

Deploying and Mirroring SUSE Linux Enterprise 10 Updates

New alternatives to cascading YaST on-line update (YOU) servers.

Introduction

With the release of SUSE Linux Enterprise 10 Novell has improved the way in which the operating system can be kept up to date. Novell has changed the software package and update format and has added some new tools to YaST. As a result the YaST online update (YOU) Server functionality has been deprecated and substituted with the following alternatives:

- A YUM Server
- ZENworks Linux Management Server

This document gives an overview on how to configure these new options and how to incorporate them into your infrastructure.

End User License Issues

The SUSE Linux Enterprise End User License Agreement (EULA) requires that each system that receives updates to SUSE Linux Enterprise must be associated with a current product subscription. Using internal re-deployment mechanisms for updates does not conflict with that policy as long as all systems have a valid subscription.

Using a YUM Server

The SUSE Linux Enterprise software package and update mechanisms now conform to the Yellow dog Updater, Modified (YUM) open source format. This change has the benefit of conforming to industry standards and unifying update technologies used across the product line. YUM is fully supported by both the Novell ZENworks and SUSE Linux Enterprise product families.

An additional change is that SUSE Linux Enterprise 10 now includes an embedded ZENworks client that supports YUM Servers as an update source. The following instructions outline the step necessary to configure a YUM server to act as an update source:

Step 1. Configure a Web Server to act as a YUM server

A YUM server is a regular web server which serves files in a specialized format. It is recommended that you use the Apache web server that is provided with SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 10. Once the web server is installed, configured and deployed then place all YUM related content into the document directories.

Step 2. Mirror Updates onto the YUM Server

Before you can download updates from Novell's update server and re-deploy them by the YUM server, it is necessary to install a package called YUP. YUP can be obtained from the the SDK (Software Development Kit) channel. Please visit to the following web article for further reference:

<http://support.novell.com/techcenter/psdb/0d00854c9f7f33f7a225f6d227c03de4.html>

For the web server to act as a YUM server, copy all of the files mirrored from update.novell.com into the document root directory.

In the 1st half of 2007 Novell is going to offer a proxy tool for the updates on Novell Customer Center. This proxy tool will provide package mirroring functionality, license checking and reporting.

Step 3. Configure ZLM Clients to Receive YUM Server Updates

Before each server can begin to receive updates from a YUM mirror server it is necessary to configure its update client. To do so add a YUM service with the address of the YUM server in the embedded ZMD client.

Step 4. Modify the Repository for Special Purposes

Once the standard update channel is configured to receive updates from YUM mirrors, you can modify the repository to update your own add on products. Please refer to the following article that describes the configuration process in detail:

http://developer.novell.com/wiki/index.php/Creating_Add-Ons

ZENworks Linux Management Server

Novell's ZENworks Linux Management offers a comprehensive product line for all kinds of enterprise resource management purposes; including server software mirroring and updating. SUSE Linux Enterprise 10 is compatible with ZENworks Linux Management 6.6 and 7 for delivering and mirroring updates.

ZENworks Linux Management can quickly be configured to automatically mirror system updates into catalogs which are hosted and made available in the local network by the ZENworks Linux Management Server. Users can then subscribe to the catalogs securely on their own internal networks and receive the latest updates with the embedded ZENworks client, included with SUSE Linux Enterprise 10. For instructions on how to configure ZLM for mirroring packages from Novell Customer Center, please refer to these articles:

http://www.novell.com/support/search.do?cmd=displayKC&docType=kc&externalId=3860200&sliceId=SAL_Public&dialogID=11710547&stateId=0%200%2011718049

http://www.novell.com/support/search.do?cmd=displayKC&docType=kc&externalId=3480922&sliceId=SAL_Public&dialogID=4783&stateId=0%200%202869

ZENworks Linux Management as an enterprise product comes with full support and maintenance by Novell (for further reference visit <http://www.novell.com/products/zenworks/linuxmanagement/>).

Conclusion

The release of SUSE Linux Enterprise 10 improved the way in which the operating system could be patched and updated. It introduced new package and patch management technologies, along with a new subscription management website. As a result there are now two new alternatives for deploying and mirroring SUSE Linux Enterprise 10 Updates. The YUM Server alternative provides plain re-deployment functionality using a widely adopted community standard. Alternatively the deployment of ZENworks Linux Management Server adds a complete enterprise ready option for mass deployment and resource management.