AUTHORIZED DOCUMENTATION

Novell Support Advisor

Novell®
Novell Support Advisor

2.0.1

June 2010

www.novell.com

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novdocx (en) 7 January 2010

About This Guide

This guide is intended to help partners and customers install and administer Novell Support Advisor

Audience

This guide is intended for Novell Support Advisor users.

Feedback

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Documentation Updates

For the most recent version of the Novell Support Advisor *Guide*, visit the Novell Support Advisor Web site (http://www.novell.com/documentation/support_advisor).

Additional Documentation

For more information on Novell Support Advisor including videos, forum links and articles, please go to the Novell Support Advisor Website (http://support.novell.com/advisor

Novell Support Advisor 2.0.1

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1.1 Overview

The Novell Support Advisor is a free tool that allows customers to perform both pro-active and reactive system and application diagnostic tasks in a loca, secure and automated fashion for SUSE Linux Enterprise, ZENworks Configuration Management, NetWare and GroupWise systems.

Novell Support Advisor is an easily installed cross-platform (Linux, Windows, MAC) client that can be downloaded directly from the Novell Support Advisor Homepage (http://support.novell.com/advisor). The client is installed on a system that can communicate with both the servers in customers’ local environment and the update server at Novell. The client prompts the customer to download newly released Novell Support Diagnostic Patterns (SDPS) authored by Novell technical experts from the Novell update server. Novell SDPS identify new problems and return possible solutions to the customer

The Novell Support Advisor diagnosis occurs securely and locally, and does not require sending log information to Novell for analysis. When the data is gathered for a health check, some load occurs over a Secure Shell connection to the queried device, but once the data is collected, the connection is terminated so network and device load is minimized. The gathered data is then consolidtaed into a dashboard view that shows critical patterns in red, and good patterns in green, identifying what segments in which systems need attention.

This tool also builds an Analysis Archive Database, or tar ball archive, that preserves a history of health checks that have been run and the problems that have been addressed, allowing customers to identify trends and changes over time. A dashboard using the same color-coding scheme, a simple red = critical and green = good makes the information readily accessible.

Novell Support Advisor can be used reactively when a problem occurs, and also proactively to run “health checks” to prevent potential future issues.

Novell Support Advisor periodically checks back to Novell to see if there are any new support patterns available. When new patterns are released, the administrator will be notified and updated will automatically download, ready for any future analysis.

If a problem is discovered where further help is needed, a service request connection to the Novell Customer Center through the client interface can be opened via Novell Support.

For more information, see Novell Support Advisor Homepage (http://support.novell.com/advisor)

1.2 System Requirements

1.2.1 Novell Support Advisor can be installed and run from:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop 11 or later

OpenSUSE 10.3 or later

Microsoft Windows XP SP3 or later

Microsoft Windows 7

Apple Macintosh OS 10.5 or later

1024 MB RAM

145 MB disk space for installation

1.2.2 Novell Support Advisor can run against and analyze the following platforms

SUSES Linux Enterprise Server 9
SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 10
SUSE Linux Enterprise 11
GroupWise 8 (Windows and Linux)
ZENWorks Configuration Management 10 (Linux and Windows)
NetWare 6.5

1.2.3 Known Issues

ZENworks running on windows requires the ZENworks control center credentials, not the windows username and password

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1.3 Installation

Download the Novell support advisor software package from Novell Support Advisor Homepage (http://support.novell.com/advisor) and select the installation platform of your choice (Linux, Windows, Macintosh)

1.3.1 Linux

Installation requires “root” privileges

Install location: /opt/novell/SupportAdvisor
Execute (Start) script: /opt/novell/SupportAdvisor/SupportAdvisor

1.3.2 Windows

Install location: %/ProgramFiles(x86)/novell/SupportAdvisor/
Executable: %/ProgramFiles(x86)/novell/SupportAdvisor/SupportAdvisor.exe

1.3.3 Macintosh

Install location: /Applications/Support Advisor.app
Executable: /Applications/Support Advisor.app/Contents/MacOS/SupportAdvisor

1.3.4 Work Directory

The first time Novell Support Advisor is started, a work directory is created in the current user’s home directory: -/.supportAdvisor/

Novell Support Advisor maintains all of the user’s actions regarding settings, server archives, reports, credential database, debug logs and client updates at this location. Deleting this directory will effectively reset Novell Support Advisor to default installation.

After you have installed Support Advisor, continue with the post-installation tasks.

1.4 Running Novell Support Advisor

1.4.1 Local Database

The first time you run Support Advisor, you will be prompted to create an encrypted database. This is a locally encrypted SQLite database used to store login credentials for the server connections you create in Support Advisor. You may choose to continue without using a secure database, however none of your server credentials will be saved. Support Advisor will still function but you will not have access to running "group" analysis on your servers.

1.4.2 Connections

Before running an analysis or creating a group, you must connect to the relevant servers in your environment.

GroupWise

The GroupWise connection will gather information provided by the web console/management pages from each of the agent types over an http/https connection. To verify the connections accessibility you should be able to access these pages through a web browser. (http://111.222.333.444:1234)

- GWIA - GroupWise Internet Agent
- MTA- Message Transfer Agent
- POA- Post office Agent
- WEB- Webaccess

SUSE Linux

The Linux connection will gather information from your SUSE based Linux machine via an SSH port. On connection Support Advisor will leverage Supportutils (http://en.opensuse.org/Supportutils) to gather system information.

If using a sudo user for analysis, the following commands require root privileges:

- /bin/uname
- /bin/mkdir
- /bin/rpm
- /usr/bin/env
- /sbin/supportconfig
- /bin/mv
- /bin/ls
- /bin/chmod
- /bin/rm

NetWare

The NetWare connection will gather information using the NetWare Remote Manger (NRM) interface to execute commands on the system for pre-migration ready analysis. An http/https connection is used to access the NRM interface. To verify accessibility of your server you should be able to access these pages through a web browser.

The user specified must have rights to the following through NRM:

- config
- seg
- netstat

ZENworks

The ZENWorks connection gathers information provided by the zeninfocollect utility provided by ZENWorks Configuration Management.

ZENworks Configuration Manager (Windows)

- User specified must be an administrative user of the ZENworks system

ZENworks Configuration Manager (Linux)

- User specified must be a user of the Linux host system.

If configuring a sudo user analysis on ZEN Linux server, the following commands require root privileges:

- /bin/rm
- /bin/kill
- /opt/novell/zenworks/bin/zac
- /usr/bin/tail
- /bin/mkdir

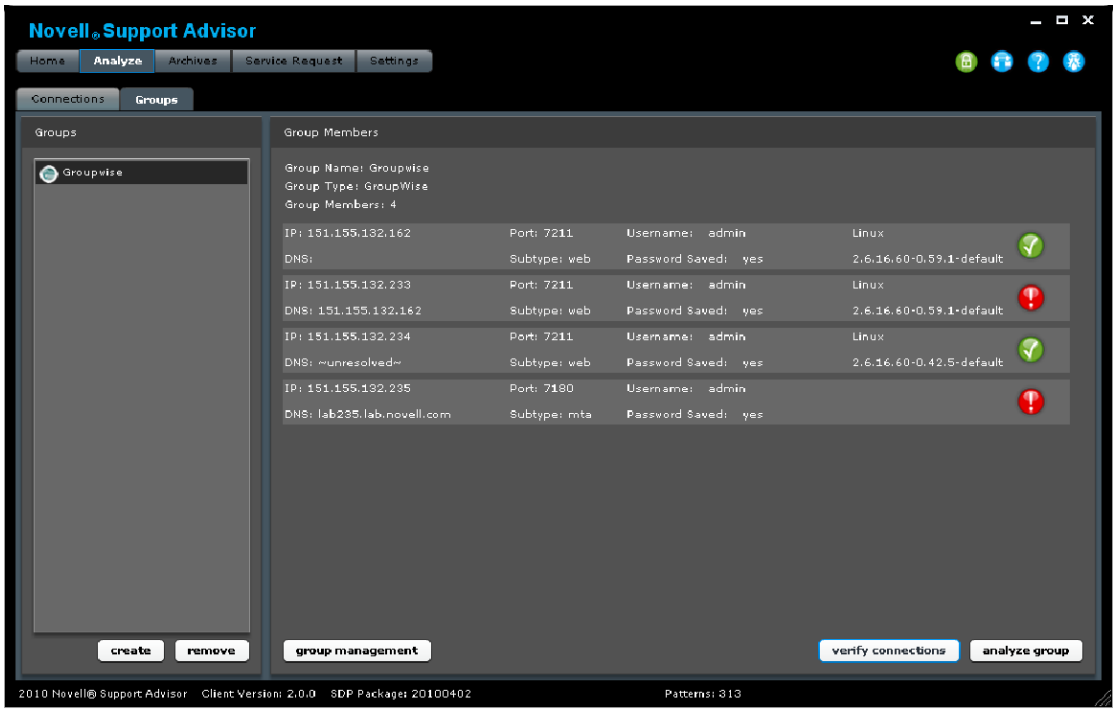
1.4.3 Adding and Saving Connections

If you have created an encrypted database you can store servers that you want to connect to in the future.

To analyze a Novell product, a server connection must first be created. Connections can be created using NMAP or PING Discover, CSV import, or manual.

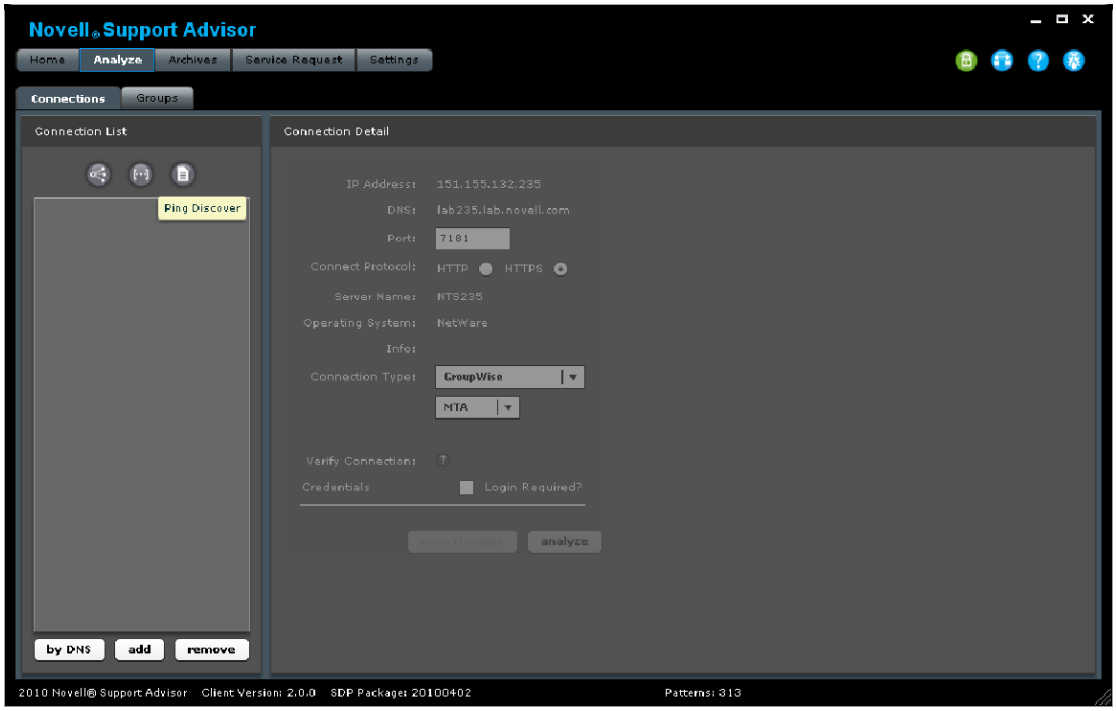
NMAP

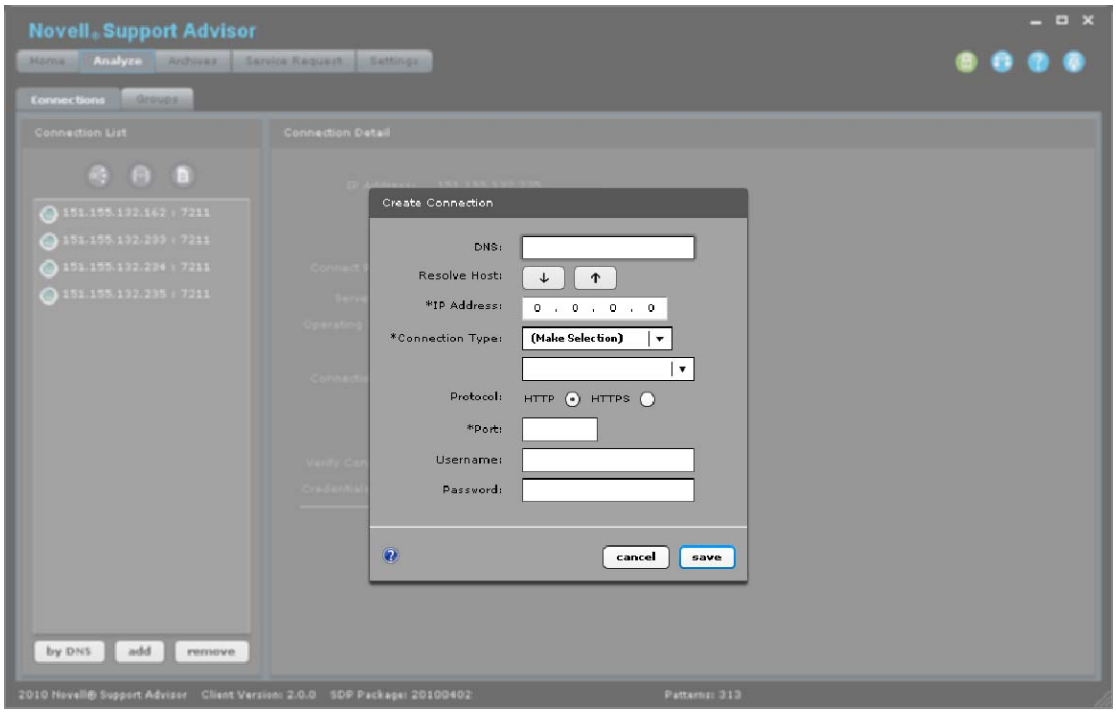
The NMAP discovery leverages the 3rd party Network Mapping Tool (http://nmap.org) to search your network for the connection type of your choice. You will first need to download and install NMAP ion your workstation, if you do not have it already, to be able to leverage this tool. Once installed, you will then point Support Advisor to the NMAP executable.



- Specify the "Connection Type" and subtype that you will be creating.
- Enter the starting IP Address range that you will be searching on.
- Select the "Octets to Scan" or "Address Range" radio button for the search parameters.
- Octets to Scan will scan all addresses (0 - 256) for each octet field checked.
- Address Range will scan from the starting IP Address specified to the ending address.
- On Run it may take some time to successfully complete depending on your network speed and the parameters defined for the search.
- On finish you may see a list of devices that were found to be up and listening on the address range and port specified. Click to add the connections that you want to attempt to run an analysis against.

Discover PING





Discover PING

The Discovery Ping works like NMAP without the dependency of a 3rd party tool.

CSV Import

The CSV (Comma Separated Values) file import will allow you to import your server lists from a pre-populated file with your connections already defined.

- IP Address
- Port
- Connection Type
- Connection Subtype
- *DNS
- * Server Name

NOTE: *Not required fields

Connections

Linux	Linux OS
GW	GroupWise
ZEN	ZENworks

Valid connection sub-types are:

POA	Post Office Agent*
MTA	Message Transfer Agent*
GWIA	GroupWise Internet Agent*
WEB	WebAccess*
ZCML	ZENWorks Configuration Management - “Linux”**
ZCMW	ZENWorks Configuration Management - “Windows”**

NOTE: *GroupWise must be the type

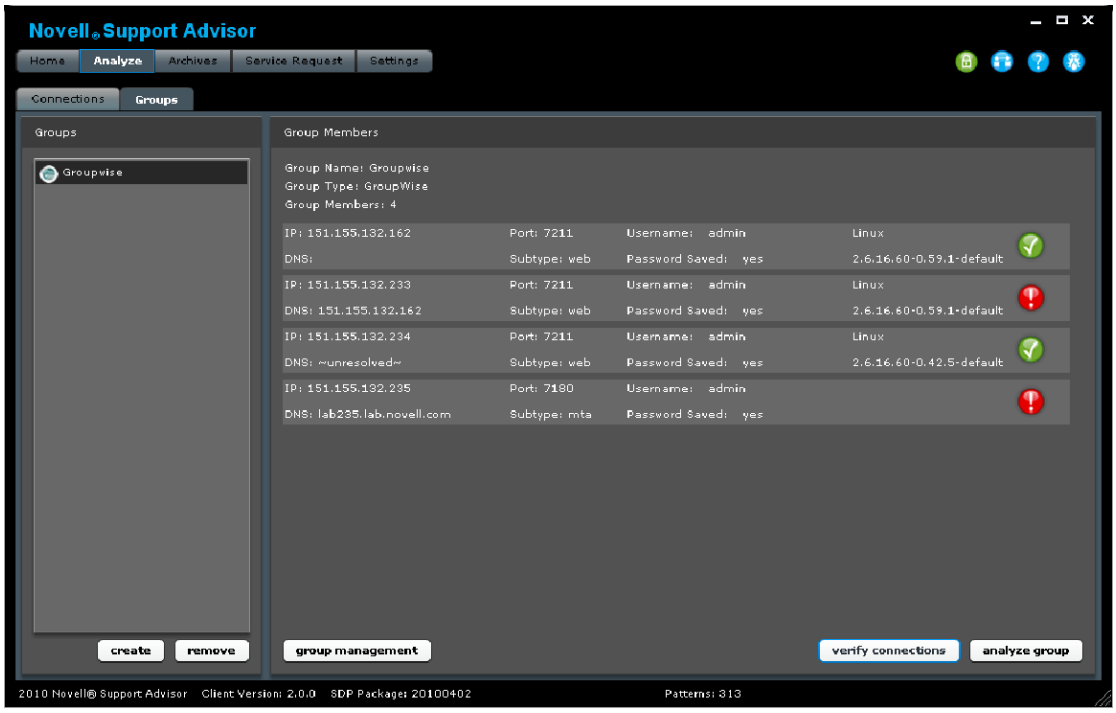
**ZEN must be the type

Example server connections file format:

- 111.222.333.444, 22, linux, suse, myserver.com, myserver
- 22.33.44.5, 8009, gw, poa, mygwserver.com, mygw

Manual

The manual option is the only connection-add method that will allow you to set and store the connection credentials at connection creation time (if you are authenticated to the local encrypted database).



1.5 Using Novell Support Advisor

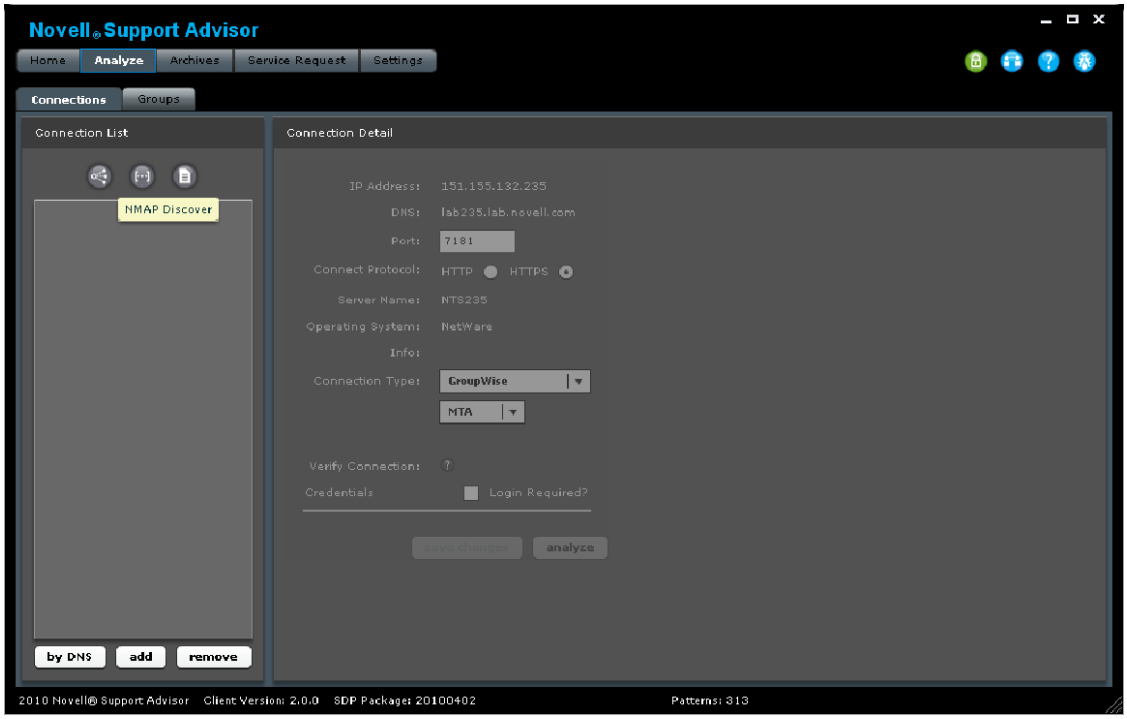
1.5.1 Analyze

To analyze a server you first select a server that you have previously added and click analyze. Depending on the type and subtype of connection created, Novell Support Advisor will attempt to connect and collect data from the specified device.

If Novell Support Advisor is able to successfully connect to and gather information from the connection specified, a message will appear indicating the it has successfully validated the connection and will move on to the data collection process.

During the data collection process a progress bar will indicate the overall progress of the data collection process. Depending on your network, the connection type, and the server being analyzed this collection time can vary greatly. If for some reason the data collection appears to have stopped and looks like it won't complete you can cancel the process.

Upon data collection completion, communication with the target system is closed and the rest of the processing occurs on your local machine.



	Critical: Issue needs immediate attention
	Warning: Possible problem that should be investigated
	Recommended: Best practices or recommendation regarding system
	Success: Conditons that matched your environment and are not a cause for concern

When a result entry is selected, a description regarding the pattern and the condition found is displayed below, along with possible solutions for that specific match. If a solution is available, it will glow in blue.

Each result will direct you to your next step. Possible solutions include:

- Novell Technical Information Document (TID)
- Security Alert
- Bug
- Video
- Script
- Misc
- Cool Solution
- Patch

Resolved?

If you find that a result is incorrectly returned or that that solutions provided are inadequate select the "resolved?" button. Through this interface you can provide information regarding the pattern back to Novell for review.

HTML Report

Report of the current analysis results and links to solutions.

Archives

The Archives view is a history of all of the analyses that have been run by Support Advisor.

There are 3 views

Connection Archives	History of single connection analysis
Group Archives	History of group run analysis
Custom Archives	Manually load archives gathered outside of Support Advisor for analysis

On selecting your connection or group you will be shown all of the archives from that selection, when it was gathered and analyzed, the overall result count by criticality and several actions that can be performed on the archive.

Archive Actions

load	quickly load the results from the archive
notes	view/add notes about the archive (current state, actions taken, etc)
report	access the HTML report version of the results
upload	if you have a Service Request (SR) with Novell you can upload the archive to Novell support. By tagging the archive with your SR number this will also attach the archive to your open service request
re-run	re-applies pattern logic to an archive. This would be used if you recently had an update to Support Advisor and want to apply the updated logic to a historical analysis
delete	removes the archive from your system

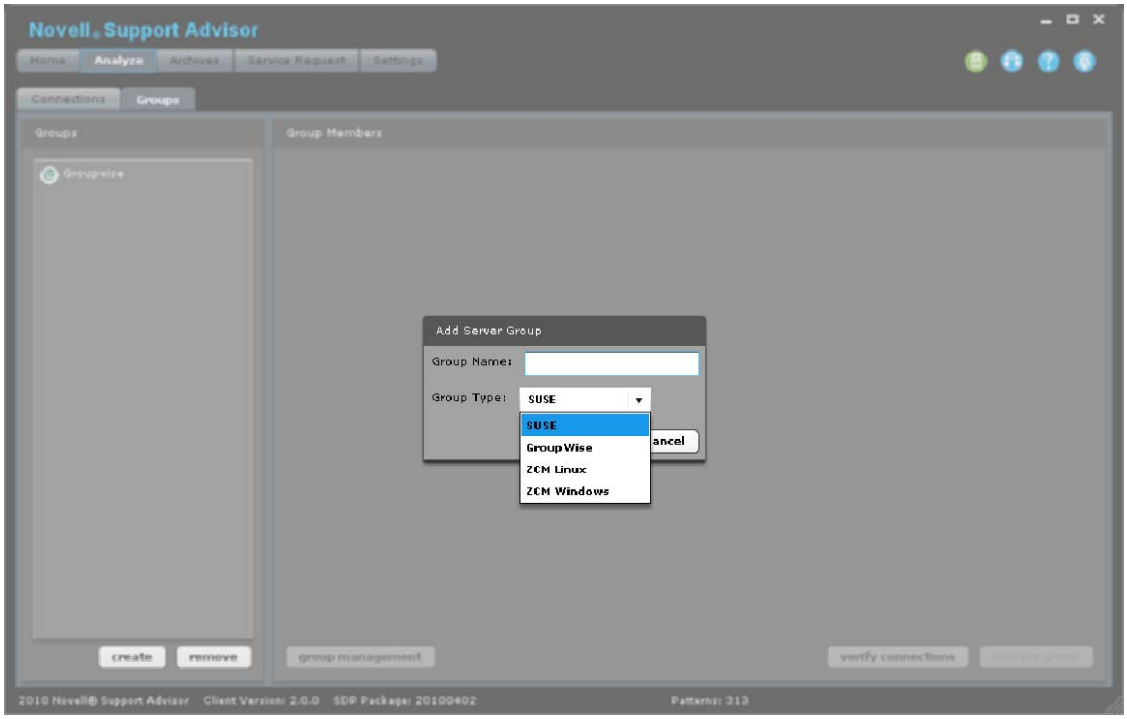
Custom Archives

When you enable the Custom Archives option you point to a directory where Support Advisor will look for archives to be analyzed. (Currently only archives gathered on Linux using supportutils is supported). When a custom archive is analyzed an HTML report for the results will also be created and placed in the location of the custom archive directory specified.isabled by default (enabled in “Settings’)

Groups

The "Groups" section is used to run an analysis on many connections of the same type at once. To be able to use the Groups functionality, you must be logged into the local database.

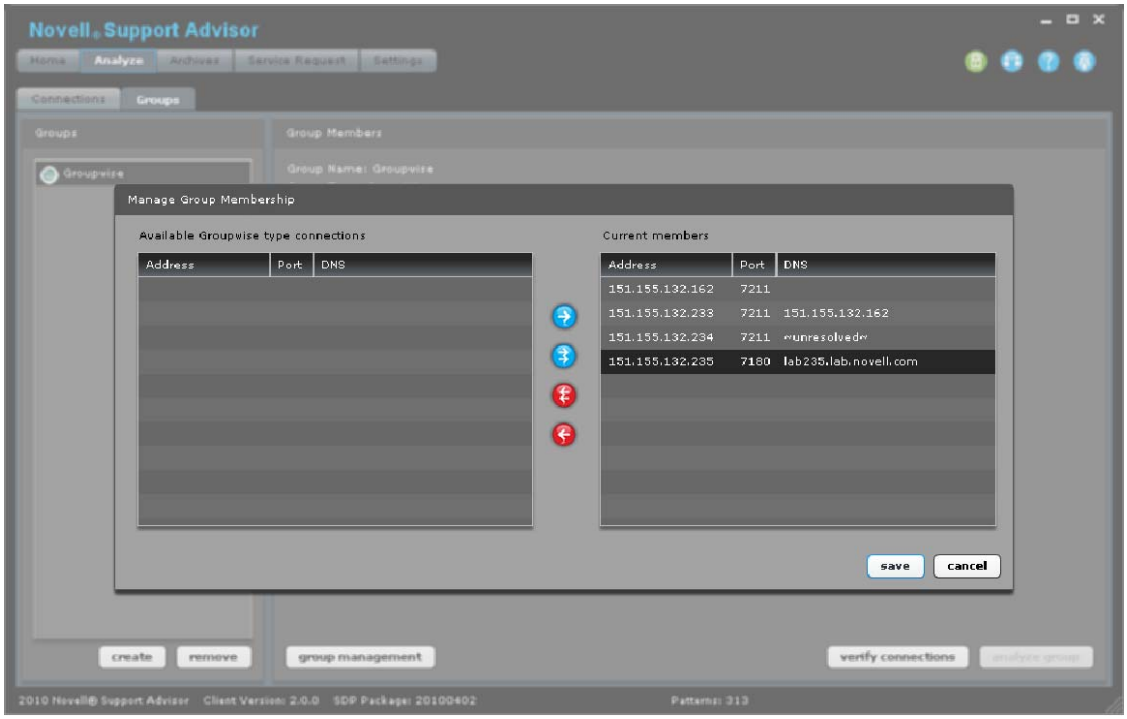
First create the desired new group of the connection type (GroupWise, Linux, etc..). A filtered list of your connections of the type that can be members of your group will be displayed. Select which connections you would like to be part of the group.le to use the "Groups" functionality you need to be logged into the local database.



After the group is created and populated, verify that your group will run correctly. By selecting the "verify connections" button, Support Advisor will test the members of the group to see if they can be analyzed. Verified connections will be identified with a green check, and unverified connections will display a red exclamation.

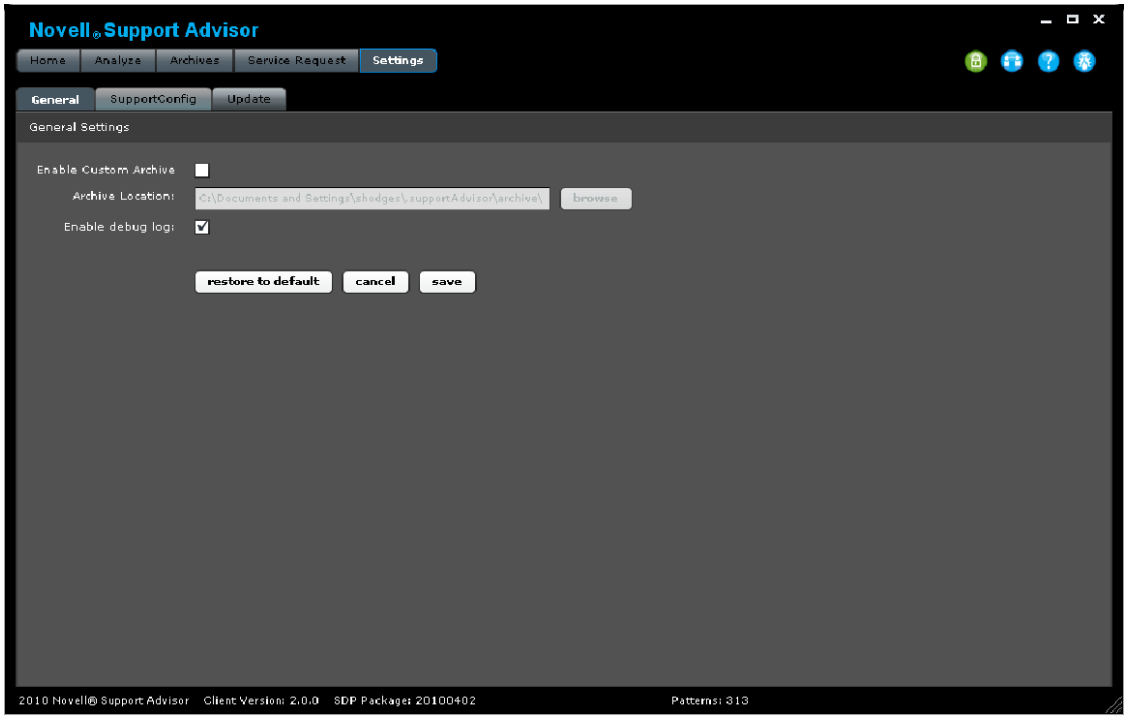
If a single server within a group has incorrect credential for connecting, double-click on the server. A new window will open, allowing you to modify the connection credentials. After the modifications are complete, the group verify can be performed again.

An analysis can still be performed even if all of the servers within the group have not been verified. However, those servers that failed verification will not be included in the group analysis. Likewise, if one of the servers fails or is cancelled during the group analysis, that server will also be omitted.



Settings

General



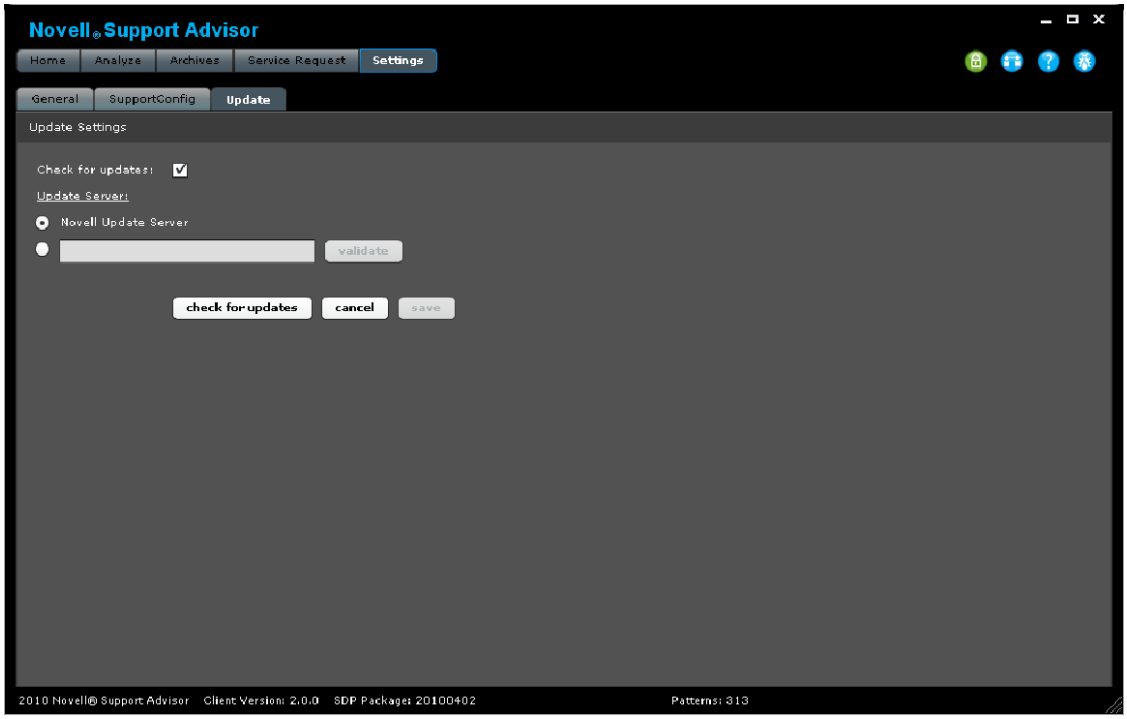
Enable Custom Archive: check to analyze Linux archives gathered outside of Support Advisor

Archive Location: the directory location where Support Advisor will look for custom archived

Enable debug log: The current active log is written to ~/.supportAdvisor/nsaLog.txt. Each time Support Advisor starts a new nsaLog.txt is created for that session. Previous session logs are rolled (up to 4) in ~/.supportAdvisor/logs/

Perl Location: The Perl engine used for running login for Linux systems. The Windows installation of Support Advisor will include a lightweight version of Strawberry Perl. Linux and Macintosh systems generally have Perl already installed and the default location/instance of Perl is used. If Perl is not present or a different version is desired, the path to the executable should be set here.

Update

Check for updates: When enabled, Support Advisor checks if there are any pattern or client updates available upon start up

Update Server: The Novell Update Server will almost always be used. It is very rare that you would specify any other server for the update location.