

Enterprise Linux
Automate System Builds with Kickstart
\$Id\$
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Who are you listening to?

Before you take the advise of anyone, know your source. Especially in forums like this, where the author announces a disclaimer of liability.

I make no claim that what I report is accurate. If you wreck your systems/data/life based on knowledge which I inaccurately report, you cannot hold me nor those that I work for responsible.

This document (presentation) is intended for consumption by responsible individuals in the spirit of sharing knowledge about Linux and Open Source Software (OSS).

That said, here is my background

- Unix Admin Experience (10+ years)
- Dec Ultrix, HP/UX, IBM/AIX, Linux, SUN/Solaris
- Education, R&D, Retail
- Instructor (1 year)
- BLU member & contributor (5 years)
- BS Computer Science Engineering

Presentation Outline

1. What is kickstart?
2. How to configure it
3. Look at sample configuration files
4. Demonstration

Note: This is a NEW document and much of it is based on personal experience at this point. Hopefully, the input of others over time while improve the accuracy of the data and make this presentation more useful.

What is kickstart?

- Tool which provides the mechanism to perform automated unattended installations

Supported techniques

- nfs
- cdrom
- harddrive
- url (ftp, http)

Why bother?

- quick & easy
- encourages standards
- easy system recovery
- customizable

How to create the ks.cfg

- Create a kickstart file by reading manuals (unlikely)
- After a RH72 non-kickstart install, you can use/modify `~root/anaconda-ks.cfg`
- RH62 provides a template on the install cd (`./doc/sample.ks`)
- You can also use `ksconfig`

Where to put the ks.cfg

- Typically, you throw it on your boot floppy
- Also modify your boot floppy so `SYSCONFIG` has `ks=floppy`
- You can remove all other options from `SYSCONFIG`
- You can also remove message files
- Almost ready...

Configuring the server

- Create a public NFS shared directory
- Dump the contents of all install CDs into your directory
- Make sure /etc/exports shares it (showmount -e)
- Also make sure NFS is running (/etc/init.d/nfs start)
- Go!

Newer Features

- --ondisk
- --onpart
- --forceprimary

Other Coolness

- At the end of the ks.cfg you can create a post-install
- If you use DHCP, you can put the ks.cfg on the server
- My understanding is that GRUB has etherboot built in, are floppyless kickstarts now possible?
- Experimenting with setting the kickstart floppy to use serial port
- Serial + GRUB = totally unattended system remote loads possible

