Foreword

Any IT professional who's been in the business more than 15 minutes knows that the only constant is change. Staying up-to-date on computing technologies is an unrelenting process. Those that thrive in this industry are those that enjoy continuous learning and new challenges. That said, it's still a daunting task to keep on top of fast-changing technology. From worms and viruses to storage area networks to Wi-Fi, today's IT professional has to constantly take in vast amounts of data, sort through it for relevant pieces, and figure out how to apply it to his or her own network.

Windows Server 2003 is based on the technologies introduced or enhanced in Windows 2000. This updated operating system contains all the technological updates you'd expect, as well as a determined effort by Microsoft to improve security. Out of the box, Windows Server 2003 is more secure than any previous Microsoft operating system. It's locked down, it doesn't install unnecessary components, and it requires activation or enabling of some key features that are installed by default. Overall, this operating system is the most stable, secure operating system Microsoft has built. The focus on security is evident and anyone running a Windows-based network should take a serious look at upgrading to this new version – not only to take advantage of the new features such as support for the latest protocols, but to improve overall security.

This book is designed to give you the best of the best. Each chapter was specifically selected to provide both the depth and breadth needed to work effectively with Windows Server 2003 without extraneous or irrelevant information. Of course, it would be easy to fill volumes on Windows Server 2003 and the technologies that go into this operating system. What we've done instead is focus on what you really

need to know to plan, install, manage and secure a Windows Server 2003 network. You won't find arcane references to the technical specifications of RFC 2460 (IPv6 for those of you who were about to jump to the IETF website or geekier still, those who have the RFC index file on their desktop). What you will find is accurate, focused technical information you can use today to manage your Windows Server 2003 systems and networks. You'll find a practical blend of technical information and step-by-step instructions on common Windows Server 2003 tasks. You can read this book from cover to cover and become highly knowledgeable about Windows Server 2003, or you can flip to specific chapters as references for particular tasks. Either way, you'll find this is the best damn Windows Server 2003 book . . . period.

— Susan Snedaker

Many thanks for the good-natured guidance from my editor, Jaime Quigley, at Syngress. Thanks also to my fine friend and mentor, Nick Mammana, who long ago taught me it's both what you say and how you say it that matter. And last, but certainly not least, thanks to Lisa Mainz for being such a techno-geek. I've learned a lot watching you break the rules.