

SSLVPN: Hosts file permission error when starting session

SYMPTOM

After logging into the SSLVPN server and clicking on the Start Session button, the following error message appears at the top of the Secure Access Manager window:

"You do not have permission to change hosts files. Please talk to your system administrator."

CAUSE

During the VPN session startup and teardown, the Java Secure Access Manager (J-SAM) performs several file operations in a system folder. If any of the file operations fail, the error message "You do not have permission to change hosts files. Please talk to your system administrator." will be displayed at the top of the J-SAM window.

There are three scenarios which can result in this error message:

Scenario 1:

The user does not have full control permission on the %SYSTEM_ROOT%\system32\drivers\etc directory.

Scenario 2:

The read-only attribute has been set on the %SYSTEM_ROOT%\system32\drivers\etc\hosts file.

Scenario 3:

Anti-spyware software is protecting system files from modification by the user.

RESOLUTION

First, ensure that the user has FULL CONTROL permission on the %SYSTEM_ROOT%\system32\drivers\etc directory, and that the read-only file attribute is unselected on the %SYSTEM_ROOT%\system32\drivers\etc\hosts file. If the user does not have administrative rights on her PC, the LAN admin responsible for that PC may need to be involved.

Second, if permissions and attributes are set appropriately, check for and temporarily disable any anti-spyware software running on the PC. If this resolves the problem, check with the anti-spyware software's vendor for help making an exception for the etc directory and/or hosts file.

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