Create or Refresh a Preview Space

> The Preview Space feature allows administrators to generate a secure, isolated testing environment that mirrors their live production system data. Its primary purpose is to provide a safe sandbox for testing new features, staging system changes, and conducting training without impacting operational data or actual end-users. This article is intended for OperationsCommander (OPSCOM) administrators responsible for managing system testing and training environments.

Setup and Configuration

Preview spaces are generated on demand directly from your live production environment.

Admin Side: Administrators require high-level system access to push data from the live database to a preview environment. No user-side configuration is required, as this is strictly an administrative testing tool.

Using this Feature

Administrators can use the following instructions to generate, access, and manage the active state of their preview database.

Creating or Refreshing a Preview Space

1. Hover over **Tools** and click **Database to Preview** in your live production system.

2. Select **Backup Production Database** to capture up-to-date information, or select a specific date from the drop-down menu to use an older historical backup.
3. Wait for the manual backup process to complete, if applicable.
4. Click the **Refresh Preview Database** button to push the data to the testing environment.

> The database refresh process typically takes 1 to 2 minutes, but it can take up to 15 minutes depending on the total size of your organization's database. A notification message will display along the top of the screen to alert you when the refresh is officially complete.

Accessing the Preview Space

1. Open your web browser's address bar.
2. Insert `.preview` immediately after your organization's subdomain name and before the main OPSCOM domain (e.g., `[https://yourorganization.preview.OPS-COM.com](https://yourorganization.preview.OPS-COM.com)`).
3. Press Enter to navigate to the isolated sandbox environment.

Locking and Unlocking the Database

Administrators can lock the preview database to prevent other staff members from accidentally refreshing the system and overwriting active testing or development work.

1. Log in to your preview site.
2. Hover over **Tools** and click **Reset Database**.
3. Toggle the lock or unlock setting as needed.

4. Enter a justification in the provided reason field when prompted by the system.

Visual Cues and Status Indicators

- **Amber Warning Banner:** To clearly distinguish a preview space from your live production system, the preview environment prominently displays an amber warning banner across the top of every page.
- **Lock Action History:** The **Reset Database** page displays a historical log of the previous 10 lock and unlock actions, providing a reference trail for the administrative team.

Best Practices and Considerations

- **Understand email suppression rules: All email notifications are automatically captured and suppressed in the preview environment.** This is a deliberate security measure to prevent accidental communications—such as test citations or training receipts—from reaching actual clients or external recipients.
- **Plan for automatic deletion: Preview sites are automatically deleted after 7 days of no login activity.** If your team requires a preview site for an extended training period or a long-term staging project, you must contact OPSCOM support staff so a custom expiry date can be set.
- **Utilize daily data backups: Production data is backed up daily at 2 AM EST and is available to push to the testing environment at any time.** If you perform a refresh of your preview site without initiating a brand new manual backup, the system will automatically pull the data captured from the night before.

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