

Microsoft Removes Exchange Online User Photo Cmdlets

Use Graph SDK Cmdlets to Manage User and Group Photos

According to message center notification MC678855 (2 October), effective November 30, 2023,

check before: 2023-10-17

Product:

Entra ID, Exchange,
Microsoft 365 admin
center, Microsoft Graph

Platform:

Developer, Online,
World tenant

Status:

Change type:

Admin impact,
Retirement

Links:

Details:

We are working to ensure a coherent user profile image experience by retiring legacy profile photo services. This announcement covers the retirement of the ExchangePowerShell UserPhoto cmdlets for tenant admins to Get, Set, and Remove user profile photos:

Get-UserPhoto

Set-UserPhoto

Remove-UserPhoto

[When this will happen:]

The retirement is scheduled for November 30, 2023.

Change Category:

XXXXXXXX ...

Scope:

XXXXXXXX ...

Release Phase:

Created:

2023-10-03

updated:

2023-10-03

Microsoft will retire the Exchange Online management cmdlets to manipulate photos for mailboxes (*Get-*, *Set-*, and *Remove-UserPhoto*). This is part of the work to improve the way Microsoft 365 manages and displays user photos and moves the photo storage location away from Exchange Online to Entra ID. Microsoft says that this will create “*a coherent user profile image experience by retiring legacy profile photo services.*”

Basically, this effort resolves the inconsistencies that crept into user photo handling through Exchange and SharePoint doing their own thing, largely because of their on-premises roots. Delve attempted to fix the problem in 2015 but never really went anywhere. After that, Microsoft started to use Exchange Online to host photos and synchronize from there, but it's a better idea to use Entra ID and have all workloads come to a common place for photo data.

Replacement User Photo Cmdlets

The replacement cmdlets for user photo management are in the Microsoft Graph PowerShell SDK:

- ***Set-MgUserPhotoContent***: Add a photo to an Entra ID account. You can add JPEG or PNG files of up to 4 MB. Entra ID can store photos with a large pixel count. I have commonly uploaded photos sized at 8256 x 5504 pixels. When applications fetch photos to use, they can specify what sized photo they wish Entra ID to provide ranging from a thumbnail (48 x 48 pixels) to a high-definition photo as used in Teams meetings.
- ***Get-MgUserPhoto***: Check if an account has photo data in the *profilePhoto* property.
- ***Update-MgUserPhoto***: According to the documentation, this cmdlet “updates the navigation photo in users.” That doesn’t make much sense, so I asked the SDK development group to ask what the text really means. As it turns out, this cmdlet is a duplicate of *Set-MgUserPhotoContent*, so you can ignore it.
- ***Remove-MgUserPhoto***: Remove user photo information from an account.

For example:

```
Set-MgUserPhotoContent -Userid Jim.Smith@office365itpros.com -Infile  
"c:\temp\Jim.Smith.jpg"
```

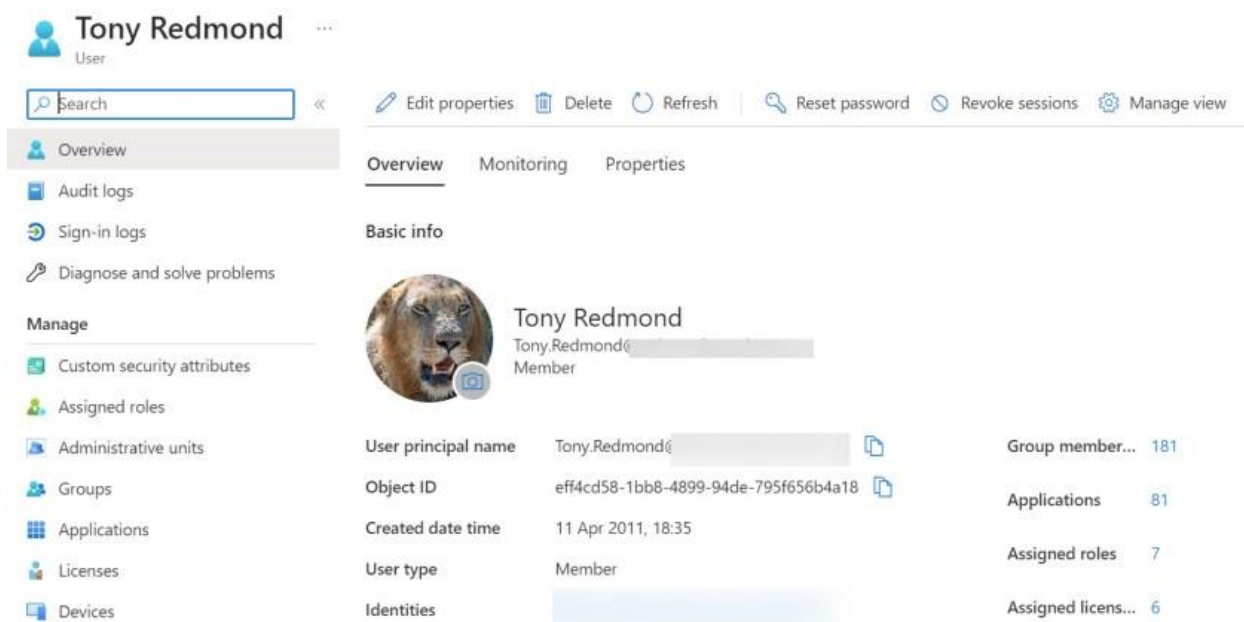


Figure 1: A user photo updated in Entra ID

Updating Scripts

From an administrator perspective, the impact of the change is a need to review scripts that call the old cmdlets to replace them with the SDK cmdlets. The changes to the script are likely to involve:

- Call the *Connect-MgGraph* cmdlet to connect to the SDK.
- Find target user accounts instead of mailboxes.
- Remove the references to *Get-UserPhoto* and *Set-UserPhoto*.
- Use the *Get-MgUserPhoto* cmdlet to find if a target mailbox has a photo and the *Set-MgUserPhotoContent* cmdlet to update the photo if necessary (and a suitable file is available).

Group Photos

Because it's a mailbox cmdlet and supports the *GroupMailbox* switch, the *Set-UserPhoto* cmdlet can set photos for Microsoft 365 groups. The *Set-MgUserPhotoContent* cmdlet only handles user accounts. To update the photos for Microsoft 365 groups, it's necessary to use the *Set-MgGroupPhotoContent* cmdlet. Alternatively, for team-enabled groups, you can use the *Set-TeamPicture* cmdlet from the Microsoft Teams module.