OFF-LINE DEFRAGMENTATION OF ACTIVE DIRECTORY

As we know, online defragmentation does not release free space to the file system. In some cases, you may want to perform offline defragmentation to shrink the overall Active Directory size. For example, when you remove Global Catalog from a domain controller, you should run offline defragmentation on the database to do decrease the size of the database file and therefore, releasing free space to the file system.

To run offline defragmentation, perform the following steps:-

1. First you should back up the Active Directory database on the domain controller.
2. For Windows Server 2008 Domain Controllers, open the **Services** snap-in and stop the **Active Directory Domain Services** service (and all related services as prompted).
3. Open a command prompt and type **ntdsutil**.
4. From the Ntdsutil prompt, type **Activate Instance NTDS**.
5. From the Ntdsutil prompt, type **files**.
6. From the File Maintenance prompt, type **info**. This option displays current information about the path and size of the Active Directory database and its log files.
7. Type **compact to *drive:\directory***. Select a drive and directory that have enough space to store the entire database.
8. The offline defragmentation process creates a new database named Ntds.dit in the path you specified. As the database is copied to the new location, it is defragmented.
9. When the defragmentation is done, type **quit** twice to return to the command prompt.
10. Copy the defragmented Ntds.dit file over the old Ntds.dit file in the Active Directory database path and delete the old log files.
11. Restart the domain controller.