

Installing Domino 8 on Windows Server 2008

By [Chuck Connell](#)

In 2009, Lotus Domino 8.x became certified on Windows Server 2008 (WS8). But many Domino administrators have continued to use Windows Server 2003 (WS3) as their operating system of choice. WS3 is super-stable and administrators have years of experience setting it up and trusting it as Domino platform. I have done so myself for many of my customers.

But since IBM has blessed WS8 as a Domino option, it is helpful to understand any special considerations about running Domino on this platform. I recently installed WS8 Standard Edition on a virtual machine in my lab, then added Domino 8.5.2, looking for any gotchas. I was surprised to find several. After making these changes, everything worked fine, and I plan to begin using WS8 for new installations at customer sites.

Much of the Domino installation process is identical to installing 8.x on WS3. The unexpected items fell into three categories: deciding which version of Standard Edition to install, opening necessary ports in the Windows firewall, and seeing the Domino console on the Windows desktop.

OS Versions

Windows Server 2008 Standard comes in four versions: 32-bit versus 64-bit, and regular versus core. The bit-ness flavors are obvious. The regular/core distinction refers to how much extra software is included on top of the OS kernel. Microsoft recommends installing the core version when the server will run largely unattended or when security is especially important. The problem with the core version, however, is that it does not include the Windows GUI desktop.

So unless you are a Windows Server admin guru, and comfortable doing all system operations from the command line, I recommend installing the regular version of Standard Edition.

Firewall Ports

Also to help with security, WS8 enables the Windows firewall by default and sets up the firewall settings tightly. Two of the ports that are blocked initially are 1352 and 80. This is obviously a problem for a Domino, since 1352 is the Notes protocol port and 80 is the web browser port. A plain vanilla installation of Domino on WS8 results in a server that is invisible to the Notes client and web browsers. To solve this problem, you must manually enable the required ports in the Windows firewall.

- Start the WS8 Server Manager program.
- Go to Configuration / Windows Firewall / Inbound Rules / New Rule.
- Set Type = Port, TCP/UDP = TCP, Specific Port = 1352, Allow the Connection, When = Domain+Private+Public (or set as you want for tighter security), Name = Lotus Notes.
- Press Finish to save and enable the new rule.
- Create another new rule for port 80, with the name Lotus Domino Web.
- Find the built-in rule named "File and Printer Sharing Echo Request ICMPv4". Enable this rule. (This step is not required but it allows the server to respond to a standard PING request, which is often helpful.)

If you are using Domino for other services, such as NNTP, POP or LDAP, be aware that you may have to enable their ports in a similar way.

Domino Console

WS8 is stricter than WS3 about protecting system services from human bungling. So, by default, system services do not interact with the Windows desktop. This can be a problem for Domino administrators. Domino is usually run as a system service, causing WS8 to hide the Domino I/O console (the black DOS box). This surprises administrators who wonder if Domino is really running, since the normal I/O console does not appear.

There are two solutions: administer Domino remotely from another computer, using the standard Domino Administration client; or run the special Domino Console program supplied with the Domino server installation. This program should be visible on the WS8 desktop. Starting it will mimic the familiar Domino I/O console and automatically attach to the Domino system service on that computer. It is similar to the Server/Console option within the Administrator client.

I should add that, in my testing, I found the WS8 behavior related to system service I/O to be inconsistent. Usually when starting Domino as a system service, I was forced to launch Domino Console to see the Domino I/O box. Occasionally, I started Domino as a system service, but Windows immediately displayed the Domino I/O box anyway and allowed me to interact with it.

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