

Q&A Red Hat Satellite Server



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Red Hat Satellite Server extends the functionality of Red Hat Network by adding a suite of sophisticated management tools, ensuring that the life of a senior administrator is made easier explains Walli Dattoo

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How can resellers benefit from selling a Red Hat Satellite Server?

The Satellite Server provides resellers an upsell opportunity when they sell 10 or more Red Hat subscriptions into an account. It also allows them to make sure end customers renew all their Red Hat subscriptions year in, year out! Server inventory and patch management capabilities in the Satellite Server will allow resellers to also evaluate a customers estate and make sure their estate is highly optimised running on appropriate hardware and scalable hardware. From a resellers perspective the Satellite Server enables both software and hardware sales.

How many Linux servers do you need to start benefiting from Red Hat Network?

Put simply, Red Hat Satellite Server is a systems management platform that makes Linux deployable, scalable, and manageable providing complete lifecycle management, including patch management, configuration management, provisioning and monitoring.

If you have 10 or more servers in your estate, the Red Hat Satellite Server provides effective management tools to make sure you are in

“Makes Linux
deployable, scalable,
and manageable”

control of your Linux infrastructure. Red Hat Satellite Server supports all versions of Red Hat Enterprise Linux (version 2.1, 3, 4, and 5) on all supported platforms. Red Hat Satellite Server also supports the Sun Solaris operating system (versions 8, 9 and 10 on 64bit SPARC) and Solaris 9 and 10 – effectively allowing you to manage your Unix and Linux servers.

What additional benefits does Red Hat Satellite Server add to Red Hat Network?

Red Hat Satellite Server is designed to be an extension of Red Hat Network hosted. While you can do basic administrative tasks with the Red Hat Network services included with your subscription, Red Hat Satellite Server adds high-end management, provisioning, and monitoring through its modules. This

administrative functionality is often needed by organizations with large or complex Linux environments.

Red Hat Satellite Server delivers updates, errata, and software in a highly scalable fashion while minimizing use of network bandwidth. Red Hat Satellite Server is capable of being run in a detached/secure mode where content updates are loaded in using physical media. Channel content ISOs can be downloaded from Red Hat Network and are required to keep certified content up-to-date. Many organizations that have very tight security requirements utilize the detached Satellite configuration.

Red Hat Satellite Server solves some Key pain points that system administrators face at the moment:

1. High/growing administration and management costs (high TCO):

- Significantly improve system to administrator ratios through automation of patch management, configuration management, provisioning, and monitoring
- Reduce errors and inconsistencies and allow junior level administrators to perform tasks of senior administrators with tasks codified into an intuitive GUI
- Decrease ongoing deployment, configuration and management costs
- Lower administration costs by easily standardizing machine configurations

2. Time/resource requirements:

- Enable time savings to allow admins to focus on higher value activities
- Roll out new systems in minutes with Red Hat Satellite Server Provisioning module
- Increase number of systems without adding more administrators

3. System downtime:

- Receive alerts on system performance and quickly re-provision systems to meet increasing performance needs

4. Security:

- Instantly see system status via web interface

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to know if any systems need important patch or configuration changes

- Improve security through centralized on-premise management tool

5. Limited functionality & scalability:

- Distribute custom content as well as RHEL updates in batch
- Easily scales to thousands of systems

As well as provisioning and updating systems remotely, how else can Red Hat Satellite Server benefit IT managers?

By providing simple tools to efficiently manage the lifecycle of systems on your network. This includes provisioning new systems, managing their updates and configuration changes, monitoring system performance, and eventually re-deploying the systems for a new purpose. Administration and management of your systems can be distributed based upon your organizational requirements. This allows you to create a centralised management location for cross departmental deployment, giving each department control over their own servers.

There are available modules for the Red Hat Satellite Server deployment. These modules need to be purchased for every server that is attached to your satellite server. The three modules are:

Management module

With the system grouping feature, you can scale your deployment without increasing administrative overhead.

- Systems grouping: Manage a group of systems as easily as you would manage a single system
- Systems permissions: Group your systems according to your needs and then assign permissions to different administrators. Permissions can also be based on roles
- Multi-organization support: Create and manage multiple organizations with one physical Satellite
- Set fine-grained control and access to systems, channels, users and more
- Virtual guests: Starting, stopping, and pausing VM's remotely
- Scheduled actions: Schedule an errata update for a system or group, taking advantage of scheduled downtime for maintenance across your network
- System search: Search by packages, errata, or systems specifications. Advanced search offers even more granularity
- Package profile comparison tools: Compare two systems, or build a package profile of your own to compare against. Results let you see the differences on both machines

- Multi-platform management: Use Red Hat Satellite Server to manage your legacy Solaris systems, giving you a single management tool for your migration to Linux
- The management module is required for a satellite server installation

Provisioning module

Manage the complete life cycle of your Linux infrastructure. Deploy, configure, manage, update, and then re-deploy your Linux systems, all from a single GUI console with all the necessary enterprise functionality and controls. Use Provisioning to create a responsive infrastructure, where you can quickly re-deploy resources as needed

- Bare metal provisioning: Automatically provision a new system using Kickstart
- Deploy the OS, packages and activation keys of your choice, all without ever touching the machine
- Virtual guest provisioning: Creation and Kickstart of para-virtualized guests
- Existing state provisioning: Provision a system to take on the state of an existing system or a predefined installation with a simple point and click
- Multi-state rollback (includes snapshot-based recovery): Records the state of all of your systems everytime an action is applied to them, serving as a repository for state information allowing your system to return to a previous state or configuration instantly
- Configuration management: Easily manage configuration files for groups of systems. Combine with Kickstart for complete provisioning
- RPM-based application provisioning: More than just OS provisioning, Red Hat Satellite Server allows application-based provisioning for all RPM-based applications – completely integrated with the rest of Red Hat Satellite Server
- Kickstart configuration writer: Write Kickstart configuration scripts with our tool, or have Red Hat Satellite Server create a script based on an existing system
- The Provisioning module requires the Management module

Monitoring Module

Keep track of your systems and applications from the Red Hat Satellite Server console. View reports that let you take action before performance becomes an issue.

- System probes: Dozens of checks can be run against each system to monitor memory, disk usage, and network service
- Application probes: Checks can be set up to

- monitor the performance of popular apps
- Custom probes: Easily create custom checks that track valuable info about your apps
- Virtual guests: Real-time monitoring of memory, disk space, and CPU utilization
- Probe suites: Create groups of probes for fast deployment and improved consistency
- Notification: Alerts resulting from systems entering WARNING and CRITICAL states can be sent to email or pager addresses
- Central status: The results of all probes are summarized in a single status page, with the systems affected broken down by state
- Reporting: By selecting a probe and identifying the desired metric and a range of time, you can see precisely how the check has performed
- The Provisioning module requires the Management module

Is it possible to manage and deploy apps not directly supported by Red Hat?

Red Hat uses a unique application packaging system called RPM. Using the provisioning module with the satellite server you can perform RPM-based application provisioning. Red Hat Satellite Server allows application-based provisioning for all RPM-based applications – completely integrated with the rest of Red Hat Satellite Server. This allows you to extend your reach beyond just operating system provisioning.

Do you need separate physical locations to benefit from Red Hat Satellite Server?

Red Hat Satellite Server doesn't need to be run in a branch architecture for it to work. It can be run in a single central environment but can also be extended to work in sync with multiple satellite servers located in branch locations.

Can Red Hat Satellite Server systems be managed locally if required?

Red Hat Satellite Server has a very effective web based user interface that is intuitive and easy to use. Administrators can manage their systems from the server itself or across their local network using the web based tools provided with Red Hat Satellite Server.

Meet Walli

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