CB1906 NEW FEATURES

In this post, I will show you all the new features that came with CB1906. I will provide a brief explanation and then detailed screen shot and configuration for each feature. Enjoy!

Link to CB1906 new features - https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/sccm/core/plan-design/changes/whats-new-in-version-1906

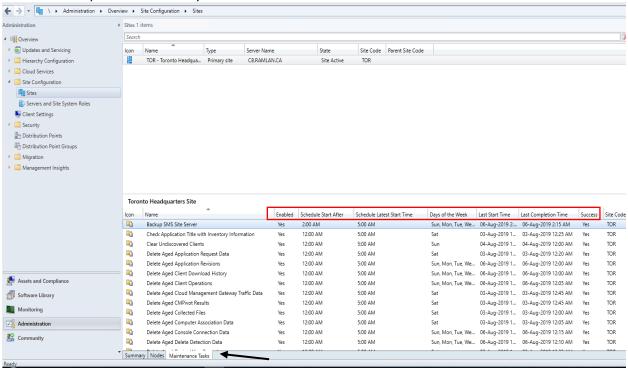
SITE INFRASTRUCTURE:

Maintenance Task Improvements - Open Console - Administration - Sites

Site server maintenance tasks can now be viewed and edited from their own tab on the details view of a site server. The new Maintenance Tasks tab gives you information such as:

If the task is enabled The task schedules Last start time Last completion time

If the task completed successfully

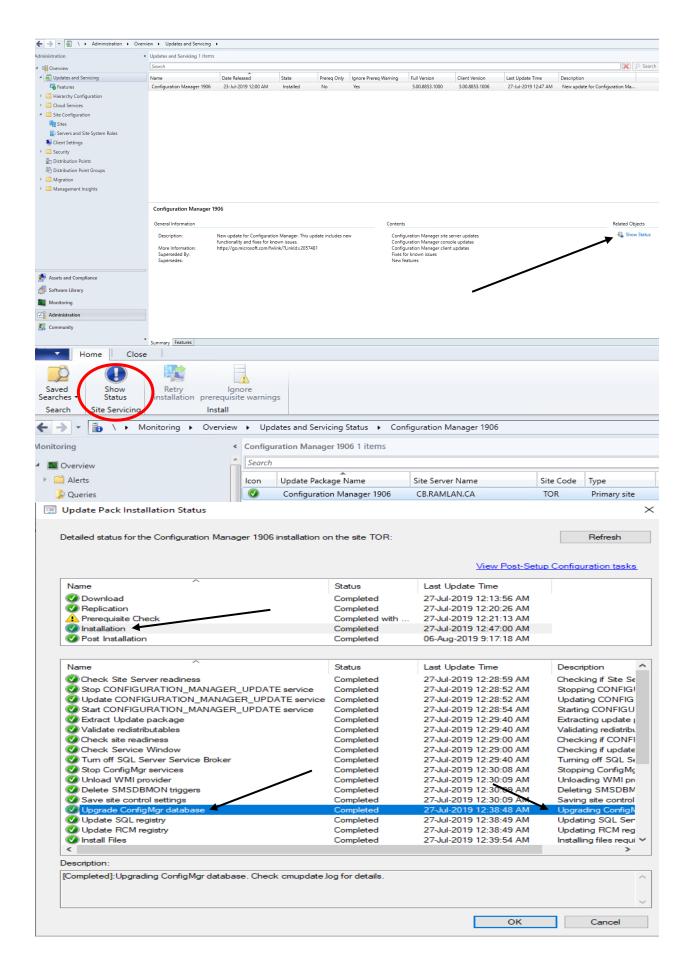


Configuration Manager update database upgrade monitoring – Open Console – Updates & Servicing – Show Status

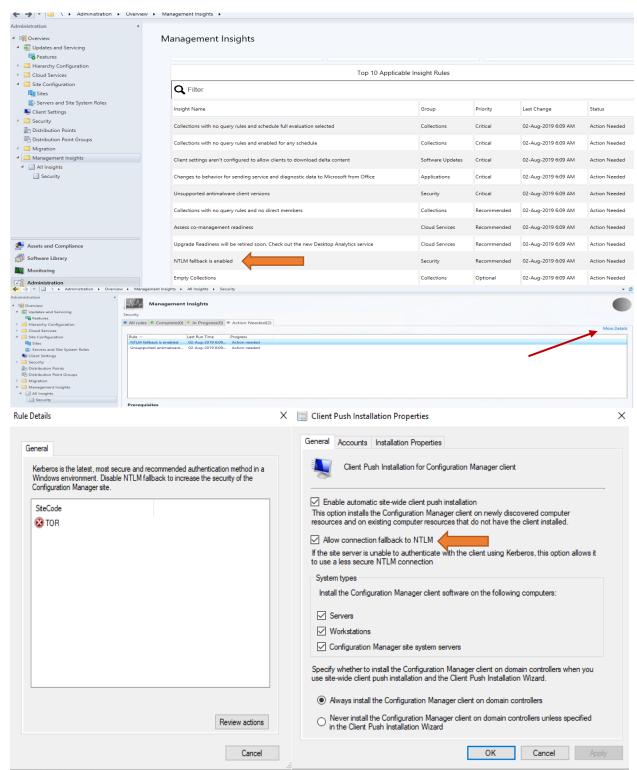
If the database upgrade is blocked, then you'll be given the warning, in progress, needs attention. The cmupdate.log will log the program name and sessionid from SQL that is blocking the database upgrade.

When the database upgrade is no longer blocked, the status will be reset to in progress or Complete.

When the database upgrade is blocked, a check is done every 5 minutes to see if it's still blocked.



Management insights rule for NTLM fallback – This configuration is set under client push installation on the site server. This is by default enabled. If you want to disable uncheck the property.



NTLM fallback is enabled: Starting in version 1906, this rule detects if you enabled the less secure NTLM authentication fallback method for the site. When using the client push method of installing the Configuration Manager client, the site can require Kerberos mutual authentication. This enhancement helps to secure the communication between the server and the client. For more information, see How to install-clients with client-push.

Improvements to support for SQL Always On – I am unable to provide more information or screen shot as, I don't have SQL Always On. I am running stand alone SQL Server. Here is what Microsoft explanation for this feature.

Improvements to support for SQL Always On

- Add a new synchronous replica from setup: You can now add a new secondary replica node to an existing SQL Always On availability group. Instead of a manual process, use Configuration Manager setup to make this change. For more information, see <u>Configure SQL Server Always On availability groups</u>.
- Multi-subnet failover: You can now enable the <u>MultiSubnetFailover connection string keyword</u> in SQL Server.
 You also need to manually configure the site server. For more information, see the <u>Multi-subnet failover</u> prerequisite.
- Support for distributed views: The site database can be hosted on a SQL Server Always On availability group, and you can enable database replication links to use <u>distributed views</u>.

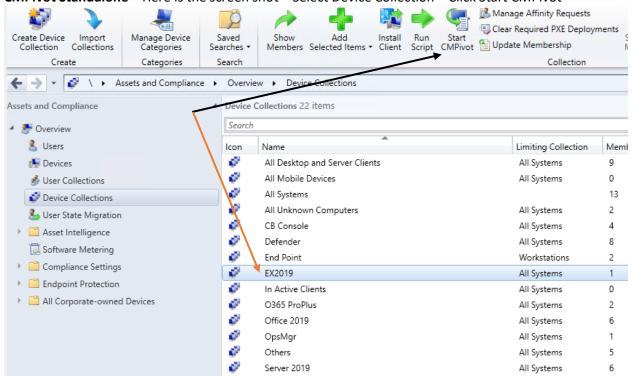
① Note

This change doesn't apply to SQL Server clusters.

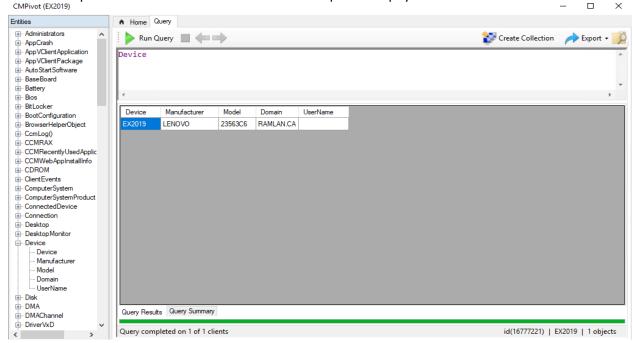
- Site recovery can recreate the database on a SQL Always On group. This process works with both manual and automatic seeding.
- New setup prerequisite checks:
 - o SQL availability group replicas must all have the same seeding mode
 - SQL availability group replicas must be healthy

REAL TIME MANAGEMENT

CMPivot Standalone - Here is the screen shot - Select Device Collection - Click Start CMPivot

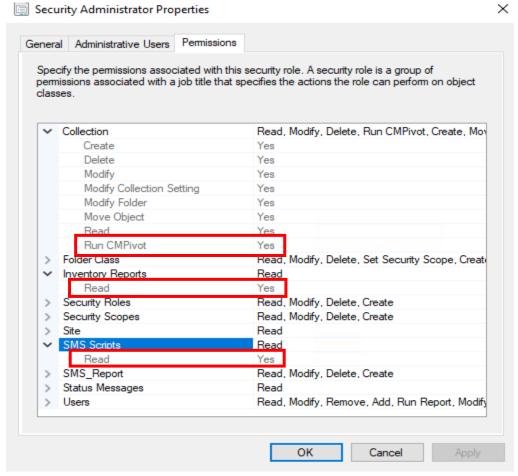


In this example – I selected the device and ran the script to find physical device info.



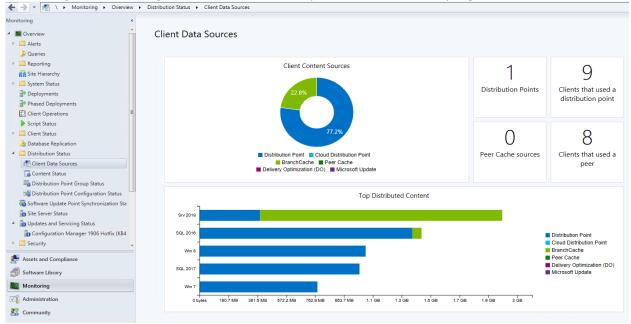
You can do a lot more with CMPivot. Check MS link for more read on this feature https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/sccm/core/servers/manage/cmpivot

Added Permissions to Security Administrator Role – Following are the new permissions set for Security Administrator role.



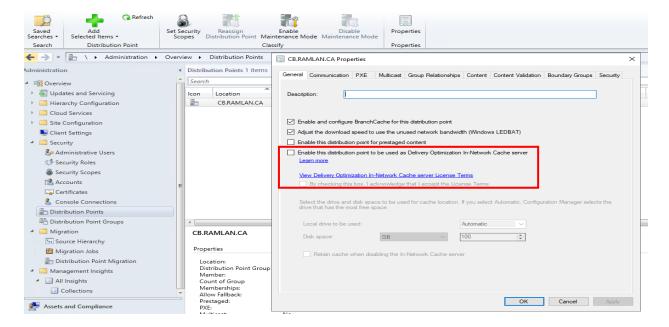
CONTENT MANAGEMENT:

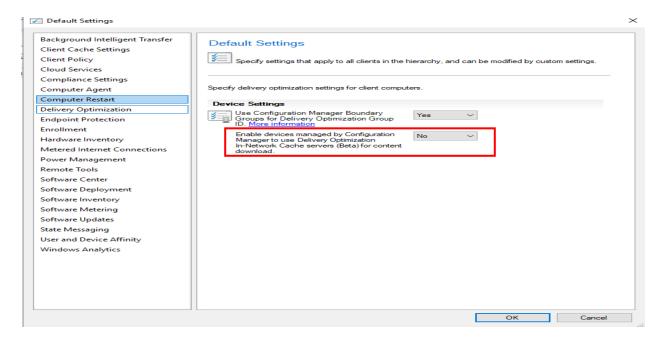
Delivery Optimization download data in client data sources dashboard – This produces a neat GRAPH for sharing with Management and other how the clients are connecting and to which DP's they are connecting. Useful for organization that has wide spread DP's across many regions.



Use your distribution point as a In Network Cache Server for Delivery Optimization – You can enable this feature from DP Properties. Don't forget to make necessary setting under Client settings as well to use the feature properly/effectively.

You can now install Delivery Optimization In-Network Cache (DOING) server on your distribution points. By caching this content on-premises, your clients can benefit from the Delivery Optimization feature, but you can help to protect WAN links. This cache server acts as an on-demand transparent cache for content downloaded by Delivery Optimization. Use client settings to make sure this server is offered only to the members of the local Configuration Manager boundary group.





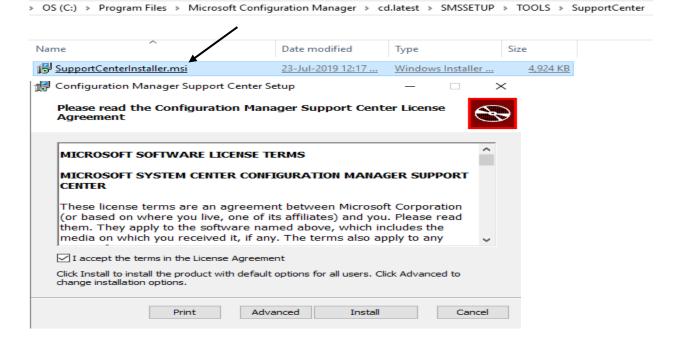
CLIENT MANAGEMENT:

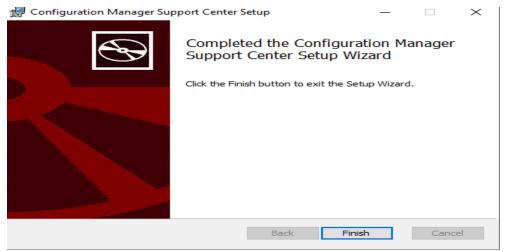
Support for Virtual Desktop – In order to use this feature, you need Azure and VDI's in Azure. **Support for Windows Virtual Desktop**

<u>Windows Virtual Desktop</u> is a preview feature of Microsoft Azure and Microsoft 365. You can now use Configuration Manager to manage these virtual devices running Windows in Azure.

Similar to a terminal server, these virtual devices allow multiple concurrent active user sessions. To help with client performance, Configuration Manager now disables user policies on any device that allows these multiple user sessions. Even if you enable user policies, the client disables them by default on these devices, which include Windows Virtual Desktop and terminal servers.

Support Center OneTrace – You have to make sure to install Support Center by running MSI from here –



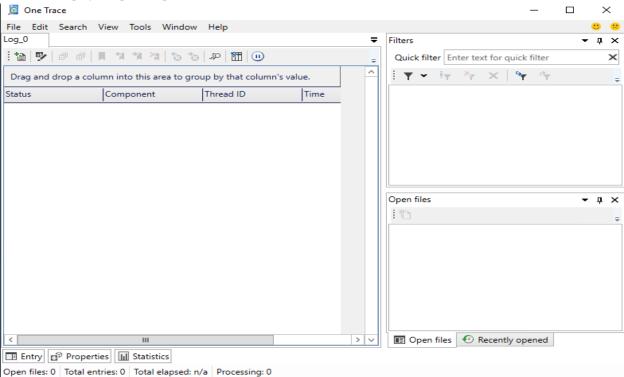


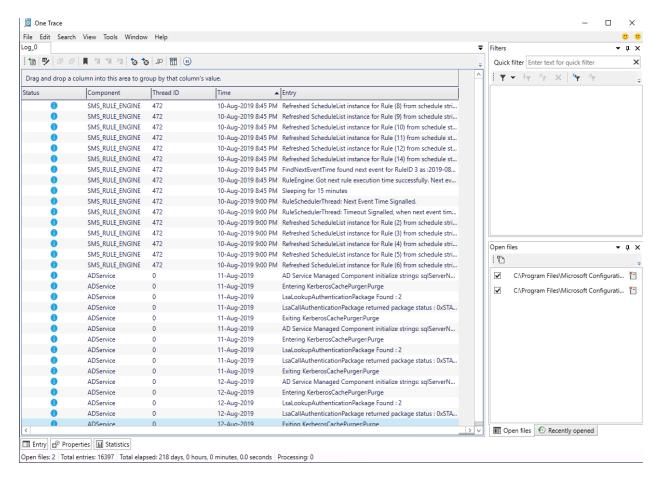
Once the install is done it will show up in Programs - Microsoft System Center - Configuration Manager - Support Center



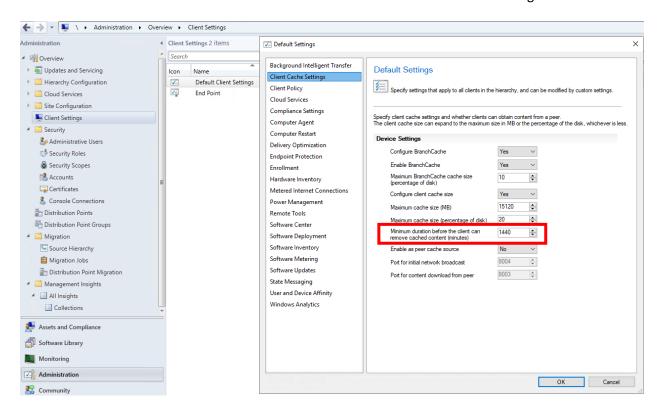
Starting in version 1906, OneTrace is a new log viewer with Support Center. It works similarly to CMTrace, with the following improvements:

- A tabbed view
- Dockable windows
- Improved search capabilities
- Ability to enable filters without leaving the log view
- Scrollbar hints to quickly identify clusters of errors
- Fast log opening for large files



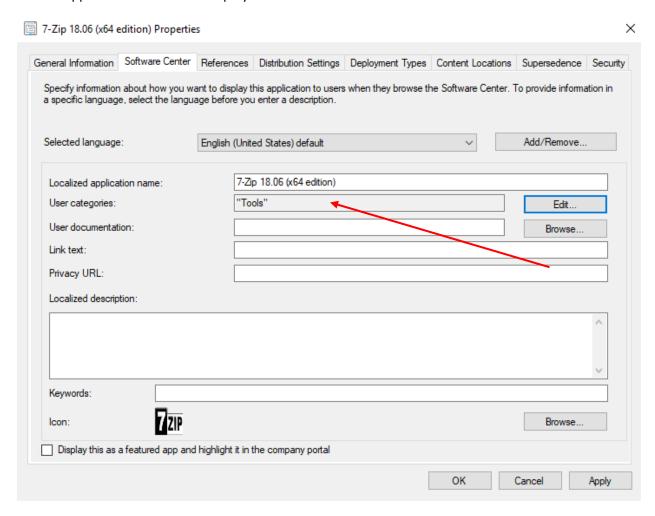


Client Cache Minimum Retention Period – You can set this from Default Client Settings. It is in minutes.

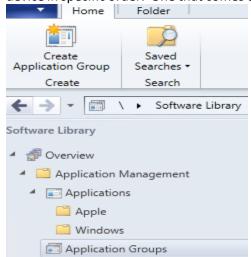


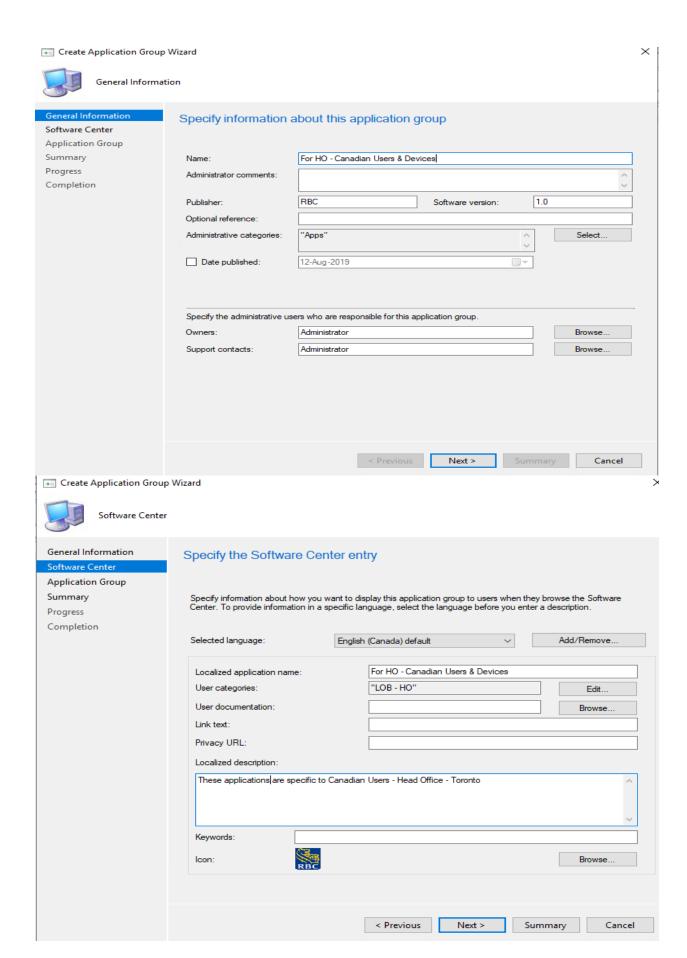
APPLICATION MANAGEMENT:

Filter applications deployed to devices – In this example, I have 7Zip as an application targeted to various device collections. In the properties you can set User Category as detailed below. This will come handy to filter applications in SC when deployed to Device.



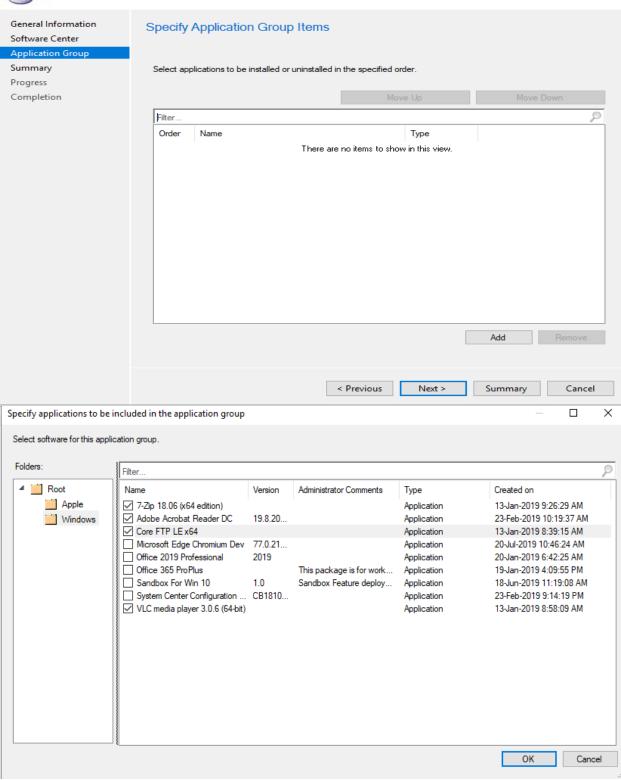
Application Groups – These can come handy when you want to deploy a group of applications to specific device in specific order. One that comes to my mind is LOB's. You can create Application group from here





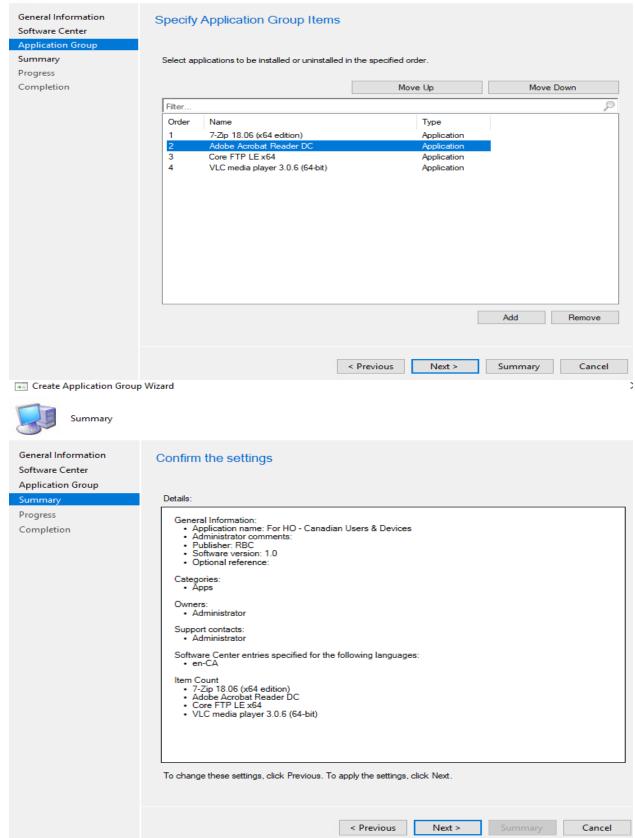


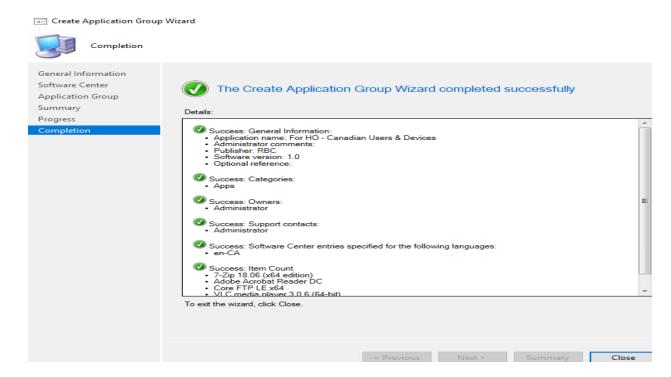
Application Group



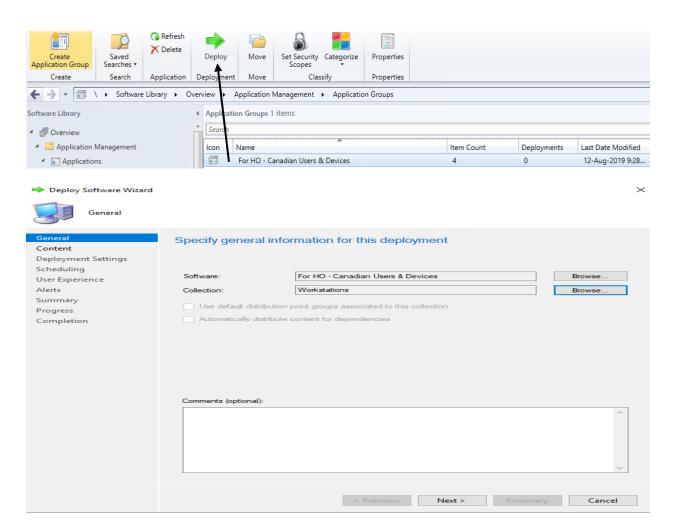


Application Group



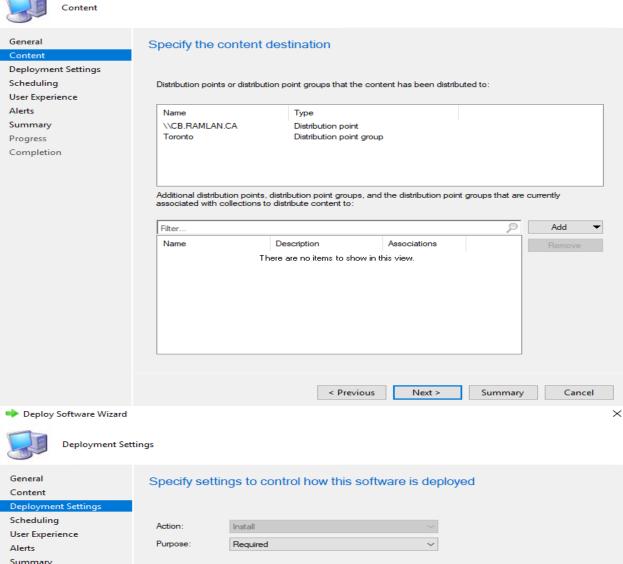


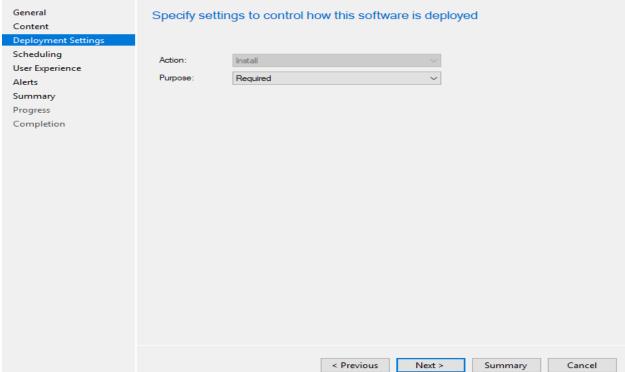
Now we have the group created. Deploy it to a device and it will show you in SC for device to install later.





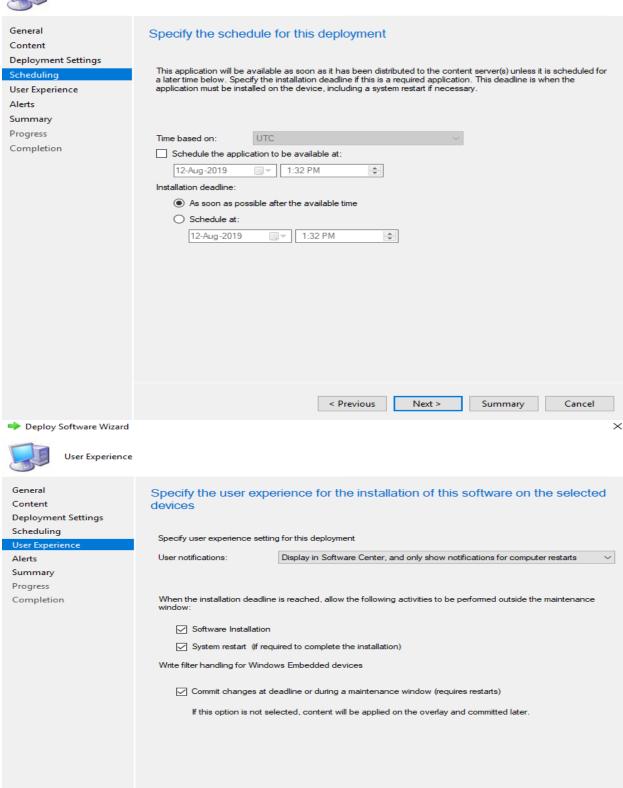








Scheduling



< Previous

Next >

Summary

Cancel

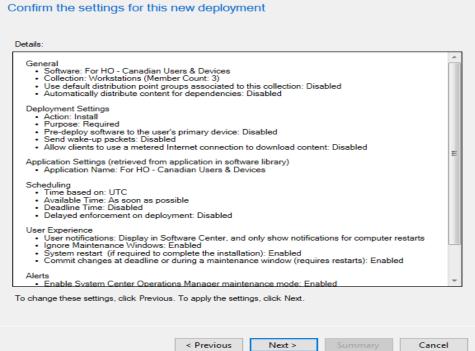


Alerts				
General Content Deployment Settings	Specify Configuration Manager and Operations Manager alert options			
Scheduling	Configuration Manager generates alerts when this application is deployed.			
User Experience				
Alerts	Threshold for successful deployment			
Summary	Create a deployment alert when the threshold is lower than the following:			
Progress	D			
Completion	Percent success:			
	After: 19-Aug-2019 ∨ 9:32 AM 💠			
	Threshold for failed deployment			
	Create a deployment alert when the threshold is higher than the following:			
	Percent failure: 0 -			
	Enable System Center Operations Manager maintenance mode if you want Operations Manager to generate alerts when this application is deployed. Description:			
	Generate System Center Operations Manager alert when a software installation fails			
	< Previous Next > Summary Cancel			
Deploy Software Wizard	×			
Summary				
General	Confirm the settings for this new deployment			

Content **Deployment Settings** Scheduling User Experience Alerts

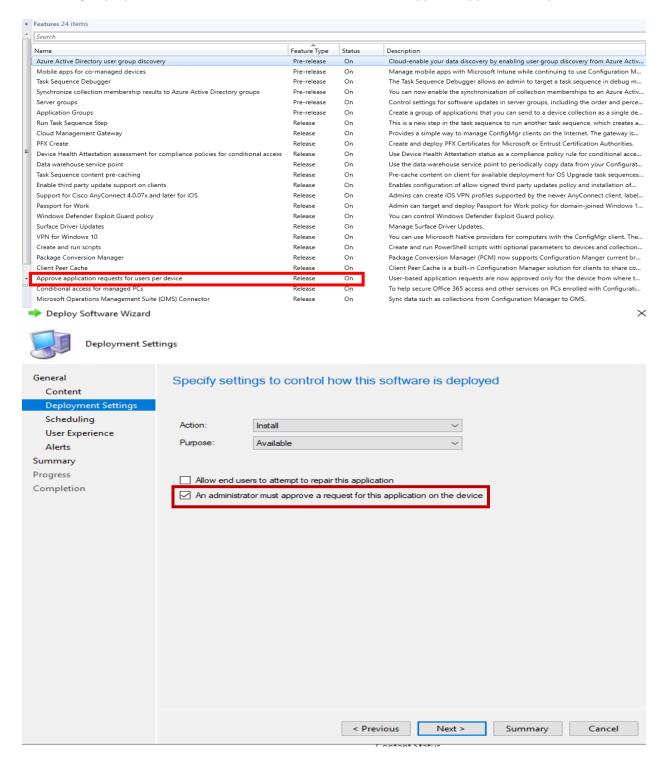
Progress

Completion

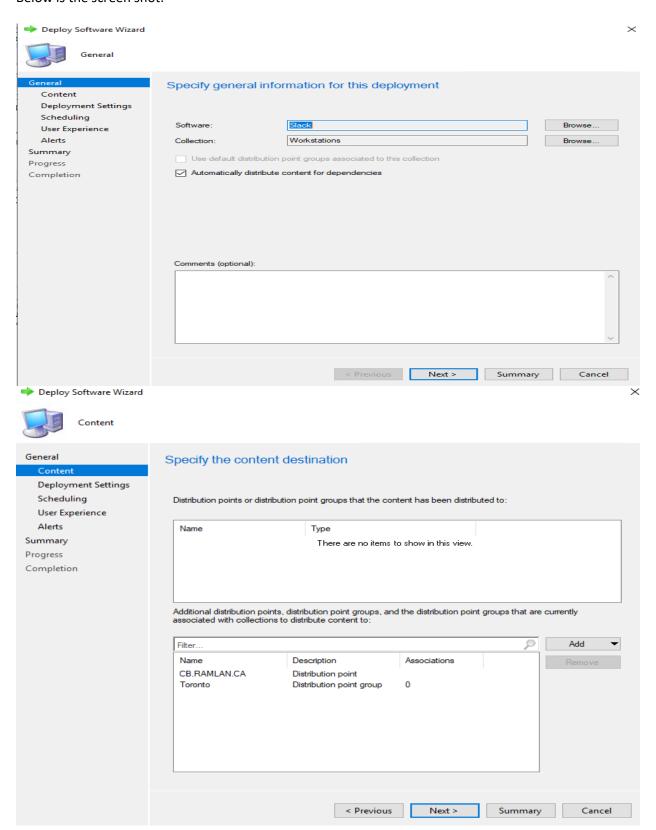


Retry the install of pre-approved applications - You can now retry the installation of an app that you previously approved for a user or device. The approval option is only for available deployments. If the user uninstalls the app, or if the initial install process fails, Configuration Manager doesn't reevaluate its state and reinstall it. This feature allows a support technician to quickly retry the app install for a user that calls for help.

Install an application for a device in real time – In order to accomplish this, you have to enable this feature and during deployment make sure to check "Administrator must approve application request".



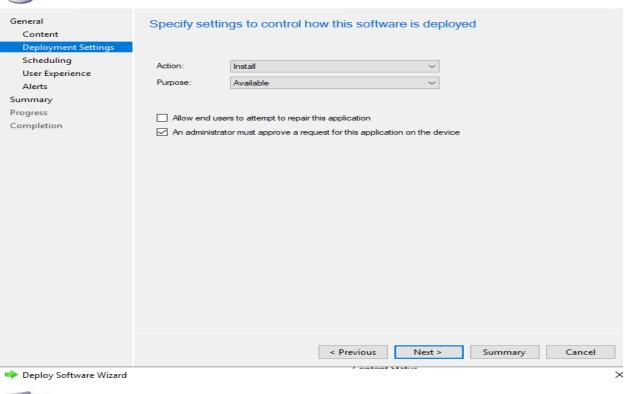
For this example, I created Slack application and deployed to workstations (Win 7, Win 8 & Win 10). Below is the screen shot.



➡ Deploy Software Wizard

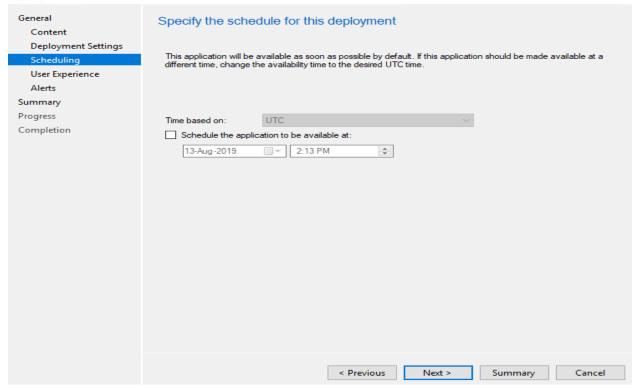


Deployment Settings





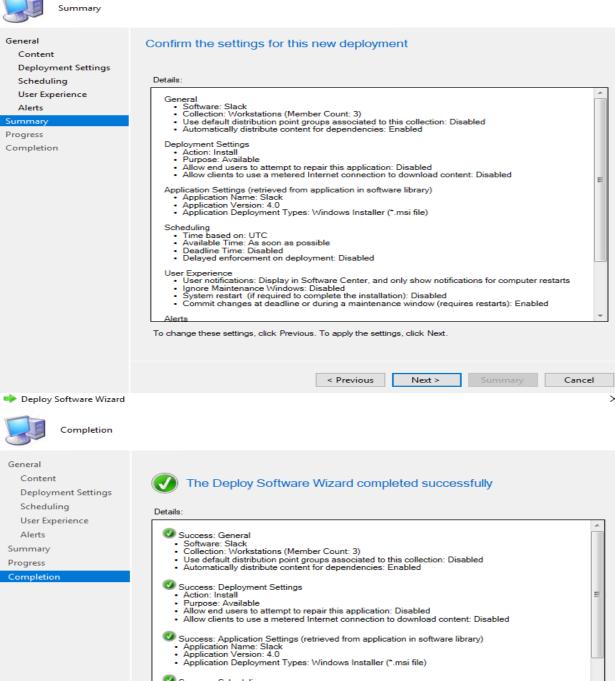
Scheduling

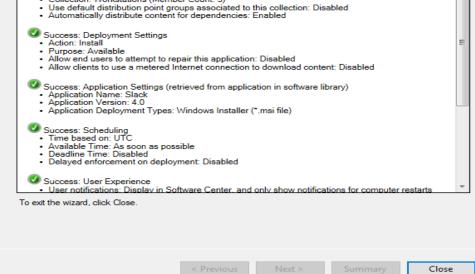




Content Deployment Settings	Specify the user experience for the installation of this software on the selecte devices					
_	Specify user experience setting for this deployment					
Scheduling User Experience Alerts Summary Progress Completion	Specify user experience setting for this deployment User notifications: Display in Software Center, and only show notifications for computer restarts When software changes are required, show a dialog window to the user instead of a toast notification When the installation deadline is reached, allow the following activities to be performed outside the maintenance window: Software Installation System restart (if required to complete the installation) Write filter handling for Windows Embedded devices Commit changes at deadline or during a maintenance window (requires restarts) If this option is not selected, content will be applied on the overlay and committed later.					
→ Deploy Software Wizard Alerts		< Previous	Next >	Summary	Cancel >	
General Content Deployment Settings Scheduling User Experience	Specify Configuration Manager and Operations Manager alert options Configuration Manager generates alerts when this application is deployed.					
User Experience Alerts Summary Progress Completion	Threshold for successful deployment Create a deployment alert when the threshold is lower than the following: Percent success: After: 20-Aug-2019 \(\) 10:13 AM \(\) Threshold for failed deployment Create a deployment alert when the threshold is higher than the following: Percent failure: 0 \(\) Enable System Center Operations Manager maintenance mode if you want Operations Manager to generate alerts when this application is deployed. Enable System Center Operations Manager maintenance mode Generate System Center Operations Manager alert when a software installation fails					
		< Previous	Next >	Summary	Cancel	

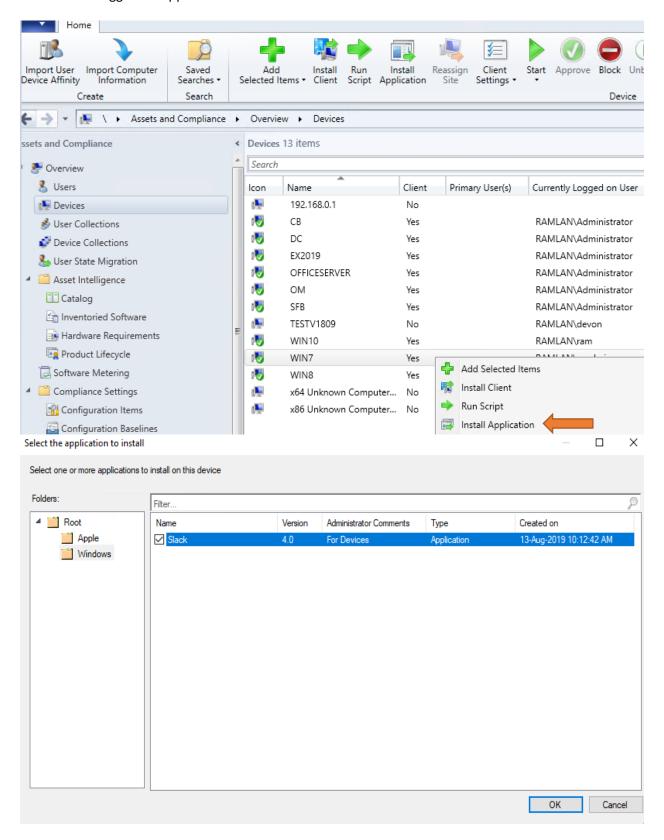




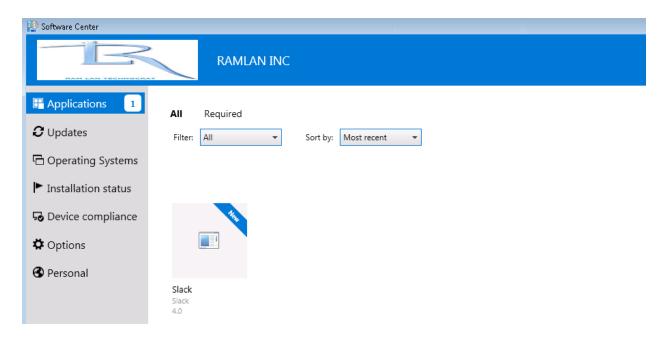


When user open Software Center on a workstation the application is not showing. That is the default and expected behaviour.

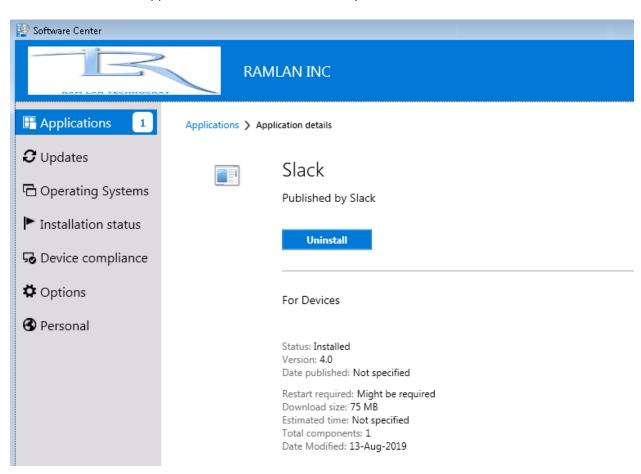
Now we will trigger the application for real time installation for the device as detailed below:

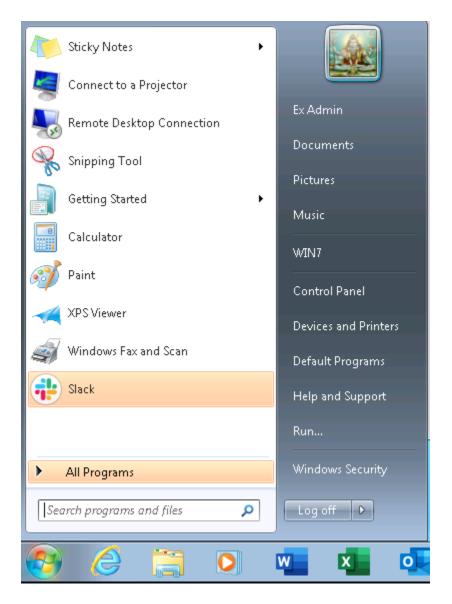


Now the application is visible in Software Center. No need to refresh any policy.

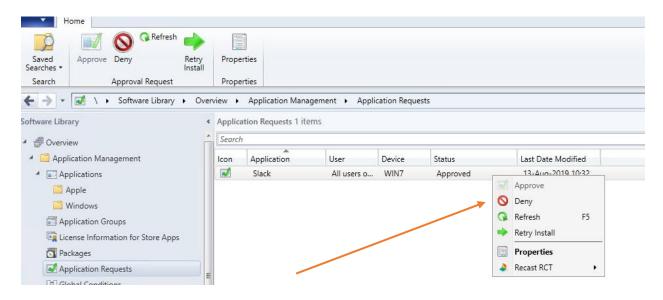


After few seconds the application is installed automatically.





If you want to cancel or deny the application it can be done from here..



Improvements to application approvals – Following is detailed explanation for this feature.

- If you approve an app request in the console, and then deny it, you can now approve it again. The app is reinstalled on the client after you approve it.
- In the Configuration Manager console, Software Library workspace, under Application Management, the Approval Requests node is renamed Application Requests.
- There's a new WMI method, DeleteInstance to remove an app approval request. This action doesn't uninstall the app on the device. If it's not already installed, the user can't install the app from Software Center.
- Call the CreateApprovedRequest API to create a pre-approved request for an app on a device. To prevent automatically installing the app on the client, set the AutoInstall parameter to FALSE. The user sees the app in Software Center, but it's not automatically installed.

OPERATING SYSTEM DEPLOYMENTS:

Task Sequence Debugger - The task sequence debugger is a new troubleshooting tool. You deploy a task sequence in debug mode to a collection of one device. It lets you step through the task sequence in a controlled manner to aid troubleshooting and investigation.

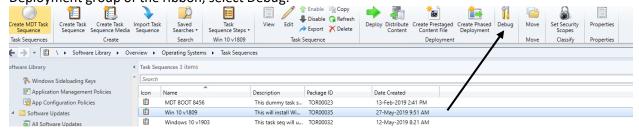
Prereqs

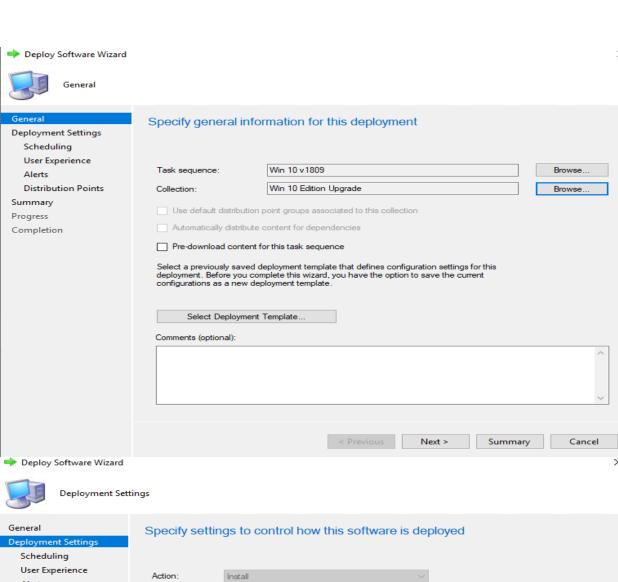
- > Full OS:
 - > Must be logged as account with administrative rights
 - > SCCM 1906 client or higher (5.00.8853.1006)
- WinPE:
 - Boot image updated with SCCM 1906 client or higher (5.00.8853.1006)

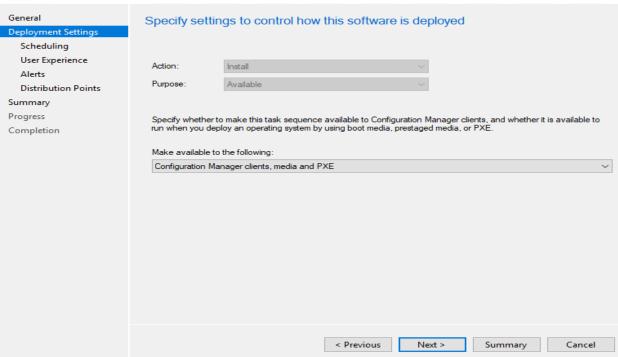
① Note

You can only select a small collection for a debug deployment. It only displays device collections with 10 or less members.

So, for this example, I am going to use in place upgrade of Win 10 v1809. Select a task sequence. In the Deployment group of the ribbon, select Debug.

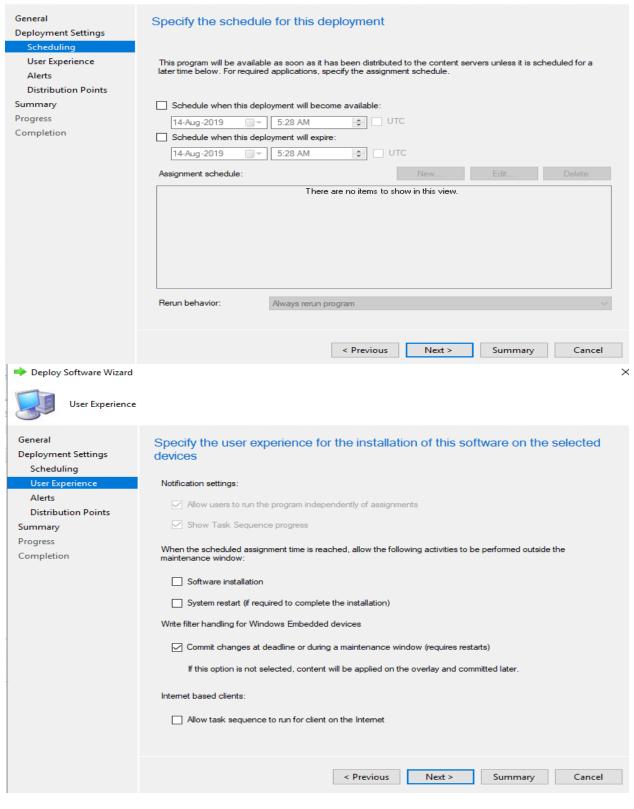


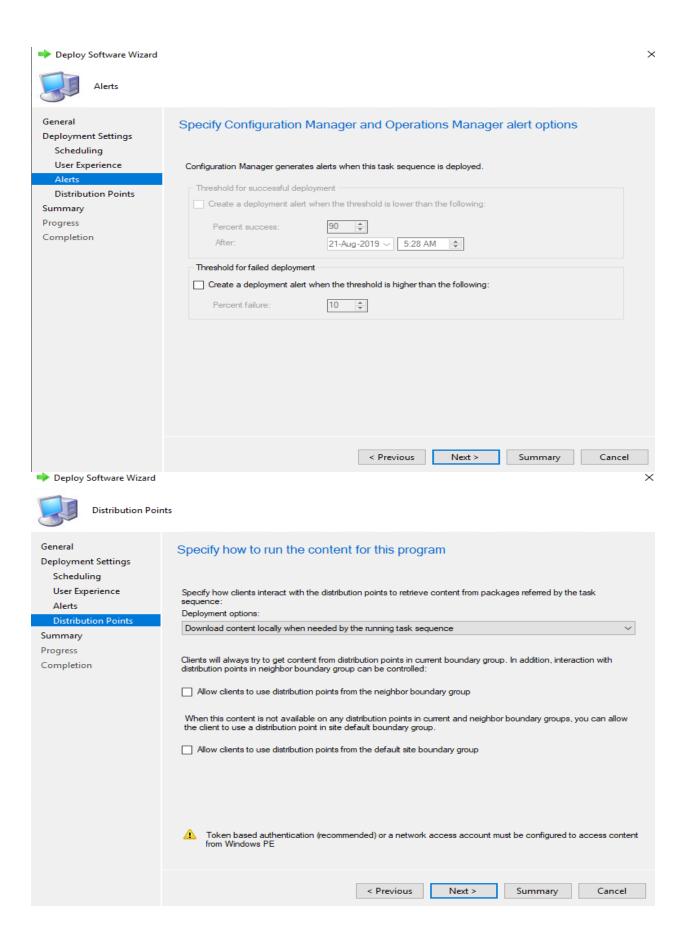


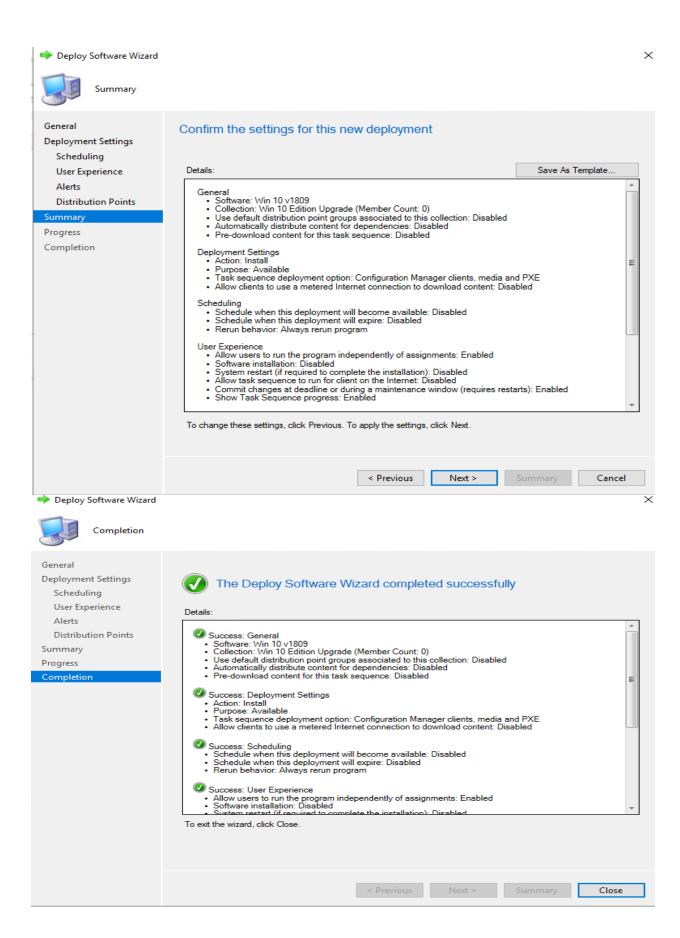




Scheduling



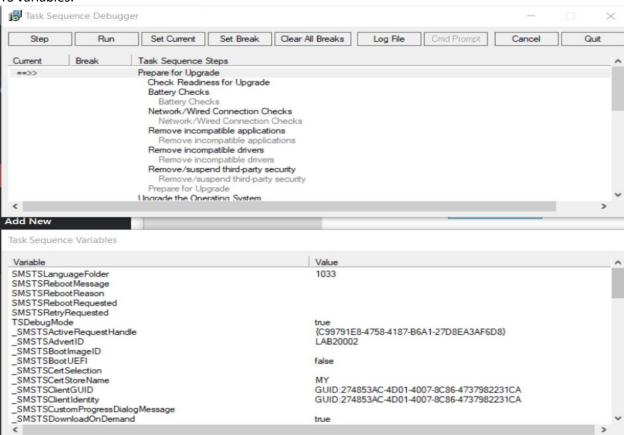


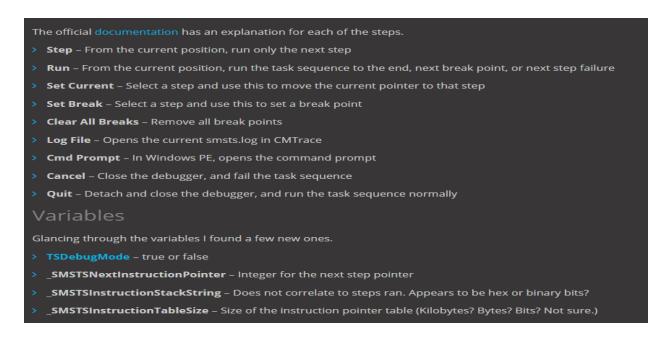


Now on your client, run the available deployment from Software Center. The first thing you will notice is a UAC prompt. Considering that the task sequence, like most things in SCCM, runs as the LOCAL SYSTEM account, you would need administrative permissions and elevation to be able to edit what a task sequence is doing.

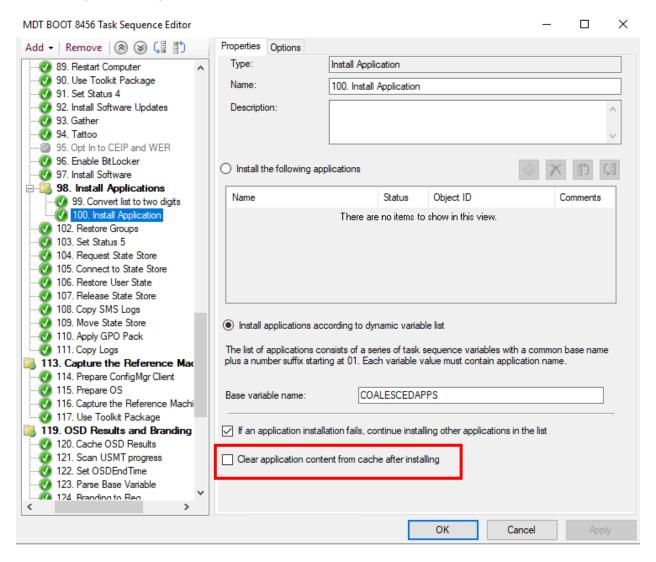


The task sequence then kicks off, and you get a beautiful popup with the TS Debugger and some of the TS variables.





Clear app content from client cache during task sequence – If you have included any apps to install during the task sequence then you can check this box to clear the cache after installation.



Reclaim SEDO lock for task sequences - If the Configuration Manager console stops responding, you can be locked out of making further changes to a task sequence. Now when you attempt to access a locked task sequence, you can now Discard Changes, and continue editing the object.

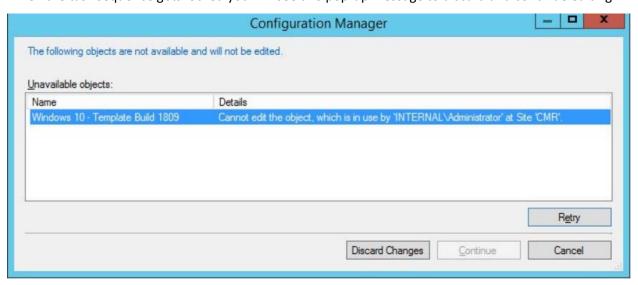
There are two way you can unlock. One through PS and other through GUI.



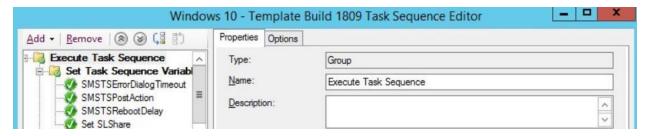
...and issue the PowerShell command:

Unlock-CMObject -InputObject (Get-CMTaskSequence -TaskSequencePackageId <TaskSequenceID>) - force

When the task sequence gets locked you will see this pop-up message to discard and continue editing.



If you click that button, then you will be straight into editing mode in your Task Sequence.



https://insights.adaptiva.com/2019/how-to-unlock-task-sequences-configmgr-1906/

Pre-cache driver packages and OS images - Task sequence pre-cache now includes additional content types. Pre-cache content previously only applied to OS upgrade packages. Now you can use pre-caching to reduce bandwidth consumption of:

- OS images
- Driver packages
- Packages

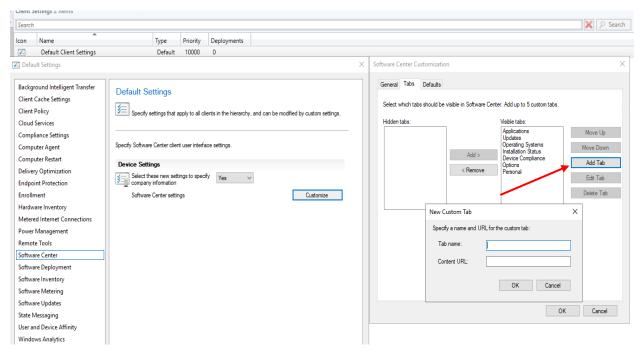
Improvements to OS deployment - This release includes the following improvements to OS deployment:

Use the following two PowerShell cmdlets to create and edit the Run Task Sequence step:

- New-CMTSStepRunTaskSequence
- Set-CMTSStepRunTaskSequence

SOFTWARE CENTER:

Improvements to Software Center tab customizations - You can now add up to five custom tabs in Software Center. You can also edit the order in which these tabs appear in Software Center.

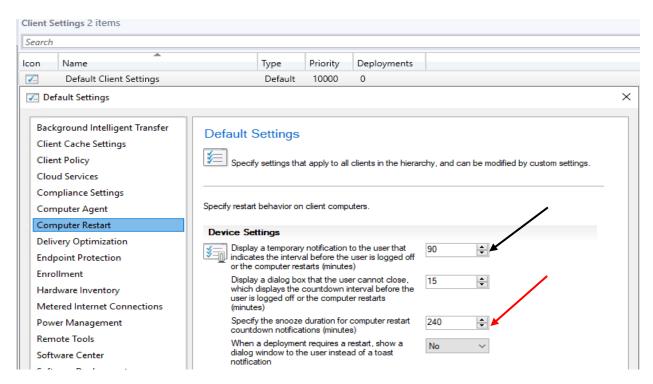


Redesigned notification for newly available software - The New Software is Available notification will only show once for a user for a given application and revision. The user will no longer see the notification each time they sign in. They'll only see another notification for an application if it has changed or was redeployed.

More frequent countdown notifications for restarts - End users will now be reminded more frequently of a pending restart with intermittent countdown notifications. You can define the interval for the intermittent notifications in Client Settings on the Computer Restart page.

Change the value for Specify the snooze duration for computer restart countdown notifications (hours) to configure how often a user is reminded about a pending restart until the final countdown notification occurs.

Additionally, the maximum value for Display a temporary notification to the user that indicates the interval before the user is logged off or the computer restarts (minutes) increased from 1440 minutes (24 hours) to 20160 minutes (two weeks).



Direct link to custom tabs in Software Center - You can now provide users with a direct link to a custom tab in Software Center.

Use the following URL format to open Software Center to a particular tab:

softwarecenter:page=CustomTab1

The string CustomTab1 is the first custom tab in order.

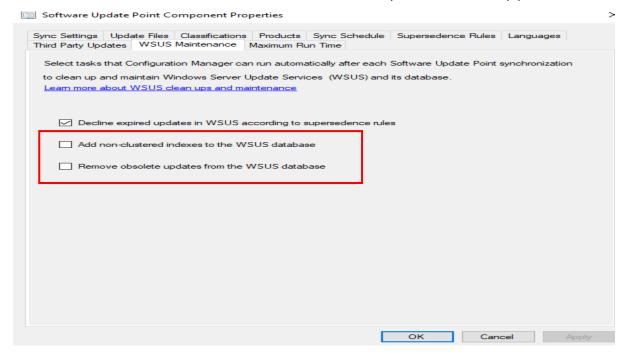
You can also use this syntax to open default tabs in Software Center:

Command line	Tab
AvailableSoftware	Applications
Updates	Updates
OSD	Operating Systems
InstallationStatus	Installation status
Compliance	Device compliance
Options	Options

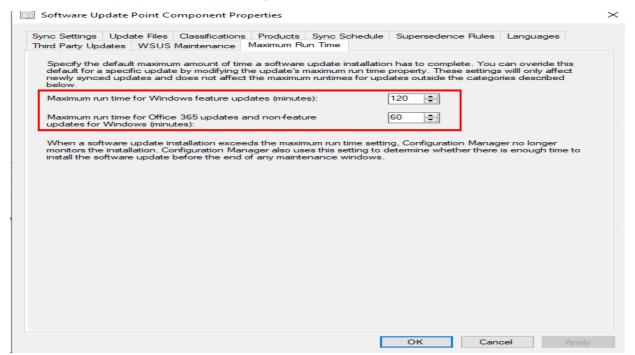
SOFTWARE UPDATES:

Additional options for WSUS maintenance - You now have additional WSUS maintenance tasks that Configuration Manager can run to maintain healthy software update points. In addition to declining expired updates in WSUS, Configuration Manager can now:

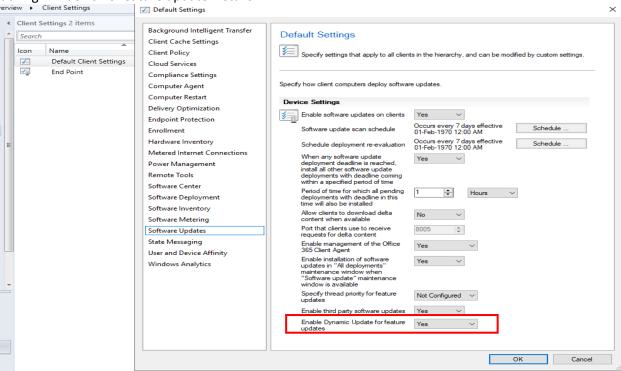
- Remove obsolete updates from the WSUS database.
- Add non-clustered indexes to the WSUS database to improve WSUS cleanup performance.



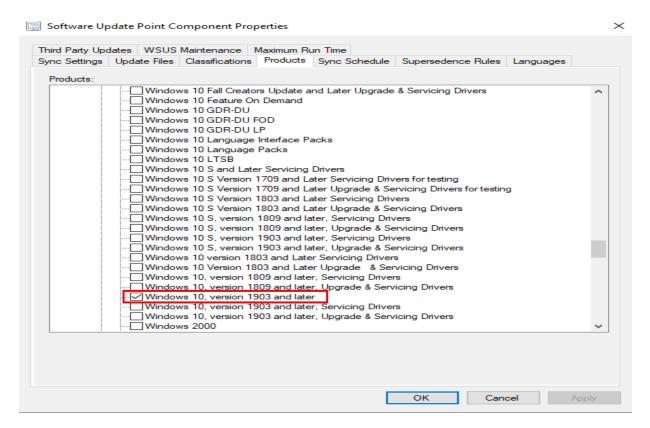
Configure the default maximum run time for software updates - You can now specify the maximum amount of time a software update installation has to complete. You can specify the following items in the Maximum Run Time tab on the Software Update Point:



Configure dynamic update during feature updates - Use a new client setting to configure Dynamic Update during Windows 10 feature update installs.

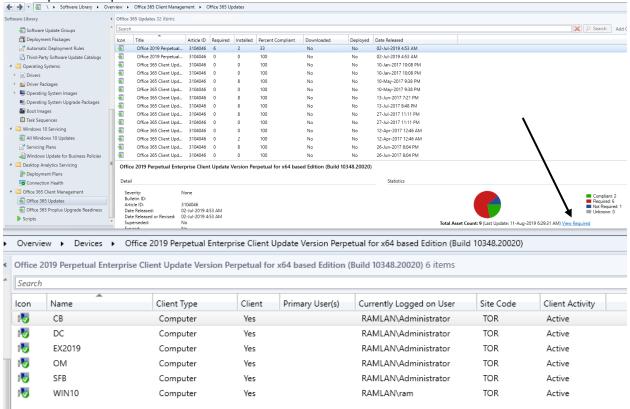


New Windows 10, version 1903 and later product category - Windows 10, version 1903 and later was added to Microsoft Update as its own product rather than being part of the Windows 10 product like earlier versions.



Drill through required updates - You can now drill through compliance statistics to see which devices require a specific software update.

Here is an example for Office 365 Updates. When you click View Required it will take you to the device that require this update.

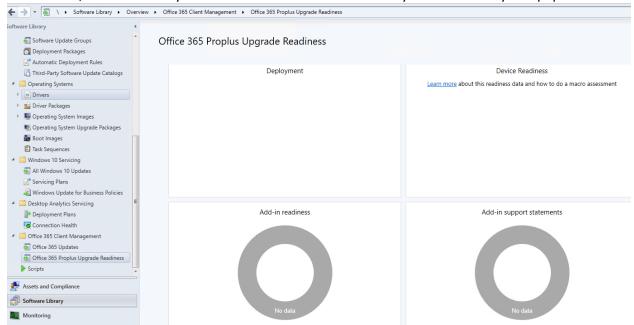


OFFICE MANAGEMENT:

Office 365 ProPlus upgrade readiness dashboard - To help you determine which devices are ready to upgrade to Office 365 ProPlus, there's a new readiness dashboard. It includes the Office 365 ProPlus upgrade readiness tile.



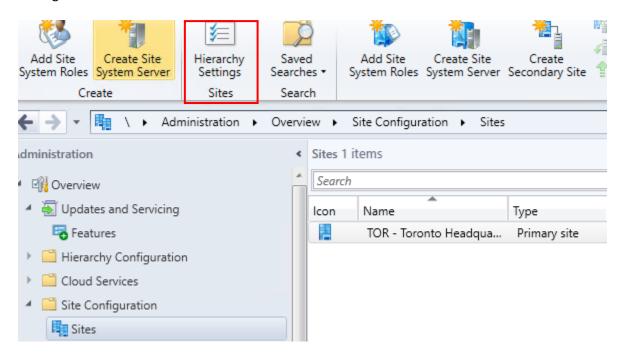
At home lab, I don't have any Office 365 Product installed. Hence you don't see any info populated.

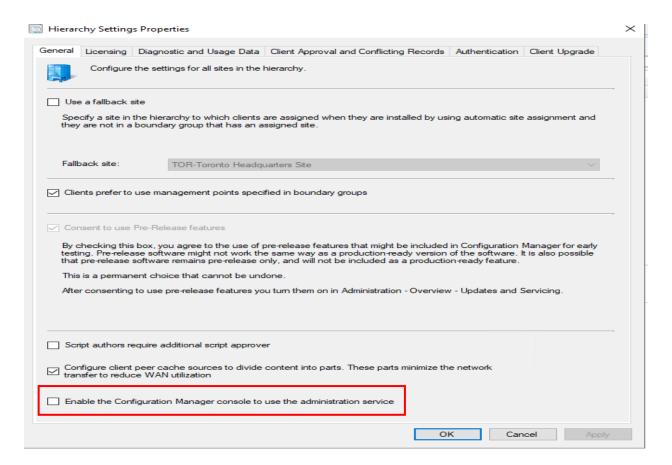


CONFIGURATION MANAGER CONSOLE:

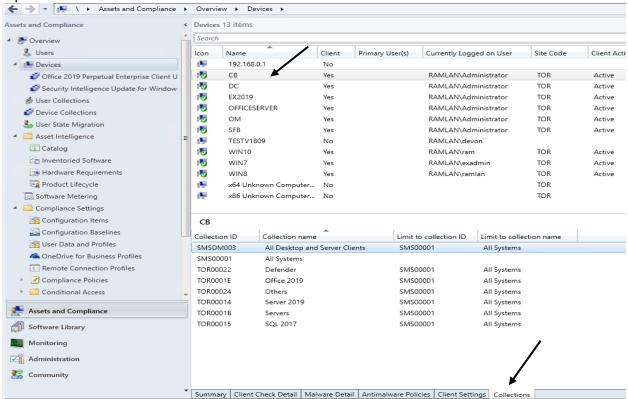
Role-based access for folders - You can now set security scopes on folders. If you have access to an object in the folder but don't have access to the folder, you'll be unable to see the object. Similarly, if you have access to a folder but not an object within it, you won't see that object. Right-click a folder, choose Set Security Scopes, then choose the security scopes you want to apply.

Administration service support for security nodes - You can now enable some nodes of the Configuration Manager console to use the administration service.

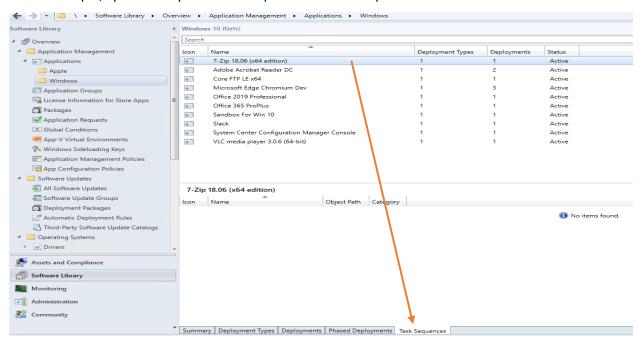




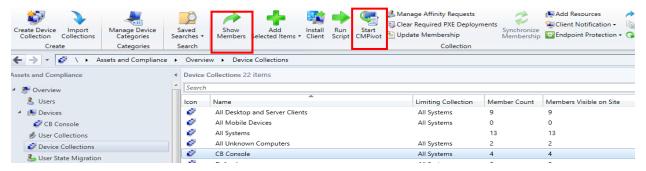
Collections tab in devices node - This tab lists the collections that include this device. In this example CB is part of various collections.



Task sequences tab in applications node - This tab list the application that are part of the task sequences. In this example, I picked 7-Zip which is not part of the task sequence.



Real-time actions from device lists - There are various ways to display a list of devices under the Devices node in the Assets and Compliance workspace.



Order by program name in task sequence - In the Software Library workspace, expand Operating Systems, and select the Task Sequences node. Edit a task sequence, and select or add the Install Package step. If a package has more than one program, the drop-down list now sorts the programs alphabetically.

This concludes exploring all the new features in Current Branch 1906.

Enjoy!

Ram Lan

14th Aug 2019

Below mentioned features are outside my scope as, I don't have CMG, CDP and Azure Services installed / available within home lab. As a result, I am not able to provide information or screen shot. You can find more about the feature and configuration details at Microsoft site.

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