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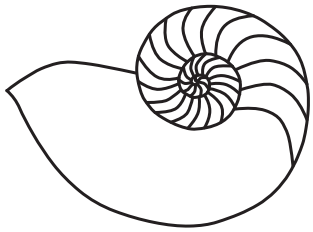

MUUGlines

The Manitoba UNIX User Group Newsletter

December 11, 2001: Using Kickstart to Install Red Hat Linux Systems

According to Red Hat, "Many system administrators would prefer to use an automated installation method to install Red Hat Linux on their machines. To answer this need, Red Hat created the kickstart installation method. Using Kickstart, a system administrator can create a single file containing the answers to all the questions that would normally be asked during a typical Red Hat Linux installation."

"Kickstart files can be kept on single server system, and read by individual computers during the installation. This installation method can support the use of a single Kickstart file to install Red Hat Linux on multiple machines, making it ideal for network and system administrators."

This month, John Schulz, from Pollard Banknote Ltd., will present an overview of Kickstart and demonstrate the install process.

Location

Please note our **new** meeting location: The IBM offices at 400 Ellice Ave. (between Edmonton and Kennedy). When you arrive, you will have to sign in at the reception desk, and then wait for someone to take you (in groups) to the meeting room. Please try to arrive by about 7:15 PM, so the meeting can start promptly at 7:30 PM. Don't be late, or you may not get in.

Limited parking is available for free on the street, or in a lot across Ellice from IBM, for $1.00 for the evening. Indoor parking is also available nearby, at Portage Place, for $2.00 for the evening.

Sign Up Now

Nearly every MUUG meeting includes a "round table", an open question and answer period in which every attendee can ask about something they would like help with or information about. In addition, there is a corresponding MUUG-managed mailing list where more questions can be asked and follow-ups posted. It seems that not everyone has been made aware of the existence of the latter.

So, sign up now at http://www.muug.mb.ca/mailman/listinfo/roundtable. The more people there are on the list, the more valuable it becomes. Even if you don't currently have questions or answers, sign up today and join in when you see an opening!

The Wonder Penguin

Development of the Linux kernel forges ahead. Linus Torvalds is now leading the work on the "development" kernel, version 2.5.1-pre4 (currently). Maintenance of the "stable" kernel series has been handed off to 18-year-old Brazilian Marcelo Tosatti. For more information on him, take a look at http://www.marcelothewonderpenguin.com/.

As the page says: "If you are the 700th journalist to wonder why Alan and Linus handed over the 2.4 kernel to an 18-year old man from Brazil, please keep in mind that Marcelo will be busy working on the 2.4 kernel, so please contact the people from Conectiva's marketing department instead of preventing Marcelo from doing his work." Marcelo works for Conectiva Inc., producers of the Conectiva Linux distribution. The current stable kernel version is 2.4.16.

SuSE Firewall on a CD

SuSE Linux (http://www.suse.de/en/) announced a version of "SuSE Linux Firewall on CD" available for "Virtual Private Networks" (VPN). Companies with secure connected networks at various company locations primarily use VPNs. Telecommuters access data in a company intranet through a VPN. In addition, many companies perform secure Internet-based information exchange with custom-

ers, partners, and suppliers via VPNs.

"Today, corporations and governments are facing an ever greater need for increased data security", said Johannes Nussbickel, CEO of SuSE Linux. "At SuSE, we have always focused on security with innovations such as the 'on-CD' security feature. Our new VPN capabilities in SuSE Linux Firewall extend the secure flow of communication in today's complex corporate networks and are of interest not only for companies but also for original equipment manufacturers."

"SuSE Linux Firewall on CD - VPN Edition" offers enterprises using Internet access efficient protection for their mission-critical data and IT infrastructure. Designed as an application-level gateway, SuSE Linux Firewall combines the high security standards of a hardware solution with the flexibility of a software firewall. As the central element of a competent IT security policy, SuSE Linux Firewall checks, monitors, analyzes, and logs the ongoing data traffic, thus providing a maximum degree of security.

The main advantage of SuSE Linux Firewall is the so-called live system that allows the operating system to be booted directly from a read-only CD-ROM without installing it on the hard disk. The live system represents a security gain, since the firewall software itself is located on the CD-ROM and cannot be manipulated. The respective configuration files - such as the ipchains packet filter settings - are stored on a write-protected floppy disk. The enclosed source code enables the adaptation to any specific needs.

A second CD contains the "Firewall Administration System" (FAS), a set of convenient tools for the quick configuration and efficient administration of one or several firewalls.

SuSE Linux Firewall continuously logs the data traffic, providing transparent information on all data accesses. The proxy server, which is based on the Open Source program package "squid", accelerates Internet operations by storing previously viewed pages and quickly reloading them on request. Additional features include syslog, postfix as mail relay, and SSH support. SuSE Linux Firewall on CD is available as "Standard Edition" and as "VPN Edition" and can be obtained from authorized SuSE Business Partners.

IBM Wants to Help You

I could repeat this every month: Check out IBM's DeveloperNet (http://www.ibm.com/developer). There are many tutorials, discussion groups and free software on a huge site, covering all things Linux (of course) and much, much more. For something relatively timely for our group, take a look at this article on xinetd by Teodor Zlatanov: http://www-106.ibm.com/developerworks/library/l-xinetd/?open&t=grl,l=252,p=xinetd

This article is meant for the beginner to intermediate system administrator and the explanations and examples try not to assume that you are already familiar with inetd. In this article he looks at some simple uses of xinetd, from installation to implementation of security policies.

What News of *BSD?

We're looking for news on the latest events in the BSD world. For now, we note that OpenBSD (http://www.openbsd.org/) has just announced 3.0, NetBSD (http://www.netbsd.org/) is at 1.5.2, and FreeBSD's current version is 4.4 (http://www.freebsd.com/). If you'd like to bring something newsworthy about any BSD to our attention, e-mail editor@muug.mb.ca.

OpenMail Lives

Samsung SDS and Hewlett-Packard have signed a licensing agreement allowing SDS to develop, enhance and sell messaging solutions built on HP's OpenMail e-mail server software. SDS plans to develop products with new features providing existing OpenMail software users an ideal path for upgrades.

The first release of SDS's messaging server, called Samsung Contact, will be compatible with OpenMail 7.0 and all its latest features while also adding new enhancements. The new server is expected to ship in the first half of 2002. A future version, also planned for 2002, will include telephone access to e-mail.

Initially released in 1990, OpenMail software

has been used by more than 60 percent of Fortune 1000 companies. As the only e-mail server apart from Microsoft® Exchange to support a wide range of important Microsoft Outlook features, OpenMail software provides a cost-sensitive enterprise solution allowing deployment of thousands or even millions of users on a single server. SDS has used OpenMail software as the basis of its own internal communication system for five years, providing reliable communications across the company's 230,000 users.

Dell Into Linux Again

Dell announced that it will offer factory installation of Red Hat® Linux 7.2 on its entire line of Dell Precision™ workstations and Dell PowerEdge™ servers, including the PowerEdge 1500SC server, which was introduced recently for small business customers.

Dell also has worked closely with Red Hat to provide support in Red Hat Linux 7.2 for Broadcom's Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) accelerator card, available as a low-cost security option on most PowerEdge servers. For customers who develop their own Linux image using Red Hat Linux 7.2 or another Linux distribution, Dell offers Custom Factory Integration to install the software on Dell OptiPlex™ desktop and Dell Latitude™ notebook computers.

Red Hat Linux 7.2 is immediately available on Dell PowerEdge servers and will be available on Dell Precision workstations later this year. For more information on Red Hat Linux on Dell systems, go to www.dell.com/linux.

New CUPS Release

Easy Software Products announced in early November the 1.1.11 release of the Common UNIX Printing System ("CUPS"), an IPP/1.1-based printing system for UNIX®

CUPS 1.1.11 adds support for embedded TrueType fonts and PostScript functions in PDF files and adds a new "cupsaddsmb" program for exporting CUPS printer drivers to Windows clients, adds preliminary support for MacOS X and Darwin. It also now supports printer drivers with more than 100 media options, includes several general performance improvements, and fixes a potential JavaScript vulnerability in the web interface. CUPS is available at: http://www.cups.org.

CUPS provides a portable printing layer for UNIX®-based operating systems. It has been developed by Easy Software Products (http://www.easysw.com/) to promote a standard printing solution for all UNIX vendors and users. CUPS provides the System V and Berkeley command-line interfaces.

CUPS uses the Internet Printing Protocol ("IPP") as the basis for managing print jobs and queues. The Line Printer Daemon ("LPD") Server Message Block ("SMB"), and AppSocket (a.k.a. JetDirect) protocols are also supported with reduced functionality. CUPS adds network printer browsing and PostScript Printer Description ("PPD") based printing options to support real-world printing under UNIX.

CUPS also includes a customized version of GNU Ghostscript (currently based off GNU Ghostscript 5.50) and an image file RIP that are used to support non-PostScript printers. Sample drivers for Dymo, EPSON, HP, and OKIDATA printers are included that use these filters. CUPS is licensed under the GNU General Public License and GNU Library General Public License.

KDE 2.2.2 Released

The KDE Project announced the immediate release of KDE 2.2.2, a powerful and easy-to-use Internet-enabled desktop for Linux. KDE 2.2.2 is available in **42** languages and ships with the core KDE libraries, the core desktop environment, and over 100 applications from the other base KDE packages (administration, multimedia, network, PIM, development, etc.). The KDE Project encourages all users of the award-winning KDE, and strongly encourages all users of KDE in multi-user environments, to upgrade to KDE 2.2.2.

KDE 2.2.2 is a security and service release. It marks the last scheduled release of the KDE 2 series, though further releases may occur. Code development is currently focused on KDE 3.0, scheduled for its first beta release next month and

for final release in the first quarter of 2002.

The principal improvements over KDE 2.2.1, released two months ago, include:

Security-related
- SSL certificate loading
- symlink vulnerability in .wmrc access by KDM introduced in 2.2
- security problem with eFax (used by klprfax)
- potential problem in PAM invocation by KDM
- potential harmful side-effect of failed KDM session starts

New features
- added support for CodeWeavers' CrossOver plug-in (provides support for QuickTime, etc.)
- added support for the wheelmouse for scrolling through the KGhostview PS/PDF viewer component
- ability to search for multiple patterns at a time in the file search dialog
- debugging multi-threaded applications with KDevelop

Improvements/fixes
- handling of HTTP links that redirect to FTP
- POST using SSL through a proxy and sending headers through proxies
- saving of recently-selected files in the file dialog
- handling of non-ASCII characters over SMB
- toolbar button captions with certain styles
- selecting items with the mouse in Konqueror
- sorting in Konqueror's textview
- saving current settings as a theme in the theme manager
- crashes in KMail with certain mails
- crash on invoking the KDM chooser
- non-Latin languages with KDevelop

Performance
- icon loading optimized
- file dialog speedups
- stop spinning SMB client processes
- handling of large files in Kate

Sun Harnessed By Monsters

Sun Microsystems, Inc. announced today that Disney/Pixar's latest animated feature film Monsters, Inc. was developed using technology from Sun Microsystems. The film's characters and scenes were brought to life in Pixar's powerful Renderfarm of 250 Sun Enterprise™ midrange servers.

Rendering is the time- and computationally-intensive process in which the correct lighting, textures and shading are applied to 3D computer models to produce sharp, colorful images with photorealistic detail. It is the critical final stage before a film reaches its audience. The rendering was completed in the Pixar Renderfarm, which is powered by 250 Sun Enterprise 4500 servers, running Solaris™, each using 14 UltraSPARC™ II microprocessors, 14 gigabytes of system memory and 196 gigabytes of local disk space for a total of 3,500 processors in production with nearly four terabytes of main memory.

"In building the Pixar Renderfarm, Pixar and Sun harnessed the power of technology to bring imagination to life - monsters and all," said Clark Masters, vice president and general manger, Enterprise Systems Products for Sun Microsystems. "In our long-term relationship, we've delivered the reliable, scalable and available technology that helps Pixar meet the rigorous requirements of film production, inspiring awe in audiences around the world."

Pixar's Renderfarm has run on Sun technology for nearly six years through the creation of "Toy Story," "A Bug's Life" and "Toy Story 2." For its first implementation in 1995, Pixar adopted Sun's SPARCstation™ 20 workstations, and later migrated to the Enterprise 4000, the Enterprise 4500 servers and Sun Fire 3800 servers.

Sending Us E-Mail?

Due to the amount of e-mail MUUG receives, we've set up an auto-reply to give you immediate feedback, and redirect some of the e-mail to the appropriate places. Why not look at http://www.muug.mb.ca/about.html#contacts first?

We Like To Hear From You

So e-mail us with your comments on the newsletter, whether it's criticisms or commendations, or send in some interesting articles! Submit personal anecdotes, stories of your use of Unix, Linux, BSD or related operating systems to editor@muug.mb.ca. We really appreciate everything you send in!