

1.108.5

Notify users on system-related issues

Weight 1

Linux Professional Institute Certification — 102

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1 Context

Outline

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2 Objective

Description of Objective

Candidates should be able to notify the users about current issues related to the system. This objective includes automating the communication process, e.g. through `logon` messages.

Key files, terms, and utilities include:

`/etc/issue` —

`/etc/issue.net` — File containing message displayed when users log in via `telnet` (which should be never! :-)

`/etc/motd` — Message of the day file: displayed when log in via `ssh` or the console

3 /etc/issue

Customize the Local Login screen with /etc/issue

- The login screen for Fedora Core 4 looks like this:

```
Fedora Core release 4 (Stentz)
Kernel 2.6.13-1.1526_FC4smp on an i686
```

```
login:
```

- The `getty` process spawned by `init` presents the contents of the file `/etc/issue` and provides a `login:` prompt for the user.
- The file `/etc/issue`

```
$ cat /etc/issue ↵
Fedora Core release 4 (Stentz)
Kernel \r on an \m
```

3.1 Manpage for issue

man issue

ISSUE(5) Linux Programmer's Manual ISSUE(5)

NAME
 issue - pre-login message and identification file

DESCRIPTION

 The file /etc/issue is a text file which contains a message or system identification to be printed before the login prompt. It may contain various @char and \char sequences, if supported by mingetty(1).

FILES
 /etc/issue

SEE ALSO
 mingetty(1), motd(5)

Linux 1993-07-24 ISSUE(5)

3.2 getty strings you can use in issue

man getty—embedded in the /etc/issue

- \d insert current day (localtime),
- \l insert line on which mingetty is running,
- \m inserts machine architecture (uname -m),
- \n inserts machine's network node hostname (uname -n),
- \o inserts domain name,
- \r inserts operating system release (uname -r),
- \t insert current time (localtime),
- \s inserts operating system name,
- \u insert the number of current users logged in
- \U inserts "1 user" or "<n> users", where <n> is the number of users logged in
- \v inserts operating system version (uname -v).

4 telnet and issue.net

Telnet uses /etc/issue.net

The following sequences are supported by telnetd:

- %l show the current tty
- %h, %n show the system node name (FQDN)
- %D, %o show the name of the NIS domain
- %d, %t show the current time and date
- %s show the name of the operating system
- %m show the machine (hardware) type
- %r show the operating system release
- %v show the operating system version
- %% display a single '%' character

5 Message of the Day: motd

Message of the Day — motd

- Contents of /etc/issue is displayed.
- getty displays the login prompt.
- /bin/login handles the login process.
 - User is authorized.
 - Contents of /etc/motd is displayed.
 - The login shell is executed.

5.1 Manpage for motd

Manpage for motd

MOTD(5) Linux Programmer's Manual MOTD(5)

NAME
 motd - message of the day

DESCRIPTION
 The contents of /etc/motd are displayed by login(1) after a successful login but just before it executes the login shell.

The abbreviation "motd" stands for "message of the day", and this file has been traditionally used for exactly that (it requires much less disk space than mail to all users).

FILES
 /etc/motd

SEE ALSO
 login(1), issue(5)

Linux 1992-12-29 MOTD(5)

5.2 motd in action

motd

```
$ cat /etc/motd ←
G'day! :-)
$ exit ←
```

Red Hat Linux release 9 (Shrike)
 Kernel 2.4.20-8 on an i686

```
marsbar login: geoffrey
Password:
Last login: Wed Sep 10 22:23:15 on tty2
G'day! :-)
You have new mail.
$
```

It also works with ssh

```
$ ssh nicku.org ←
Last login: Thu Oct 27 10:51:21 2005 from nicku.org
G'day! :-)
$ cat /etc/motd ←
G'day! :-)
$
```

6 Ways of notifying users

Notify Users of System Related Issues

Login Screen /etc/issue

Telnet Login Screen /etc/issue.net

Login message /etc/motd

wall Message to all terminals

talk Split screen message

Email Users list

Phone They have a phone

Visit They have an office

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