
Exchange GroupCalendar Administrator Guide

Installing and configuring Exchange GroupCalendar step by step

Log on to the Exchange Server with the Administrator account.



A - Start the "Active Directory Users & Computers"-tool and create a new(*) user account, f.i. 'GCADMIN'. Answer YES when it offers to create an Exchange server inbox for the new account.

(* Don't use the administrator account and **don't copy** an existing account, it won't work. The only proper method is to create a clean new user.)

B - Make sure the new 'GCADMIN' account is **member of the groups** "Exchange Domain Servers" plus "Administrators" and **not** a member of "Enterprise Admins" or "Domain Admins".) Also do the following in the Active Directory Users and Computers tool:

1. On the View menu, click Advanced Features if this option is not already enabled.
2. Right-click the Active Directory Container object where the users are located in (or any higher level container object) and then click Properties.
3. Click the Security tab, and then click Advanced.
4. Click Add.
5. In the Name box, type the name of the account under which the application runs (gcadmin), and then click OK.
6. In the Apply to list, select "User objects"
7. click to select the "Send As" Allow column.
8. Click OK three times to save your changes and to close all the dialog boxes.

C - The new 'GCADMIN' account should be able to access everything on your Exchange server and the following method has proved to work best:

- Open the Exchange System Manager.
- Navigate through the server tree until you reach your server. For example, you might need to click through an administrative group and a server group.
- Browse further down to the [Mailbox store and Public folder store](#)
- Right click the 'Mailbox store'. (the place where the future groupcalendar users have their inbox)
- Click Properties
- Click the Security tab.
- In the Name dialog box, click Add and then select the new account (f.i. GCADMIN) from the list that appears.
- Select Full Control for the permission level.
- While you are there, check the Exchange Domain Servers group that is also listed. Check if it has a black tick in the Deny column for Send As or Receive As. If that's the case, remove the black tick. A grey tick may still be visible but that is ok.
- Set the same permissions on the 'Public Folder Store' and after that (up the tree) also on the Server node.(*)
- Click Okay and wait at least 20 minutes for the permissions to be applied internally.

(* It is very important to add the permissions to the database stores before adding them to the server object.)

D - Run ExchGC_COM+.MSI (*) from the zip file that you **downloaded** from this website. (logged on as the Administrator)

(* if you get Error 2755.1601 or another error trying to install it, check the troubleshooting section for the solution. You will also get an error if the com+ component was installed already.)

E - Open: Start menu - Settings - Control Panel - Administrative Tools - Component Services. (logged on as the Administrator)

- **Open:** Computers - My computer - **Com+ applications**
- Right-click 'ExchGC'. Select Properties - **Identity** - tick 'This User'
- Browse for the *gcadmin* account you created, enter the password and press OK.

NOTE: Do **not** right-click and start ExchGC manually. In fact if you do you will not be able to use step#3 of the configuration tool. The ExchGC component 'ball in the box' will start rotating in the 'box' and stop automatically in response to events in user calendars. **NOTE 2:** If you change the gcadmin password later, remember to adjust it here as well

F - Now run 'Exchange GroupCalendar Setup.exe' (still logged on as administrator). Accept all defaults. The gcadmin.exe administration tool will start and probably give you an error message "root folder not found" That's ok. Close the gcadmin tool for now.

Again: Do not configure anything yet. **Close the GroupCalendar Administration tool without using it.**

G - Optional Install: You can skip to **H** and do **G** later if you want. You need step G only when the groupcalendar is not updating correctly.

In c:\Exchange Group Calendar you will find a subfolder called *Service*. There are two executables in that folder; the *service* and the *service-installer* tool.

The *service* should be considered as a second line of defense to make sure that the Group Calendars always show up-to-date information. Even if the real-time processing would fail to process the calendar events correctly, the *server service* kicks in every 5 minutes and will correct the problem.

The *service* MUST run with the identity of the newly created *gcadmin* account, so you must add the gcadmin account to the "log on as a service" policy.

This can be done by [opening the policies](#) (Start-Programs-Administrative Tools- Local Security Policy - Local policies - User Rights Assignment - Log on as a service) and adding the gcadmin account there.

After that, start the service installer executable in the service subfolder, type in the name and password of the gcadmin account, click Install and click Start.

If it fails to start, go to Administrative tools, Services, open the Exchange GroupCalendar check&fix service, make sure that gcadmin name and password are correct and click apply & start service.

Before exporting existing calendars (in step 3 of the gcadmin.exe), make sure that you stop the Exchange GroupCalendar Check & Fix service. When the export is ready and your server CPU is back at a normal level, open the USERS.INI file in c:\Exchange Group Calendar\Service and delete everything from it. Close the Users.ini and start the Check & Fix service again.

H - Before you continue to the configuration you may want to adjust the setting that determines in which Active Directory user field the configuration info gets stored by Exchange GroupCalendar. The default field is the *Description* field at the *General* page of the *Active Directory Users And Computers* tool. Some organizations use the *Description* field already and prefer another active directory field. You can/may change this to *Custom Attribute* field 1 to 15 (those are located at the *Exchange Advanced* page).

- open the file c:\exchange group calendar\config.ini
- find the following line at the bottom of the page: ExtensionAttributeFieldNumber=
- and add the field number of your choice so it looks like this: ExtensionAttributeFieldNumber=12

Close and save the config.ini file and **log off** from the Exchange server.

I - Log back on to the Exchange server **with the new account (GCADMIN)** that you created. Start gcadmin.exe(*) from the installation path c:\Exchange GroupCalendar to start the configuration.

(* If you get an 'access denied' error when you try to start gcadmin.exe; log back on as administrator and give the gcadmin account full control permissions on the 'c:\exchange groupcalendar' directory and make sure that it propagates that to all files in the directory.)

Configuration; short version:

- LOG ON AS GCADMIN! (to the exchange server console)

- Check the properties of your future groupcalendar users in the active directory;
 - Do they have information in the initials field? (*1)
 - Do they have an correctly formatted email SMTP address in the primary domain? (*2)

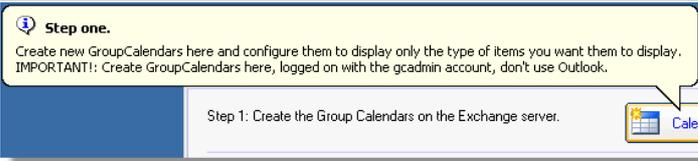
- In Step one, click both buttons on the left, type a name in the field on the right and click the Add button.
- In Step two, click an Organizational unit on the right, select a user and click the Connect calendar button.
- In Step three, click an Organizational unit, select a user and click the Share calendar button. (box turns green)
- In Step three, select a user and click the Import button.
- Test it by creating an item in the outlook calendar of that user and look in the public folders to see(*3) the item in the groupcalendar.

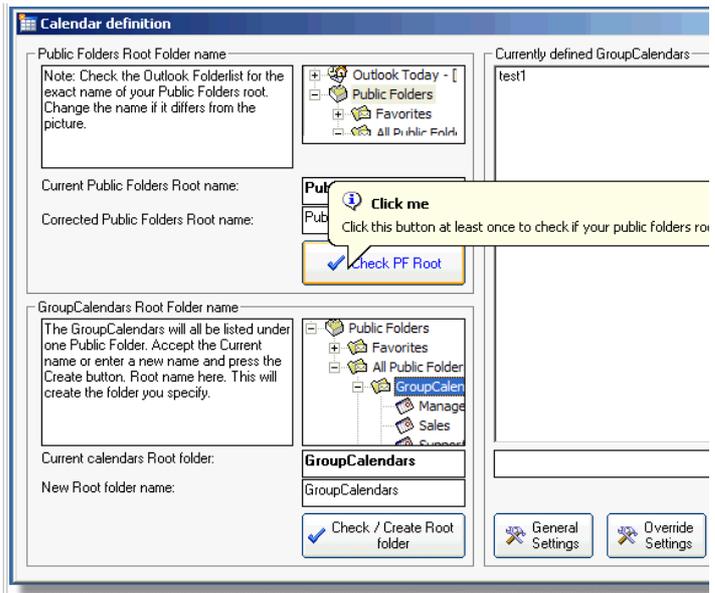
(*1) By default, Initials will be displayed in front of the subject in the group calendar like this **[JFK] Sales meeting** but it is possible to change this with the 'user name display' setting.

(*2) If you host multiple email domains on the same server make sure the users have an email address in the primary domain like ALIAS@DOMAIN.COM

(*3) Outlook 2003 uses cached mode by default. It updates the public folder at a regular interval. Disable cached mode to see the real performance of the Exchange GroupCalendar software.

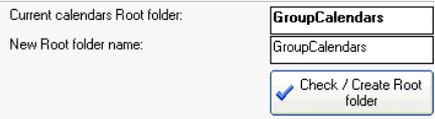
Configuration; step by step detailed version:

<p>LOG ON AS GCADMIN!</p> <p>Important:</p> <p>Logging should not be enabled in a production setting. The checkbox should be enabled only to create detailed logs to send along with a support call.</p>	
<p>Click the first button (step 1) to create the Group Calendars on your Exchange server.</p> <p>(You must be logged on to Exchange server as gcadmin when you do this!)</p> <p>Bookmark invalid error? : download the latest version of MDAC . that error seems connected to installation adn removal of some third party products on you exchange server.</p>	
<p>The Calendar definition form will open.</p> <p>Hold your mouse over the buttons or bold labels for an explanation of the functionality.</p> <p>The two buttons on the left must both be clicked once. The 'Check PF root' button checks the name of your public folders store and gives an OK message or an error.</p> <p>If you get an error you may have another Public Folders root name (check that in Outlook) or more likely :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insufficient access rights. (*) • No local public folders store on the server. • Not logged on as 'gcadmin' • No permissions to create public folders. See http://support.microsoft.com/kb/328808 <p>(*) check the step C install instructions and also check if the gcadmin user is able to open, change and save the Config.INI file which resides in the same folder as the gcadmin.exe. Maybe the gcadmin account has no permissions to edit the files in the program directory.</p>	

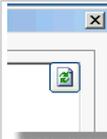


Now create the Root folder. This is the place in Outlook where all Group Calendars will be listed. You can accept the default name 'GroupCalendars' or change the default. Do not use the name of an already existing folder created with Outlook. You must create a new root folder with this gadmin tool.

The 'Create Root folder' button must be pressed at least once, even if you don't change the name of the Root. An error message will indicate insufficient access rights. In that case repeat step C of the installation instruction. If all goes well you will get two OK messages.



An almost unlimited number of Group Calendars can now be created. Press the 'Refresh' button to see the calendars already created.



Create new Group Calendars by typing the name in the box and clicking the 'Add' button.

If they fail to show up in the list that says 'currently defined GroupCalendars' try to create another GroupCalendar root name on the left hand bottom.



Use the Exchange/Outlook security to define user access to some of the Group Calendars you create here. By default everyone will be Author and able to view or even edit the information in the Group Calendars.

You can change the permissions from within Outlook (logged on as gadmin) or from the Exchange System Manager tool on the server by right-clicking the groupcalendar folder and selecting properties. Users need only *reviewer* rights to see the content. Even when they have no permissions at all, their appointments can still show up in a groupcalendar.

So it is safe to set user permissions to a low level or even un-tick the 'Folder visible' for some users. One thing is very important though. The *GCADMIN* account must always be listed as *owner*.



Two way sync.

Click on one of the GroupCalendars in the list to see the current status of the two-way replication feature for that GroupCalendar.

In GroupCalendars that have a green box, users with sufficient permissions (*) can create or change items in the GroupCalendar and the change will replicate back to the personal calendar. This is a nice feature for office managers and others who need easy access to other peoples schedules for editing.

The egcGridView tool is available and using that, meetings and appointments can be created for other users as well in the groupcalendars.

When a scheduled **meeting** is moved in the GroupCalendar, the item will update automatically in the organizers personal calendar and the other users (attendees) will automatically receive an update notice which seems to come from the organizer. Single items (non meetings) will simply follow the change in the groupcalendar. Deleting from the GroupCalendar is not (and will not become) available. Editors that want an item gone from the user's calendar and thus from the GroupCalendar should either:

- Change the subject of the group item (add *cancelled* or *remove*) so the **owner** can see it needs deletion in the personal calendar, or,
- Move the item in the group to Sunday night or any other date that you see fit to use as your "deleted items day"

(*) Permissions

Users that you want to allow to edit items in two-way sync enabled calendars or users that want to use the [GridView](#) tool to edit and create items, should have Edit permissions.

(Note that you can remove the *create items* tick as well but drag and drop will then not work and create will not work in the gridview tool. Editors will have to open the appointment and change the item in that way. Another alternative setting reported by a licensee using GridView is to set the permissions to Publishing Editor and also click Folder contact)

Users that you want to only view items in two-way sync enabled calendars should have these permissions. This goes for non two-way sync enabled calendars as well.

You can edit these permissions in Exchange system manager or from Outlook (right click the public folder calendar) when logged in as gadmin.

The 'General Settings' button enables you to configure what type of items should be displayed in the Group Calendars.

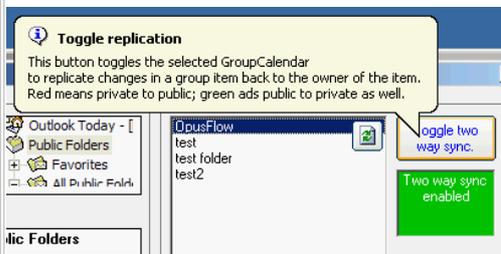
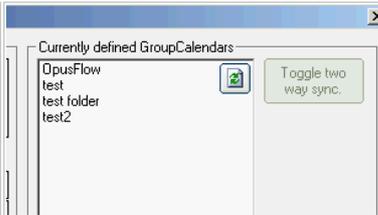
This collection of setting applies to all your GroupCalendars but can be overruled with specific settings per calendar and per rule.

(example: You can disable the display of "Free Time" items in the general settings. If you have a "vacations" groupcalendar you might want to show only "free time" items there so in the Override setting of the "vacations" calendar you would tick the "Show Free time" option and leave all other settings intact as specified in "General Settings".)

There are a lot of options you can use to make sure that every groupcalendar only shows the desired information. Combine this with the user permissions you can set on every Public Folder from within Outlook and you have all the tools to make sure that every user only sees the information they need.

(With regards to setting permissions on calendars; nobody **needs** access but gadmin. A users' calendar items can be visible in a GroupCalendar while that GroupCalendar remains invisible to that user!)

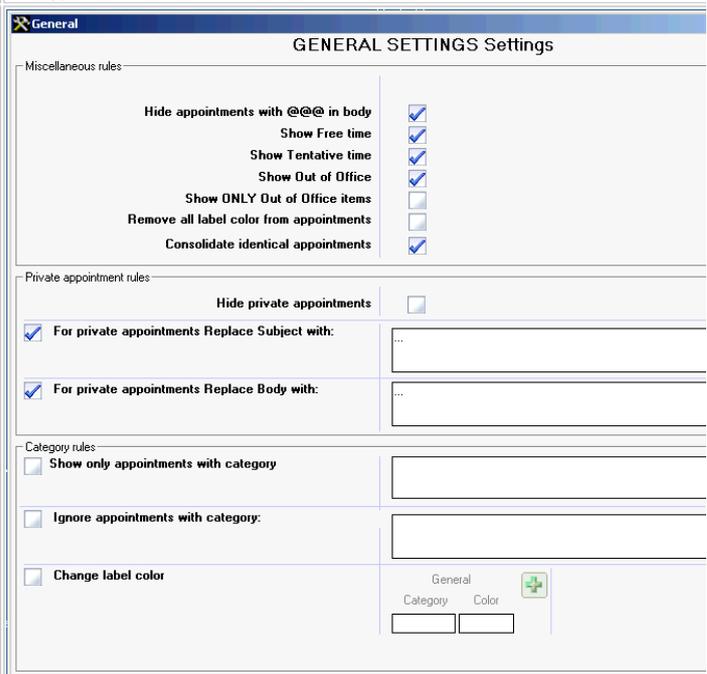
The settings are grouped by the property that leads the action. The first form holds the Miscellaneous Rules, the actions based on the *Private* property and actions based on the *Category* property of an appointment.



Permissions for editors



view only permissions



User Name Display

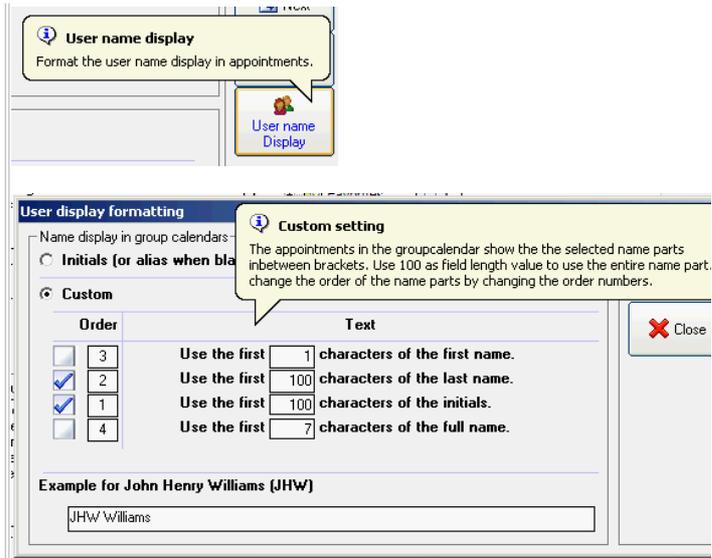
By default, all items in the groupcalendars will be displayed with the initials of the user in between brackets.
If no initials are available in the active directory, the exchange alias will be used.

However it is possible to override this behavior by selecting the user name display option and take a pick from the available name parts. The number 100 represents the choice to use all characters of a name part. The 'order' 1 to 4 can be changed to compose the desired format.

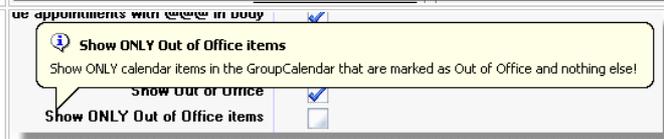
In the example to the right you see the choice :

All initials + all of last name

The two checkboxes for first name and full name are not ticked so they will not be used.



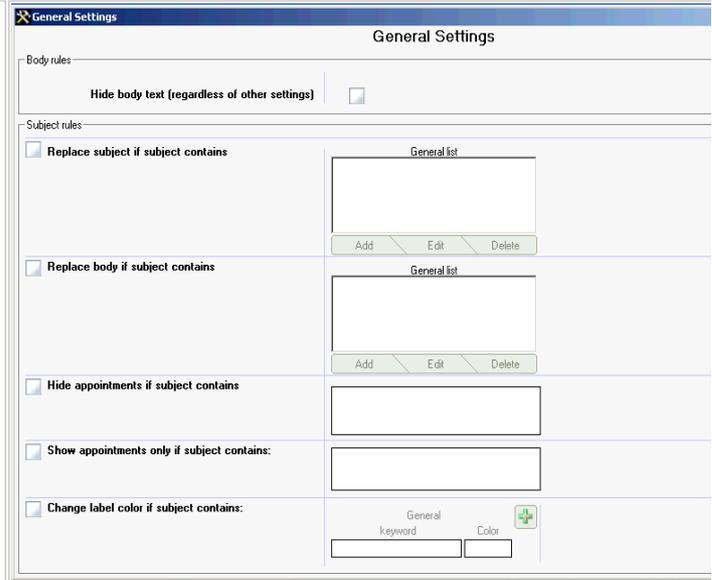
Hover the mouse over a bolded label to learn how the options works.



Press the "NEXT" button



The second form of the *General Settings* - settings handles the rules based on the *Subject* and *Body* property of an appointment.



close the General Settings form.

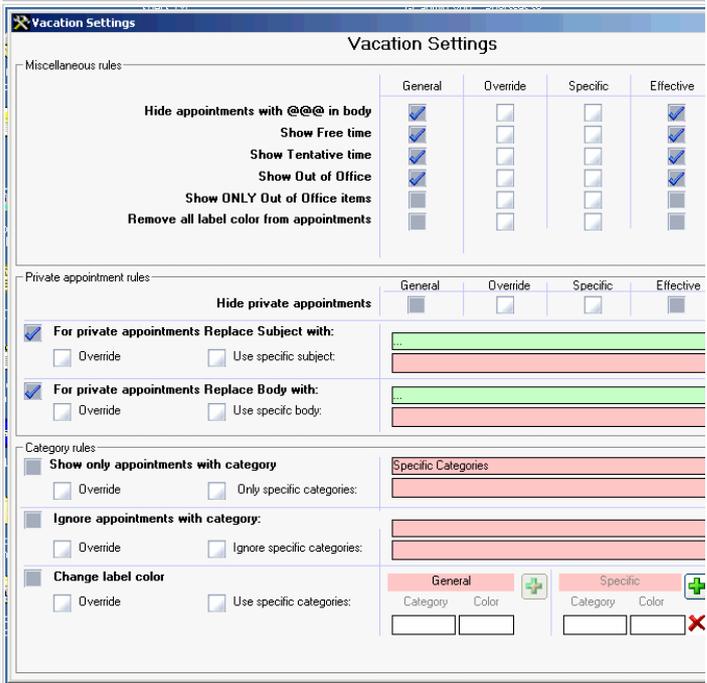
close the General Settings form.

Back in the calendar Definition (step #1) you can now select one of the GroupCalendars you defined earlier and click the Override Settings button.



Here we selected the **Vacation** groupcalendar we defined earlier.

While configuring the specific rules for this calendar we can still see what the General Settings are. The dark grey boxes on the left show the general setting and the dark grey option on the right shows the effective setting for this Vacation calendar.

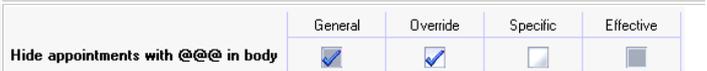


The effective setting has status ON so for this calendar the appointments with @@@ in the body will not be visible.

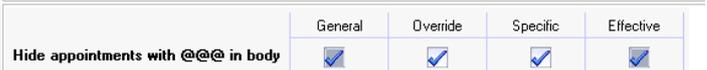


If the general settings change, that change will also effect the settings for this option in this Specific calendar.

The Override option has status ON. Because Specific is OFF the Effective result is OFF. This calendar will not hide appointments with @@@ in the body.



The Override option has status ON and the Specific option is ON. The Effective result is that the option is turned ON for this calendar.

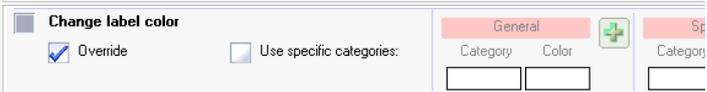


If the general settings change, that change will not effect the settings for this option in this Specific calendar.

The dark-grey option is not ticked. This means that the general setting for this option has status OFF



The Override option has status ON but the Specific option is OFF so the result is still that this option is OFF.



After ticking the Specific option box the rule is ON. Now appointments with Holiday or Vacation as a category will be displayed with a specific color in this specific GroupCalendar.

Change label color

Override Use specific categories:

General +

Category Color

Category:

Holiday

Vacation

Close the configuration and return to the opening screen.

Press button # 2 to assign users to GroupCalendars.

GroupCalendar Administration

Step two.
Connect users to GroupCalendars you created in Step 1. Depending on the rules in step #1 their appointments may become visible in the GroupCalendars you select here.

Step 2: Assign users to Group Calendars.

Step 3: Enable or Disable monitoring of users calendars.

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Enable logging. Use only to create logs to send along when asking for info@opusflow.nl for support. Enable logging and restart this tool to cr

Choose language:

The Calendar/User Mappings form opens up. This tool enables you to determine who's appointments will be included in a specific Group Calendar.

On the left you see all Group Calendar names.

On the right are the Groups in your Active Directory and once a Group has been selected the users will be shown in the list below.

For very large organizations it might be a good idea to select an Organizational Unit that represents the top level of the active directory where all "your" users are under and tick the "Show only OU's under" option to narrow down the list of OU's to an acceptable amount.

Users / Groups

Show only OU's under:

Calendar <-> User Mappings

GroupCalendars: Events, Sales, test1, Vacation

List users of selected calendar(s)

Disconnect user from selected calendar(s)

Connect selected user to selected calendar(s)

Users / Groups

Organizational Units Show Groups

- Domain controllers -> OU=Domain Controllers,DC=opus
- Domain Controllers -> OU=Domain Controllers,DC=tes
- hst10 -> ou=hst10,DC=test,DC=opusflow
- sales -> OU=sales,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- sub of sales -> OU=sub of sales,OU=sales,DC=
- testing -> OU=testing,DC=opusflow,DC=nl

Users container(s)

- Users -> CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- Users -> CN=Users,DC=test,DC=opusflow

Users

- Administrator@opusflow.nl -> CN=Administrator,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- Amini@opusflow.nl -> CN=Amini,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- ava@opusflow.nl -> CN=Alex van Amersfoort,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- ba@opusflow.nl -> CN=Monique Wolf,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- gvs@opusflow.nl -> CN=Guus van Scheven,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- hank@opusflow.nl -> CN=Hank HW. Williams,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- Jay@opusflow.nl -> CN=Jay Hudson,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- jiv@opusflow.nl -> CN=John in 't Veld,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- jopie@opusflow.nl -> CN=Tessa t.d. v.d. Wal,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- jrema@opusflow.nl -> CN=Juan G. Remon,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- KeyFlow@opusflow.nl -> CN=KeyFlow,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- Petri@opusflow.nl -> CN=Petri van der Vliet,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- studio@opusflow.nl -> CN=Studio,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl

Users -> CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl

Select one of the users (here 'Amini' has been selected) and look below the 'disconnect' button to see his current mappings. Here it says 'Amini has been mapped to calendar: Sales'

The mapping information can also be found in the active directory user field 'Description'. If the Description field already contains information the calendar mapping information is added to that existing description.

User Amini has been mapped to calendar(s):
- Sales

Users container(s)

- Users -> CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- Users -> CN=Users,DC=test,DC=opusflow

Users

- Administrator@opusflow.nl -> CN=Administrator,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- Amini@opusflow.nl -> CN=Amini,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- ava@opusflow.nl -> CN=Alex van Amersfoort,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- ba@opusflow.nl -> CN=Monique Wolf,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- gvs@opusflow.nl -> CN=Guus van Scheven,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- hank@opusflow.nl -> CN=Hank HW. Williams,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- Jay@opusflow.nl -> CN=Jay Hudson,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- jiv@opusflow.nl -> CN=John in 't Veld,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- jopie@opusflow.nl -> CN=Tessa t.d. v.d. Wal,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- jrema@opusflow.nl -> CN=Juan G. Remon,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl

Notice that the text "GroupCalendar items label color for this user" appears when you select a user. Click the white field to choose a specific color for that user's items in the groupcalendars.

Users

- Administrator@opusflow.nl -> CN=Administrator,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- Amini@opusflow.nl -> CN=Amini,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- ava@opusflow.nl -> CN=Alex van Amersfoort,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- ba@opusflow.nl -> CN=Monique Wolf,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- gvs@opusflow.nl -> CN=Guus van Scheven,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- hank@opusflow.nl -> CN=Hank HW. Williams,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl
- Jay@opusflow.nl -> CN=Jay Hudson,CN=Users,DC=opusflow,DC=nl

Item color

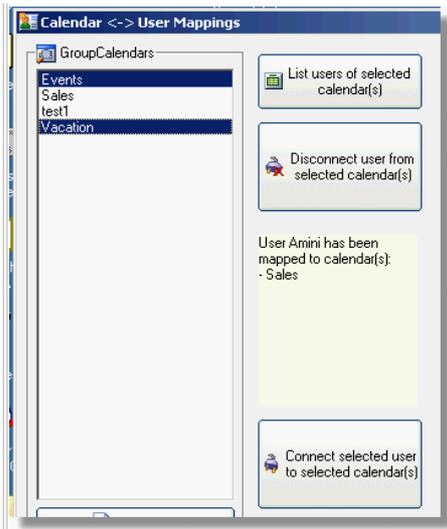
Click here to select a color for the selected user
All appointments of this user in the GroupCalendars will have that color.

GroupCalendar items label color for this user:

Select one or more of the Group Calendars in the list on the left and notice that the connect/disconnect buttons are activated. By pressing the appropriate button you can connect or disconnect one or more users to one or more groupcalendars.

The other button "List users of selected calendar(s)" will produce a printable report of the user mappings. Click that button after selecting the GroupCalendars you are interested in.

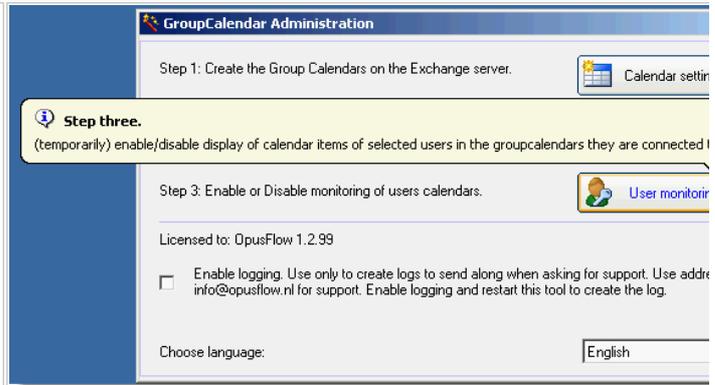
After completion of this step you have your GroupCalendars ready to display only what you want, the users are set up to share their calendar info in the appropriate public calendars and only one thing remains; start the actual sharing of information in step #3



close the calendar / user mapping form and proceed to step three

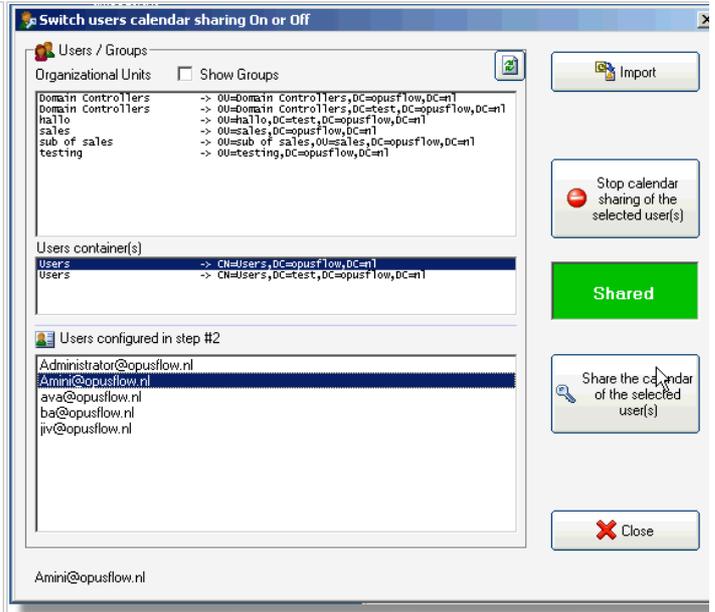
close the calendar / user mapping form and proceed to step two

You are back at the administration tool.



Press button # 3 to open the switch form.

From here you enable or disable the calendar sharing for selected users.



In step #2 users are mapped to one or more calendars. However until you switch them ON they will not participate and their calendar information will not be visible in the GroupCalendars they have been mapped to.

Only the users that you configured in step #2 with a GroupCalendar mapping will be visible in the list and can be switched ON.

Make sure that before you remove users from all groupcalendars in step #2 you first unshare their calendar here.

Select a group from the list to see the users you want to enable or disable calendar sharing for. If this user is currently switched off, you will see a red box. Press the 'Key' button to switch calendar sharing ON for this user.

If this fails; Check the **primary** smtp email address of the user. Make sure the **Exchange Alias** (on the 'exchange general' tab in the active directory) is the same as the primary email address. (only the part before the @). So email address jack@opus.com would give alias 'jack'
 If you still can not get it to work this way, open the *gcadminerrorlog.txt* file from c:\Exchange Group Calendar. Browse down from the top until you find the entry 'Exchange name : xxxx.yyy'
 When the value xxxx.yyy differs from the primary email address you must add a secondary smtp address to the user properties in the form of **ALIAS@xxxx.yyy**

Also confirm that you have the com+ component installed and configured to run with the gcadmin name and password. (**identity** tab)

If you are working on users in a child domain you might have to give them a **secondary** smtp address with the same namespace as the exchange server top level. (example: The exchange server is in opus.com and the users in child.opus.com. Give those users user@opus.com as a secondary email address.

After these steps you are ready for testing. Simply create a new appointment in the personal calendar (*) of one of the users and if it complies to the rules you set up in the calendar configuration of step #1 you should now see it appear in the groupcalendars.

(*) A common mistake is that people create items in a calendar folder that is part of a PST file and not in their Exchange Inbox.

To export existing appointments from your users' personal calendars into the Group Calendar you first select the users and click the import button. You will have to do this only once when you start using the software.

It will not create duplicate items if you use the option later again to fill up a newly created groupcalendar folder with existing appointments.

(*) Before exporting existing calendars, make sure that you stop the Exchange GroupCalendar Check & Fix service. When the export has finished and your server CPU is back at a normal level, open the USERS.INI file in c:\Exchange Group Calendar\Service and delete everything from it. Close the Users.ini and start the Check & Fix service again.

Read the [user experience](#) to learn what you can expect from the Exchange GroupCalendar software.

If you like the software you can order a license [here](#). No need to uninstall the demo version, we will send you a license after purchase to turn the demo version into a full version.

If it's not what you are looking for let us know. We welcome all suggestions; in fact the current functionality of the software was created based purely on user feedback and suggestions.

To uninstall the software you must first stop sharing for all users in step #3. After that you select all users and calendars in step #2 and disconnect everyone. Now you can uninstall the software from control panel - add/remove programs. This will remove the com+ component and executable.

