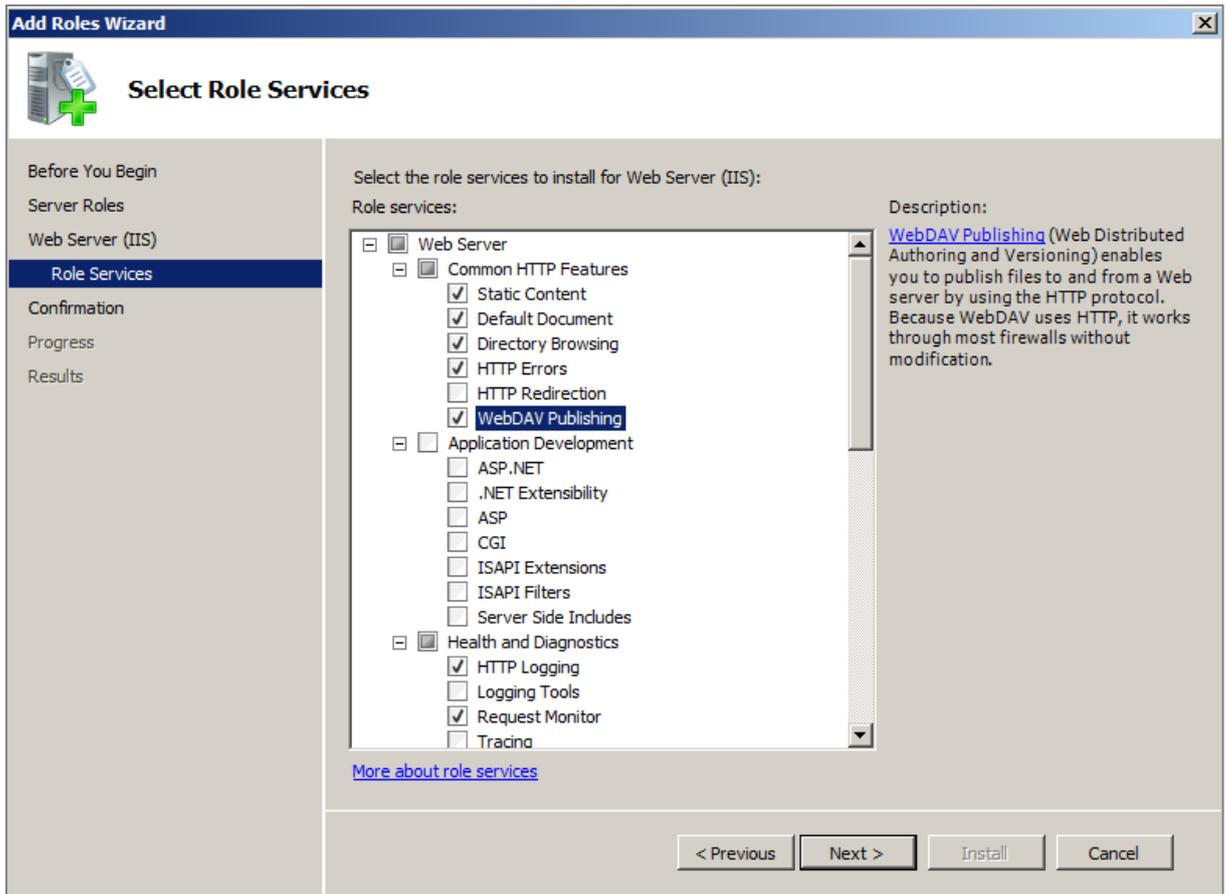
1. If it has not yet been installed, add the IIS role in the Server Manager console (menu **Add roles** > **Server roles** > **Web Server (IIS)**).



2. During the installation of the IIS role, or when selecting the option **Add Role service for the Web Server (IIS) role** in the **Server Manager** console, select the following options:

Web Server

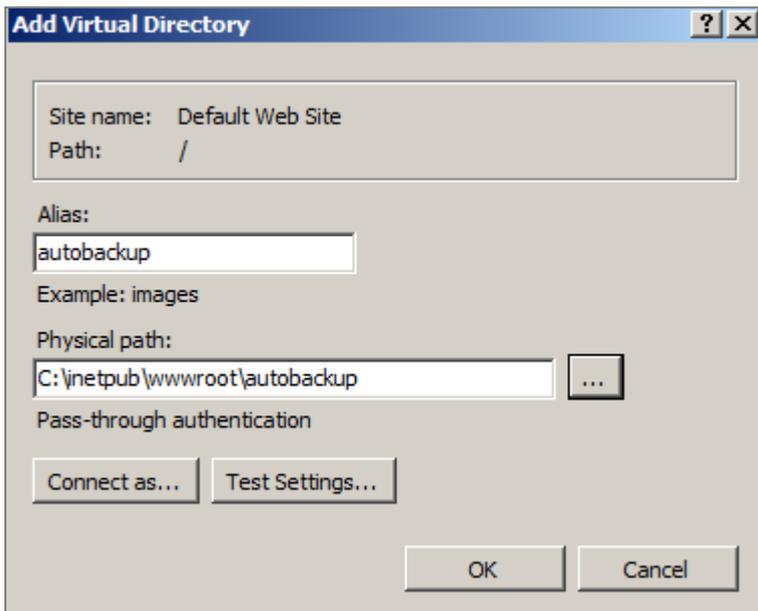
- |----- Common HTTP Features
 - |----- WebDAV Publishing
- |----- Security
 - |----- Basic Authentication
 - |----- Digest Authentication
- |----- Management Tools
 - |----- Management Service



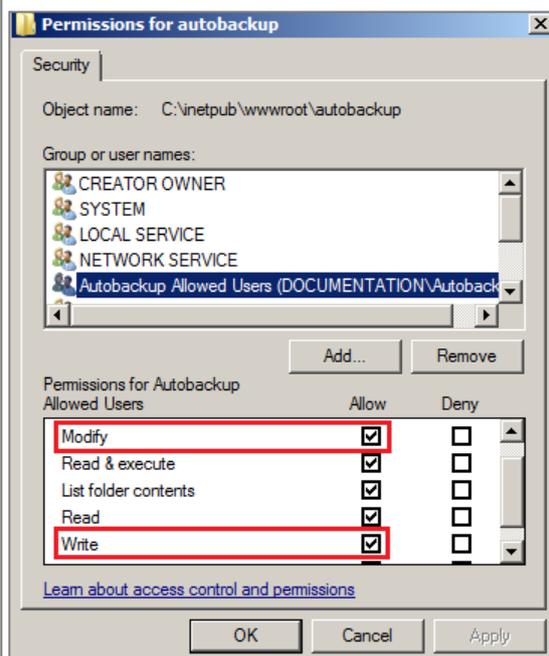
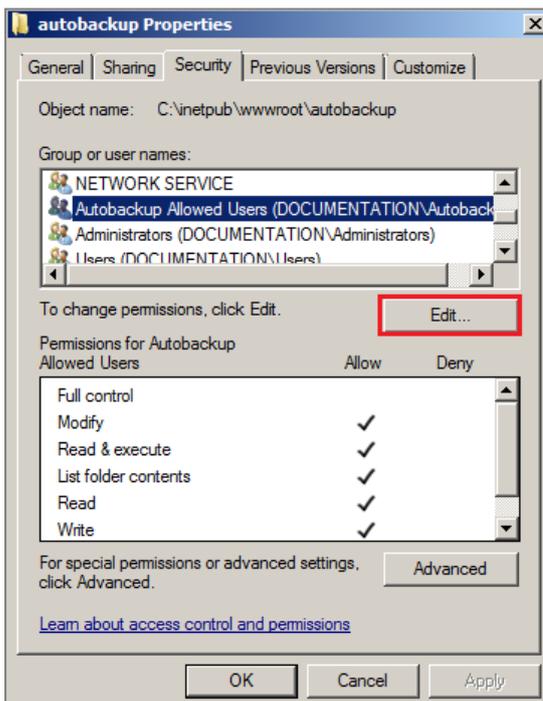
Creating a virtual folder

In this example, the site used for receiving and storing backups will not be the *Default Web Site*, but a dedicated site named *autobackup*, whose base folder will be located under the root of the *Default Web Site* (*c:\inetpub\wwwroot*).

1. Launch the **Internet Information Server (IIS) Manager** console.
2. Right-click on *Default Web Site*.
3. Select the option **Add Virtual Directory**.



4. In the field Alias, select the name given to your site (example: autobackup); the address of the site will take the form *https://server_name.company.com/alias*.
5. In the field Physical path, select (or create) the physical folder corresponding to your virtual site (example: *c:\inetpub\wwwroot\autobackup*).
6. Right-click on your site.
7. Select the option **Edit Permissions** to grant writing privileges to the group of dedicated users on the physical folder meant for storing the backups.
8. In the **Security** tab, click on **Edit**.
9. Select the user group (example: *Autobackup Allowed Users*).
10. Select the checkboxes **Modify** and **Write**.
11. Validate.





Granting directory browsing privileges

1. In the **Internet Information Server (IIS) Manager** console, select your site (*autobackup* in the example).
2. Double-click on the **Directory browsing** icon.
3. In the right panel (**Actions**), click on **Enable**.

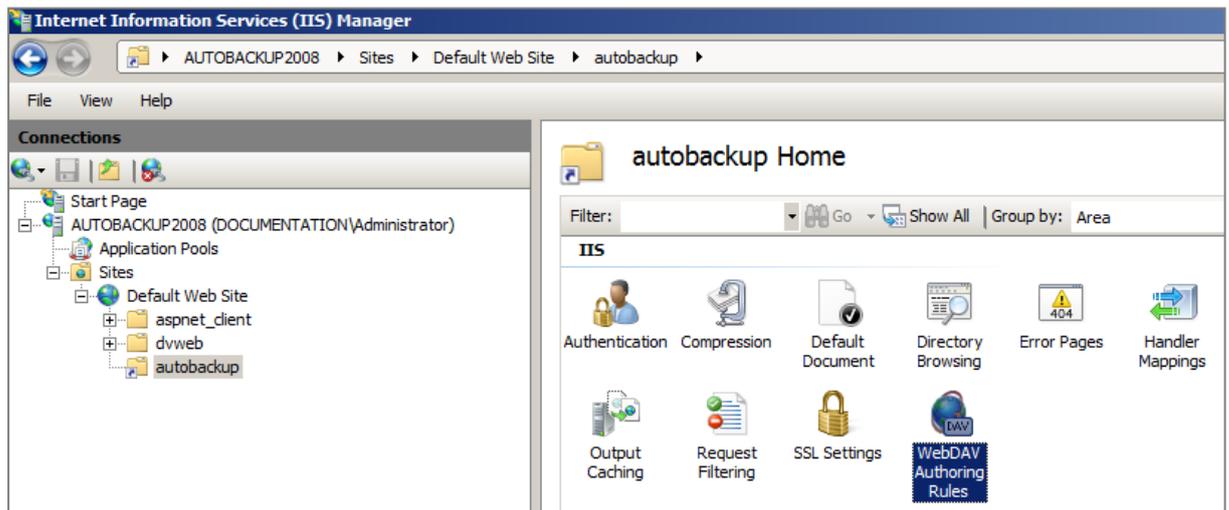
Adding a MIME type for backup files

Backup files are encrypted and have an “.enc” extension. Since this extension is unknown to the IIS server, it must be defined so that the server will know which action to perform when you click on the link corresponding to a backup (execute the file, suggest opening or downloading it, etc.).

1. In the **Internet Information Server (IIS) Manager** console, select your site (*autobackup* in the example)
2. Double-click on the **MIME Types** icon.
3. In the right panel (**Actions**), click on **Add**.
4. In the field **File name extension**, indicate .enc.
5. In the field **MIME Type**, specify *application/octet-stream*.

Enabling WebDAV

1. In the **Internet Information Server (IIS) Manager** console, select *Default Web Site*.
2. Double-click on the **WebDAV Authoring Rules** icon:

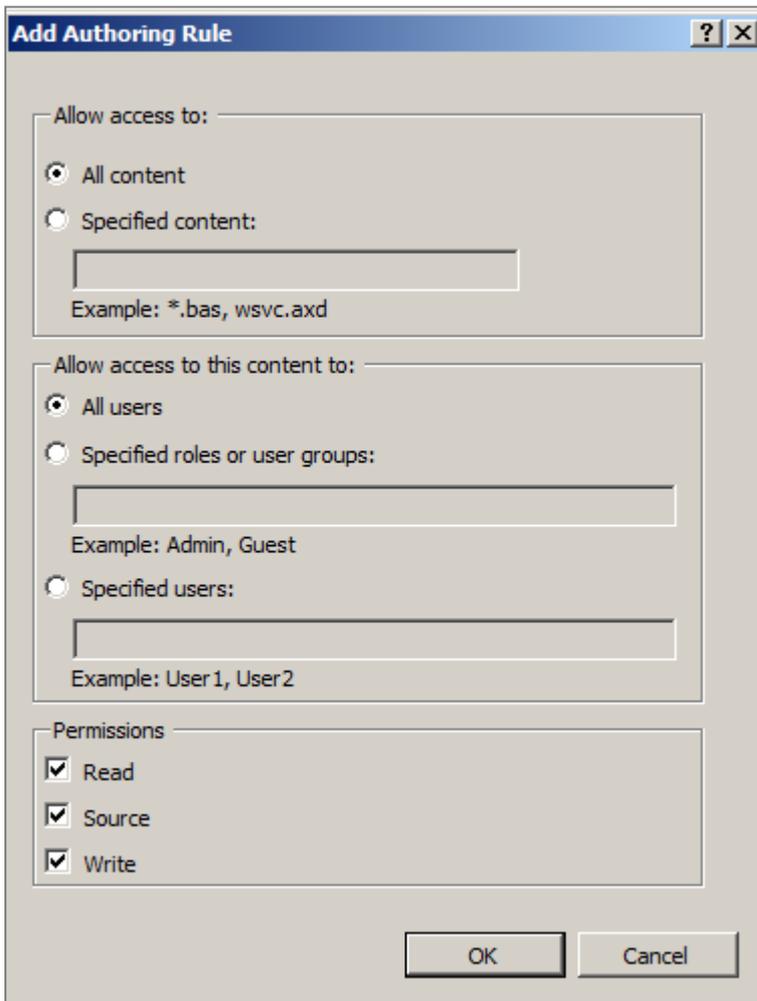


3. In the right panel (**Actions**), click on **Enable WebDAV**:



Adding a rule for creating WebDAV

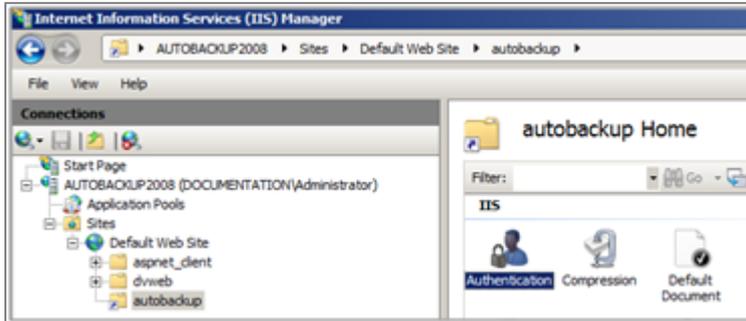
1. In the IIS console, select your site (*autobackup* in the example).
2. Double-click on the **WebDAV Authoring Rules** icon.
3. In the right panel (**Actions**), click on **Add Authoring Rule**.
4. For this rule, select the options **All content**, **All users** and permissions: **Read**, **Source**, and **Write**.



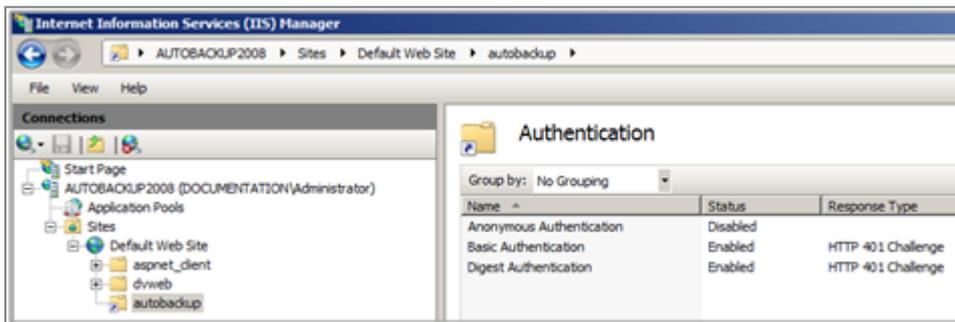


Setting authentication mechanisms

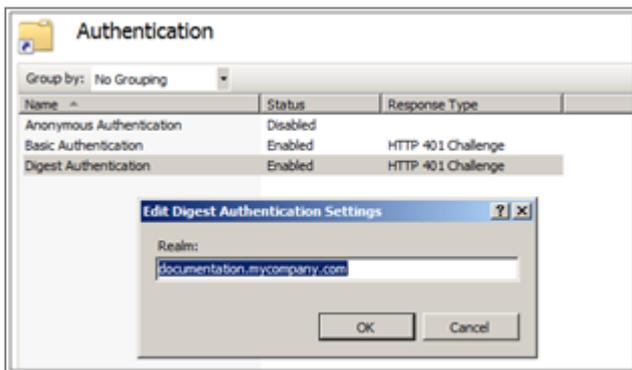
1. In the **Internet Information Services Manager** console, click on your site.
2. Double-click on the **Authentication** icon.



3. Enable **Basic Authentication** and **Digest Authentication**.
4. Disable **Anonymous Authentication**.



5. Select **Digest Authentication**.
6. Click on **Edit** in the right panel to specify the server's Active Directory domain (*documentation.mycompany.com* in the example).



7. Validate.

Creating the server certificate

On the firewall hosting the CA used for automatic backups:

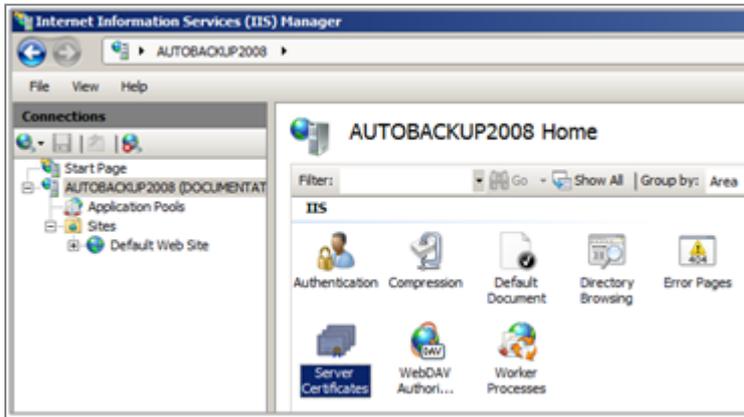
1. Go to the **Configuration > Objects > Certificates and PKI** module.
2. Create a server certificate relating to the server hosting the backups (menu **Add > Add a server certificate**).



3. Select this certificate and export it in PKCS12 format (menu **Download** > **Certificate as a P12 file**).

Importing the certificate on the IIS server

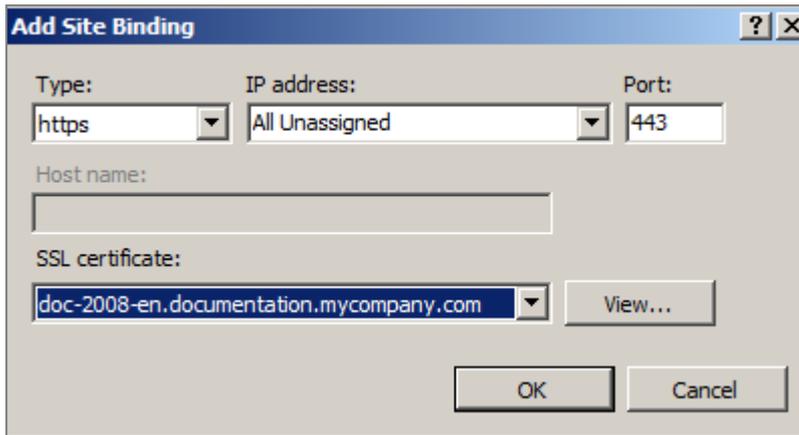
1. In the **Internet Information Services Manager** console, select the name of the server.
2. Double click on the option **Server Certificates**.



3. In the right panel (**Actions**), click on **Import**.
4. Select the server certificate.
5. Enter the associated password.
The certificate will then appear in the IIS certificate store:



6. In the **Internet Information Services Manager** console, click on the **Default Web Site**.
7. Select the option **Bindings** in the right panel.
8. Add a binding with the following values:
 - **Type:** https,
 - **IP address:** the IP address on which the server has to be contacted in HTTPS,
 - **Port:** 443,
 - **SSL certificate:** the imported server certificate.



Exclusive access in SSL

1. In the **Internet Information Services Manager** console, click on your site.
2. Double-click on the icon **SSL Settings**.
3. Select the checkbox **Require SSL**.
4. Apply.



Further reading

Additional information and responses to questions you may have are available in the [Stormshield knowledge base](#) (authentication required).



STORMSHIELD

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