

Setting Up a yum Repository

As discussed in Chapter 6, “Configuring a yum Client,” `yum` is built on the Python programming language, which is a building block for the Red Hat/Fedora distributions. While current support is limited to the Red Hat/Fedora/Yellow Dog/Mandriva/Asp distributions, per the latest available Netcraft survey (<http://news.netcraft.com/archives/2005/03/index.html>), that’s over half the Linux market. If you want to learn patch management for Linux, you need to know how to use `yum` and configure, or “yummify,” associated repositories.

The simplest way to configure a `yum` repository is to mirror one that already exists. Most Fedora repositories already support `yum`. But you do not have to mirror the entire repository, because much of it is built from installation CDs. In addition, as packages change, or if you combine packages from different mirrors, you may prefer to create `yum` headers on your own system rather than download them from a remote mirror.

We’ve divided this chapter into several major sections. You can take most of the packages for a repository from the installation CDs. You’ll need to manage headers for those repositories. You’ll need to configure sharing of that repository with other computers on your network. You’ll need to download other repositories associated with updates, developmental packages, and those created by third parties. Finally, you’ll need to keep these repositories up to date.

When configured, you’ll be able to update your computers from local repositories, minimizing the loads on your Internet connections, giving you more control over what is installed on your systems. You can focus on making sure that critical packages, including those related to security, are up to date. That is the essence of good patch management.

At the end of this chapter, we’ll show you how you can create a `yum` repository for Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) 4 clients with an authorized subscription to the Red Hat Network. If you have valid subscriptions, this is a viable alternative to the Red Hat Network Proxy Server described in Chapter 2, “Consolidating Patches on a Red Hat/Fedora Network.”

7.1 GETTING THE PACKAGES

You already have many of the packages that you'll want in a `yum` repository: the same RPMs that are already included with the installation CDs/DVDs for your distribution. With those RPMs, you can use `yum` to populate the base repository and add the headers needed for easy access from the other computers on your network.

In this part of the chapter, we'll show you how to start your repository, install `yum`, create an appropriate `yum` directory tree, add headers to the appropriate directory, and test the base repository on your local system. We'll start with the Fedora Core 4 Updates repository. When you see how it's done, you can use the same techniques to create other repositories on your system.

While you could use the `rsync` command described in earlier chapters to mirror an entire repository, each version of Fedora requires well over 10GB of space. You do not need to mirror the directory with the 6GB+ of ISO files. As described earlier in this book, there are ways to cut that down with appropriate `--exclude` switches to the `rsync` command. But if the loads on your Internet connection are not a problem, you might not need a local patch management repository in the first place.

Note

SUSE supports two different patch management tools described in Chapter 3, "SUSE's Update Systems and rsync Mirrors": YaST Online Update and Zenworks Linux Management. As noted in Chapters 5 and 6, they now support `apt`, and plan to support `yum` in the future.

7.1.1 Strategy

Before you create your repository, decide what you want to store locally. Viable options vary. If you have only two or three workstations, a local repository might not be so important. However, it can become profitable to configure a local repository if you have a substantial number of workstations. What you configure locally depends on your patch management strategy. Consider the following:

- ☞ To keep a substantial number of computers up to date, it can help to configure a local repository for updates. Alternatively, if your Internet bandwidth is unlimited, and the people behind your remote mirror do not object to the load, you may prefer to use remote mirrors, as they may be more up to date.
- ☞ If you frequently change the base software on your systems, you should load the installation RPMs on your repository.

- ☞ If you need packages outside the standards available on the installation CDs, look for other directories of RPMs on your favorite mirror. For example, Fedora includes the Extras repository with many useful packages.
- ☞ If you need packages simply unavailable from mirrors associated with your distribution, there are also third-party repositories described throughout this book.
- ☞ If your users test updates before they're moved to the stable update repository, consider mirroring such repositories. You may even have reason to mirror a development repository. However, be warned that these packages are generally not stable or suitable for a production environment.

Note

The Fedora development repositories, formerly known as “Rawhide,” are collections of RPMs that may change on a day-to-day basis. They are, by definition, not stable. They are not suitable for production use. However, they may be of considerable interest to developers and others looking for the latest available solutions.

After you decide what you're going to mirror, you can set up a `yum` directory tree for your local repository. In the following sections, we'll focus on creating an Updates repository. If you have the installation CD available, you can use the same steps to create an Installation repository.

In my case, I've created a Fedora Core 4 repository on a system running RHEL 4, as it is a fairly stable distribution. You'll want to leave room for future releases of Fedora Core. It might even make sense to add a new hard drive for that purpose so that the packages won't overwhelm other files on your system. In any case, it's an excellent idea to at least configure a separate partition for your repository.

7.1.2 Creating a yum Directory Tree

We're assuming that you're ready to create your own `yum` repository directory tree for your own network and that the tree does not have to be identical to the one on your favorite mirror. For example, assume that you've created the `/var/ftp/pub/yum` directory in a separate partition. Assume that for now, all you need to provide for are standard 32-bit systems. If you wanted to create a `yum` directory tree for Fedora Core 4, you might end up with the following directories:

```
/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/os  
/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/updates  
/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/extras  
/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/dag
```

The `/var/ftp/pub` directory is the default directory associated with the vsFTP server. It happens to be the default FTP server for Fedora and Red Hat distributions. With the right settings, you can link to this directory from an Apache Web server. You can also share this directory on the local network using NFS. In fact, NFS is generally preferred on a network of Linux computers because shared NFS directories can be treated as if they were on the local computer.

Note

To promote security, the vsFTP server does not allow symbolic links (also known as symlinks). Therefore, you can't use the vsFTP server for packages downloaded to directories, such as `/var/spool/updates`.

As the noted directories are several levels below `/var/ftp/pub`, you might feel like you'll have to run the `mkdir` command a thousand times. There is one minor trick that can speed the process. The following command creates all needed subdirectories in one shot:

```
mkdir -p /var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/os
```

Note that the structure of these directories does not correspond to those you see in current Fedora Core mirrors. The directory structure of different Fedora Core mirrors varies. Unless you're creating a mirror for public use, there is no need to create a directory structure similar to any existing Fedora Core mirror.

7.1.3 Start with a Distribution

For the purpose of this chapter, I've downloaded the Fedora Core 4 installation DVD, to create repositories for Fedora Core 4 systems. As noted earlier, it'll be on a RHEL 4 computer so that I can add repositories for future releases of Fedora Core. As RHEL 4 was developed in large part from Fedora Core 3, I'll be using Fedora-based yum packages. Naturally, the following instructions will also work for a repository configured on Fedora Core 3.

Note

For Fedora Core 3, this section works in the same way. Just substitute appropriate file names. I could not test these settings on Fedora Core 5, as Red Hat was just starting its test (beta) releases for this distribution as this book was going to print.

For example, if you've download the Fedora Core DVD, you can mount the ISO file almost as if it were a DVD/CD with the following command:

```
mount -o loop FC4-i386-DVD.iso /media/cdrecorder
```

Of course, you can “burn” the DVD `.iso` file (or associated CD `.iso` files) to appropriate media. It may be handy to have a DVD available. But, in my opinion, because you can mount the ISO directly, you don’t need a physical DVD.

Note

If you can’t work with DVD-sized files, you can still create a local repository. For example, if you’ve downloaded the four Fedora Core 4 binary CDs, all you need to do is mount the CDs one at a time, and copy their contents (including the `.discinfo` file from the first CD) to the directory of your choice. For example, you could run the following commands:

```
mount -o loop FC4-i386-disc1.iso /media/cdrecorder
cp -ar /media/cdrecorder/* \
/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/os/
```

If it’s the first CD, don’t forget to copy the `.discinfo` file to the noted directory. Change CDs:

```
mount -o loop FC4-i386-disc2.iso /media/cdrecorder
cp -ar /media/cdrecorder/* \
/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/os/
```

Repeat the process until you’ve reached the fourth CD.

A quick look at other mirrors confirms that the contents of the Fedora Core DVD are part of the `os/` repository directory. You can make it part of your own local repository, by copying the contents of the DVD to the corresponding directory described earlier:

```
cp -ar /media/cdrecorder/* /var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/os/
```

7.1.4 Installing yum

For Fedora Core 3 and above, you’ll need at least the `yum` and `createrepo` RPMs, along with the packages associated with the way you plan to share your repository on your network (FTP, Apache, or NFS server). Earlier versions of Fedora Core did not include a `createrepo` RPM; if you want to create a repository from Fedora Core 1 or 2, use the `yum-arch` command, which is part of the `yum` RPM and is functionally similar to `createrepo`.

When the appropriate CD or DVD is mounted, you can then install the Fedora Core 3 `yum` and `createrepo` RPMs with the following commands:

```
rpm -Uvh /media/cdrecorder/Fedora/RPMS/yum*
rpm -Uvh /media/cdrecorder/Fedora/RPMS/createrepo*
```

Note

Because RHEL 4 is built on Fedora Core 3, it generally works when you use Fedora Core 3 RPMs on RHEL 4. However, Fedora Core 4 RPMs sometimes require more advanced dependent packages. If you install those dependencies, that might cause problems for other RHEL 4 applications.

If you're working with a RHEL 4 rebuild distribution, such as CentOS-4, the appropriate `yum` packages may already be installed on your system. The actual directory with these packages may vary; for example, the CentOS-4 version of the `createrepo` RPM is part of the CentOS-4 `addons/` repository directory.

Note

If you are also using this server for installations, copy the `.iso` files associated with the DVD or CDs to the `/var/ftp/pub` directory. The Red Hat installation program, Anaconda, can automatically mount and read appropriate `.iso` files. When shared, you can use this directory as a network installation source, which can help you automate the installation of additional PCs.

If you're working with RHEL 4, you can install the `yum` and `createrepo` RPMs from Fedora Core 3. If you don't have the associated installation media, you can download the RPMs directly from your favorite mirror from among those listed at <http://fedora.redhat.com/download/mirrors.html>.

7.1.5 Synchronizing Updates

More important than the installation RPMs are the updates. While you can use tools, such as `system-config-packages`, to install and remove Fedora packages from the installation files, you need access to the updates to manage patches on your system. Based on the directories described earlier, we're planning to store RPMs from the Fedora Core 4 Updates repository on the following directory:

```
/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/updates
```

Based on the `rsync` commands described in Chapter 2, you should find an Updates repository in the `rsync` mirror of your choice. Fedora `rsync` mirrors are listed at <http://fedora.redhat.com/download/mirrors.html>. One `rsync` mirror that I use is `rsync://mirrors.kernel.org/fedora/core`.

You can list the directories and files on a remote `rsync` server. Just make sure to include the last forward slash in your command. For example, the following command lists the directories available in the Kernel.org Fedora Core repository:

```
rsync rsync://mirrors.kernel.org/fedora/core/
```

You'll see `updates/` in the directory tree. As you continue this process, you'll find the actual `updates/` RPMs in the `updates/4/i386/` subdirectory.

Search through the subdirectory. You'll find `debug/` and `repodata/` subdirectories. While you may be able to use the data in the `repodata/` subdirectory in your own `yum` repository, you don't need to download the hundreds of megabytes of files in the `debug/` subdirectory. To avoid downloading files from that directory, you'll need to apply the `--exclude` switch. For example, the following `rsync` command synchronizes the packages from the remote `updates/` repository, without `debug/` packages:

Note

Through Fedora Core 3, the noted repository included a `headers/` subdirectory, as created with the `yum-arch` command.

```
rsync -av --exclude debug \  
rsync://mirrors.kernel.org/fedora/core/updates/4/i386/* \  
/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/updates/
```

As noted in Chapter 3, this synchronizes the noted remote and local directories in `(-a)` archive mode, with `(-v)` verbose output. Contents from the `debug` directory are `(--exclude)` excluded.

Note

Note the backslashes (`\`) at the end of the first two parts of the command line. It's an escape character, which cancels out the carriage return; in other words, all three lines are run as a single command.

7.2 MANAGING HEADERS

One key skill in maintaining a repository is header management. Headers, stripped from RPM packages, allow yum to determine dependent packages. Unless the packages you download are identical to those on your selected mirror, you won't be able to use the headers created on the mirror. You will have to learn to create your own headers. There are two major header creation commands, which we'll review in this section and then use on a Fedora Core 4 repository.

7.2.1 Header Creation Commands

As noted earlier, there are two different commands associated with creating headers for a yum repository. Before Fedora Core 3, the key command was `yum-arch`. It may still be the primary command for the distribution for which you're managing patches. The alternative, starting with Fedora Core 3, is `createrepo`.

yum-arch

The `yum-arch` command comes with the yum RPM and is the first method to strip headers from associated RPM packages and organize them in a headers subdirectory. When the headers are available, various yum commands described in Chapter 6 can use them to identify packages and package groups, along with any dependencies for the purposes of installation, upgrades, and removals.

There are several different options associated with the `yum-arch` command. While none are absolutely necessary, they can help you in various special cases. They do not always work. For more information on the options associated with the `yum-arch` command, see Table 7-1.

Table 7-1 The yum-arch command options

Option	Description
-d	Checks for dependencies and conflicts from listed RPM packages
-n	Creates the database without headers; may be appropriate if you've already download headers
-s	Creates headers from source packages
-c	Checks package integrity against available checksums
-l	Follows any noted symlinks
-z	Compresses headers

createrepo

The `createrepo` command now creates metadata from the headers in XML format. If you're familiar with the Red Hat `comps.xml` file (available from the first installation CD's `RedHat/base` or `Fedora/base` subdirectory), you understand how these distributions use XML to organize packages and their associated package groups for installation. As Fedora (and perhaps other Linux distributions) evolves, they might move toward XML as a Linux standard to organize packages and their associated package groups.

There are several different options associated with the `createrepo` command. While none are absolutely necessary, they can help you in various special cases. For more information on `createrepo` options, see Table 7-2.

Table 7-2 The `createrepo` command options

Option	Description
<code>-g</code>	Supports commands associated with Red Hat/Fedora groups from the <code>comps.xml</code> file
<code>-p</code>	Supports output in XML format
<code>-s</code>	Selects the type of checksum to use, such as <code>md5</code>
<code>-c</code>	Checks package integrity against available checksums
<code>-u</code>	Creates headers from a list of files at a specified URL
<code>-x</code>	Excludes specified files; wildcards are allowed

If you want to see how the `createrepo` command works, you can analyze its code in the `/usr/bin/createrepo` script. As with `yum`, this command is written in Python.

7.2.2 Adding the Headers

As suggested earlier, there are two commands you can use to create the headers needed for a `yum` repository: `yum-arch` and `createrepo`. If you use `yum-arch` in Fedora Core 3 or above, you'll see the following message:

```
THIS PROGRAM IS DEPRECATED!
You should be generating xml metadata instead.
Please see http://linux.duke.edu/metadata
```

If you're running RHEL 4 or the associated rebuild distributions, you should use the `createrepo` command, because these distributions are based on Fedora Core 3. However, several other distributions still use `yum-arch`. If you don't see the "deprecated" message, use the `yum-arch` command, which is a part of the `yum` RPM.

yum-arch

The `yum-arch` command is fairly straightforward. All you have to do is navigate to the directory with the RPMs and you can create the headers in the local directory with the following command (don't forget the dot, which specifies the files in the current directory):

```
yum-arch .
```

As you can see in Figure 7-1, headers are generated and “digested.” You'll find the headers in the local `headers/` subdirectory.

```

root@suse1:/var/ftp/pub/yum/3/i386/updates
[root@suse1 updates]# yum-arch .

THIS PROGRAM IS DEPRECATED!
You should be generating xml metadata instead.
Please see http://linux.duke.edu/metadata

Digesting rpms 0 % complete: selinux-policy-targeted-sources-1.17.30-2.93.noarch
Digesting rpms 14 % complete: xorg-x11-deprecated-libs-devel-6.8.2-1.FC3.13.i386
Digesting rpms 17 % complete: selinux-policy-targeted-sources-1.17.30-2.96.noarc
Digesting rpms 19 % complete: selinux-policy-targeted-sources-1.17.30-2.94.noarc
Digesting rpms 100 % complete: epiphany-devel-1.4.4-4.3.1.i386.rpm
Total: 639
Used: 639
Src: 0

Writing header.info file
[root@suse1 updates]# █

```

Figure 7-1 The `yum-arch` command digests RPMs and exhales headers

If you're successful, the numbers associated with `Total` and `Used` in the output should match. In other words, Figure 7-1 tells me that there are 639 RPMs in this repository, and all were used to create headers.

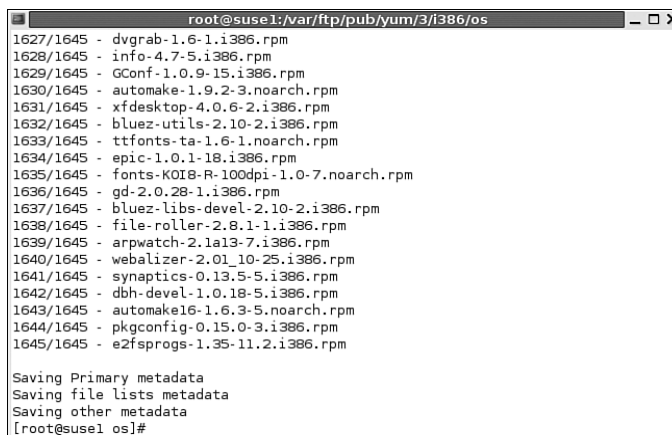
If there are problems, there may be older RPMs in the repository. Updates to an update repository where older RPMs conflict with others could be the cause. Therefore, if you use the `rsync` command to synchronize your repository, you should take care to delete older RPMs. Alternatively, you can wipe the repository directories before downloading updates.

This repository is now ready. You'll still need to share the directory with an FTP, Apache, or an NFS server.

createrepo

While the `yum-arch` command was developed for RPMs, Red Hat's move to organize packages in XML files is fairly recent. The `createrepo` command consolidates headers in compressed XML files. It creates the headers that the `yum` command needs to specify dependencies.

As you can see in Figure 7-2, the `createrepo -v <PATH>` command creates metadata. You'll find the headers in compressed XML files in the local `repodata/` subdirectory.



```
root@susel:/var/ftp/pub/yum/3/i386/os
1627/1645 - dvgrab-1.6-1.i386.rpm
1628/1645 - info-4.7-5.i386.rpm
1629/1645 - GConf-1.0.9-15.i386.rpm
1630/1645 - automake-1.9.2-3.noarch.rpm
1631/1645 - xfdesktop-4.0.6-2.i386.rpm
1632/1645 - bluez-utils-2.10-2.i386.rpm
1633/1645 - ttfonts-ta-1.6-1.noarch.rpm
1634/1645 - epic-1.0.1-18.i386.rpm
1635/1645 - fonts-KOIR-R-100dpi-1.0-7.noarch.rpm
1636/1645 - gd-2.0.28-1.i386.rpm
1637/1645 - bluez-libs-devel-2.10-2.i386.rpm
1638/1645 - file-roller-2.8.1-1.i386.rpm
1639/1645 - arptwatch-2.1a13-7.i386.rpm
1640/1645 - webalizer-2.01_10-25.i386.rpm
1641/1645 - synaptics-0.13.5-5.i386.rpm
1642/1645 - dbh-devel-1.0.18-5.i386.rpm
1643/1645 - automake16-1.6.3-5.noarch.rpm
1644/1645 - pkgconfig-0.15.0-3.i386.rpm
1645/1645 - e2fsprogs-1.35-11.2.i386.rpm

Saving Primary metadata
Saving file lists metadata
Saving other metadata
[root@susel os]#
```

Figure 7-2 The `createrepo` command

This repository is now ready. You'll still need to share the directory with an FTP, Apache, or an NFS server.

7.3 CONFIGURING A LOCAL YUM SERVER

The skills you need to configure a local yum server are not related to yum. They require knowledge of the FTP, Apache, or NFS services. While this section is not designed to provide a complete guide to any of these services, it provides a description of how you can configure a yum repository server based on the settings described earlier for Fedora Core 4 updates.

Because I personally prefer the efficiency of the FTP and NFS services for sharing files, I've covered the configuration steps required only for those services. For completeness, I've described how you can configure an Apache server to share files on a RHEL 4 yum repository near the end of this chapter. If you're configuring a yum server, what you do will vary based on the following factors:

- ☛ Distribution and version
- ☛ Preferred version of a server (configuration steps vary for different FTP and HTTP servers and, to some extent, the way different distributions implement NFS servers)
- ☛ Availability of yum for the distribution (i.e., if it isn't available, be prepared to compile yum from a source RPM)

As with other network services, `yum` servers may be sensitive to any firewalls that you may configure. If you have a firewall between the `yum` server computer and associated clients, you'll need to make sure traffic can travel through appropriate TCP/IP ports; for example, Apache services require access through TCP/IP port 80. Sure, there are ways to “tunnel” data through other services, such as SSH, but that should not be necessary for updates limited to your internal network. In any case, that level of detail is beyond the scope of this book.

7.3.1 Configuring an FTP yum Server

On current Red Hat/Fedora distributions, the default FTP server is `vsFTP`. According to its home page at <http://vsftpd.beasts.org/>, it's the default FTP server used to share a number of Linux distributions, including Red Hat and Debian. It's even used to share kernels through ftp.kernel.org.

The default version of `vsFTP` is configured in the `vsftpd` RPM. The default installation works well in most cases. The `vsFTP` configuration file is stored in `/etc/vsftpd/vsftpd.conf` for Red Hat/Fedora distributions (`/etc/vsftpd.conf` for SUSE and Debian distributions). In this case, we're working from the RHEL 4 version of `vsFTP`.

By default, `vsFTP` files are stored in the `/var/ftp` directory. By convention, files that you copy for downloads are stored in the `pub/` subdirectory. Therefore, the repository that you create should be in the `/var/ftp/pub` directory. For the example described earlier, update RPMs are stored in the following directory:

```
/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/updates
```

If you've used the commands described earlier for Fedora Core 4, you'll find the update header database in the `repodata/` subdirectory.

There is a substantial number of options for `vsFTP`, most of which you can configure in the `vsftpd.conf` configuration file. The following is a review of active options in the RHEL 4 version of this file. If you want to check the current defaults for these and other options, read the `vsftpd.conf` man page associated with your `vsFTP` RPM.

```
anonymous_enable=yes
```

You absolutely want to enable anonymous access for a FTP-based `yum` server. Anonymous access is normally enabled by default on a `vsFTP` server.

```
local_enable=yes
```

It's normally best to disable access by regular users to a FTP-based `yum` server. As it is disabled by default, all you need to do is comment out this option.

```
write_enable=yes
```

Naturally, because you do not want anyone (unless authorized) to overwrite (or even add) to a `yum`-repository, you should disable write access.

```
local_umask=022
```

If you do authorize write access (I believe you should not do so on an FTP-based `yum` server), this option sets the `umask` for any files created by users who are logged into your FTP server.

```
dirmessage_enable=yes
```

If active, this option looks for and reads any `.message` file that exists in the local directory. This can be useful if you want to send messages to other administrators.

```
xferlog_enable=yes
```

If active, this option logs downloads (and uploads) on the vsFTP server in the `/var/log/xferlog` file. For example, when I downloaded an updated version of `yum`, the vsFTP server placed the following entry in that file:

```
Mon Sep 2 17:18:25 2005 1 192.168.0.20 390363
/pub/yum/4/i386/updates/yum-2.4.0-0.fc4.noarch.rpm b _ o a anonymous@
ftp 0 * c
```

As you can see, this lists the date and time of the transfer, the client IP address, as well as the size and location of the file. This is a standard format shared with the WU-FTP server and can be mined as a database for more information on client computers that connect to your server.

```
connect_from_port_20=yes
```

Some FTP clients require this option, which uses TCP/IP port 20 for data transfers.

```
xferlog_std_format=yes
```

If you've activated the `xferlog_enable` option noted earlier, this option supports a standard format shared with the WU-FTP server.

```
pam_service_name=vsftpd
```

The `pam_service_name` option defers to Pluggable Authentication Modules to help secure the vsFTP service. This particular option sets rules in `/etc/pam.d/vsftpd`. One of the key options in this file prohibits users listed in `/etc/vsftpd.ftpusers` from logging into this vsFTP server.

```
userlist_enable=YES
```

As configured, this is redundant with the previous command. When enabled, it makes the vsFTP server read the `/etc/vsftpd.user_list` file and deny access to all who attempt to connect as one of the users listed in this file. By default, this file contains the same list of users as shown in `/etc/vsftpd.users`.

```
listen=YES
```

By default, Red Hat / Fedora configures the vsFTP server as a stand-alone service, with a `vsftpd` activation script in the `/etc/rc.d/init.d` directory. In contrast, SUSE does not configure vsFTP as a stand-alone service and configures `listen=NO` by default.

```
tcp_wrappers=YES
```

As configured, Red Hat / Fedora configures the vsFTP server for one more level of security, through TCP Wrappers support, which allows you to configure more security related commands in the `/etc/hosts.allow` and `/etc/hosts.deny` files. When you're satisfied with the configuration, you should activate the vsFTP server with the following command (which is not required if you've set `listen=NO`):

```
/etc/init.d/vsftpd start
```

Finally, you can make sure that vsFTP is active the next time you reboot Linux with the following command:

```
chkconfig vsftpd on
```

This command activates the vsFTP server whenever you're in run levels 2, 3, 4, or 5. (If you configure vsFTP in `xinetd`, it activates it in the `/etc/xinetd.d`

directory.) For the purpose of this chapter, assume the name of this server is `yum.example.com`.

7.3.2 Configuring a yum Client for an FTP-Based yum Repository

After you've configured this FTP yum server, configuring the associated yum client is a straightforward process. As you've seen in Chapter 6, yum configuration files that point to yum servers are normally configured in the `/etc/yum.repos.d` directory. For Fedora Core 4, we will examine the client file that points to the yum Update server: `fedora-updates.repo`.

For the yum FTP server as configured, all you need to include in the `fedora-updates.repo` file is the following:

```
[updates-released]
name=Fedora Core $releasever - $basearch - Released Updates
baseurl=ftp://yum.example.com/pub/yum/4/i386/updates
enabled=1
gpgcheck=1
```

As described earlier, for a vsFTP server, this means that update RPMs as well as the associated `repodata/` subdirectory are stored on the `yum.example.com` computer in the `/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/updates` directory.

7.3.3 Configuring an NFS yum Server

On current Red Hat/Fedora distributions, an NFS server is installed by default, courtesy of the `nfs-utils` RPM. The default installation works well in most cases. You can specify shared NFS directories in the `/etc/exports` configuration file. In this case, we're working from the RHEL 4 version of NFS.

You can share directories as configured on an NFS server. For the example described earlier, update RPMs are stored in the following directory:

```
/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/updates
```

Therefore, you can share this directory at any level, as long as the mount point on the NFS client is consistent. For example, I've added the following line to my `/etc/exports` configuration file:

```
/var/ftp/pub 192.168.1.0/24(ro,sync)
```

This particular configuration command shares the `/var/ftp/pub` directory. It limits access to clients in the noted IP address range. Clients are allowed read-only (`ro`) access. Changes are committed to disk before any new requests are made (`sync`).

Note

The notation shown in `/etc/exports` is associated with Classless Inter-Domain Routing (CIDR). The `192.168.1.0/24` address corresponds to a range of client IP addresses from `192.168.1.1` and `192.168.1.254` (the range excludes network and broadcast addresses).

For more information, see the `exports` man page *Linux Administration Handbook* by Evi Nemeth, Garth Snyder, and Trent Hein (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002). After you're satisfied with the configuration in `/etc/exports`, deactivate the NFS server with the following command:

```
/etc/init.d/nfs stop
```

Note

Remember, this chapter is focused on Fedora/Red Hat. The NFS server script goes by different names on other Linux distributions.

By default, this should stop any NFS services, quotas, the NFS daemon, as well as the `mountd` daemon. Next, export the changes to `/etc/exports` with the following command:

```
exportfs -a
```

Now restart the NFS services with the following command:

```
/etc/init.d/nfs start
```

Confirm the exports in from the local list with the following command:

```
showmount -e
```

If you're on another system, you can find the shared NFS directories. For example, you can list those on a server named `yum.example.com` with the following command:

```
showmount -e yum.example.com
```

Finally, you can make sure that NFS is active the next time you reboot Linux with the following command:

```
chkconfig nfs on
```


This command activates the NFS server whenever you're in run levels 2, 3, 4, or 5.

7.3.4 Configuring an NFS yum Client

You'll need to mount the NFS share on an appropriate local directory, and then configure the associated file in `/etc/yum.repos.d` to point to that share. Because we're configuring a share for Fedora updates, we'll modify the `fedora-updates.repo` file.

First, on the NFS client, you should confirm your ability to connect to a shared NFS directory. The following command connects to the `yum.example.com` NFS server to find what shares are available on that server:

```
showmount -e yum.example.com
```

You'll see the shared directories that you configured earlier, including `/var/ftp/pub`. I've mounted it on the local `/var/yum` directory with the following command:

```
mount yum.example.com:/var/ftp/pub /var/yum
```

If the `/var/yum` directory does not yet exist, you'll get an error message. Now you can configure your `fedora-updates.repo` file in your `/etc/yum.repos.d` directory. For the `yum` NFS server as configured, all you need in `fedora-updates.repo` is the following:

```
[updates-released]
name=Fedora Core $releasever - $basearch - Released Updates
baseurl=file:///var/yum/yum/4/i386/updates
enabled=1
gpgcheck=1
```

As described earlier, for a vsFTP server, this means that update RPMs as well as the associated `repodata/` subdirectory are stored in the `yum/4/i386/updates` subdirectory, mounted on the `/var/yum` directory.

Note the syntax associated with the `baseurl` command. The `file:` command works in place of `ftp:` or `http:`. The triple forward slash (`///`) is the standard syntax required for mounted directories.

If you've configured a Fedora Updates repository on a Fedora Core server, this command may be slightly different. Based on the directory specified earlier, you would substitute the following `baseurl` command:

```
baseurl=file:///var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/updates
```

Naturally, you may want to configure this shared directory as part of the boot process for each NFS client. It's possible to configure it in the default `/etc/fstab` configuration file, as well as through the Automounter daemon. I recommend the latter, which avoids hangups when there are network problems. The Automounter daemon is easy to configure; it requires the `autofs` RPM. After that RPM is installed, here's how you can configure a NFS client for Fedora updates as configured in this chapter:

1. Install the `autofs` RPM; if you've configured `yum`, the simplest way is with the following command. Even if you're not sure if `autofs` is installed, this command makes sure that you have the latest version of the Automounter:

```
yum install autofs
```

2. Configure the Automounter master file to read from `/etc/auto.misc`. Open the `/etc/auto.master` configuration file. You'll see sample commands; activate the following to read from the noted file. The timeout prevents your system from hanging if there's a problem with your network or the NFS server.

```
/misc /etc/auto.misc --timeout=60
```

Automounter shares configured in `/etc/auto.misc` are configured as sub-directories of `/misc`.

3. Configure the Automounter `/etc/auto.misc` file to read from the shared NFS directory. Based on the shared directory and NFS server name described earlier, add the following line to that file:

```
yum -ro,soft,intr yum.example.com:/var/ftp/pub
```

4. Start the Automounter service with the following command:

```
/etc/init.d/autofs start
```

Note

Yes, it is possible to use the `/etc/auto.net` script to find and connect to shared NFS directories. But it might not be compatible with SE Linux. For more information, see bug 174156 on bugzilla.redhat.com.

5. Test the result. If your network is connected and the NFS server is running, you should be able to see the shared NFS directory with the following command:

```
ls /misc/yum
```

Occasionally, you may need to run this command more than once to establish the connection.

6. Configure the `/etc/yum.repos.d/fedora-updates.repo` file to point to this directory as shared. Based on the previously shared NFS directory, the `baseurl` command would be

```
baseurl=file:///var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/updates
```

7. Test the result with the `yum update` command. You should see messages similar to a regular `yum update` from other local or remote servers.

7.4 ADDING OTHER REPOSITORIES

You might want to maintain other repositories on a local server. Based on the chapter so far, you should have the tools you need to create the server and configure your clients to read from that server.

As suggested earlier, there are several different repositories available for Fedora, such as Extras, Development, and Testing repositories. In many cases, you might want to add repositories from allied distributions. For example, Fedora Core 3 repositories may be suitable for RHEL 4 and related rebuild distributions. There are also third-party repositories available; many of the same third-party `apt` repositories described in Chapter 5, “Configuring `apt` for RPM Distributions,” also include “yummified” RPM repositories of possible interest.

7.4.1 Using Distribution Installation Files

If you’ve followed the steps described earlier, you’ve copied the files from the Fedora Core 4 installation CDs to a directory in your yum repository. You should have a copy of the installation DVD (or CDs) in the following directory:

```
/var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/os/
```

You can now yumify this repository with one of the following commands. Naturally, if you’re using Fedora Core 3 or later, you should install the `createrepo` RPM and then yumify the repository with the second command:

```
yum-arch /var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/os/*
createrepo /var/ftp/pub/yum/4/i386/os/*
```

If you’re running Fedora Core 4 on your clients, you can now point the `fedora.repo` configuration file in the `/etc/yum.repos.d` directory to the installation repository. If you’ve configured the FTP server described earlier, you should use the following `baseurl` command in that file:

```
baseurl=ftp://yum.example.com/pub/yum/4/i386/os/
```

7.4.2 Keeping Extras with yum

One useful Fedora repository is known as Extras. It includes a number of packages not integral to the smooth running of the distribution. However, the Fedora Core 4 Extras repository includes a number of packages of interest,

including Tripwire, the WindowMaker GUI, the BitTorrent download manager, and even the `apt` tools described in Chapter 5.

Depending on how frequently you or your users need Extras packages, you might want a local copy of that repository. It might not be easy to find this repository in the `rsync` mirrors. For example, the mirror listed for the University of Southern California (USC) is `rsync://mirrors.usc.edu/fedora/`. Sometimes, you'll find seemingly duplicate copies of the same repository in different directories. For example, the following two commands return the same list of packages from the Fedora Core 3 Extras repository:

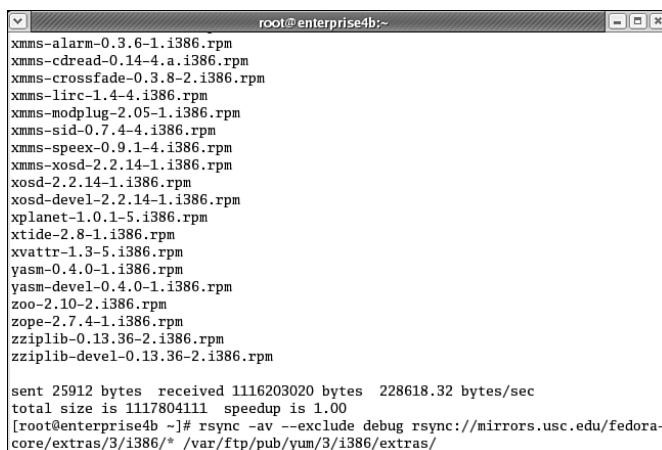
```
rsync rsync://mirrors.usc.edu/fedora/fedora/fedora/3/i386/RPMS.extras/
rsync rsync://mirrors.usc.edu/fedora-core/extras/3/i386/
```

In this case, the packages from the first repository are newer than those I found in the second. Naturally, I want the newest version of all packages, so I synchronize with that repository.

You can copy this repository to your own system. Based on the directories and `rsync` commands described earlier, the following command would synchronize your system with the `rsync` repository from USC:

```
rsync -av --exclude debug \
rsync://mirrors.usc.edu/fedora/fedora/fedora/3/i386/RPMS.extras/* \
/var/ftp/pub/yum/3/i386/extras/
```

You can review the output in Figure 7-3. As you can see, the information includes the amount of data transmitted across the network. In this case, I downloaded over a gigabyte of data. You do not want to repeat this process often.



```
root@enterprise4b:~
xmms-alarm-0.3.6-1.i386.rpm
xmms-cdread-0.14-4.a.i386.rpm
xmms-crossfade-0.3.8-2.i386.rpm
xmms-lirc-1.4-4.i386.rpm
xmms-modplug-2.05-1.i386.rpm
xmms-sid-0.7.4-4.i386.rpm
xmms-speex-0.9.1-4.i386.rpm
xmms-xosd-2.2.14-1.i386.rpm
xosd-2.2.14-1.i386.rpm
xosd-devel-2.2.14-1.i386.rpm
xplanet-1.0.1-5.i386.rpm
xtide-2.8-1.i386.rpm
xvattr-1.3-5.i386.rpm
yasm-0.4.0-1.i386.rpm
yasm-devel-0.4.0-1.i386.rpm
zoo-2.10-2.i386.rpm
zope-2.7.4-1.i386.rpm
zziplib-0.13.36-2.i386.rpm
zziplib-devel-0.13.36-2.i386.rpm

sent 25912 bytes received 1116203020 bytes 228618.32 bytes/sec
total size is 1117804111 speedup is 1.00
[root@enterprise4b ~]# rsync -av --exclude debug rsync://mirrors.usc.edu/fedora-core/extras/3/i386/* /var/ftp/pub/yum/3/i386/extras/
```

Figure 7-3 A lot of data is downloaded the first time you synchronize

7.4.3 Adding Development Repositories

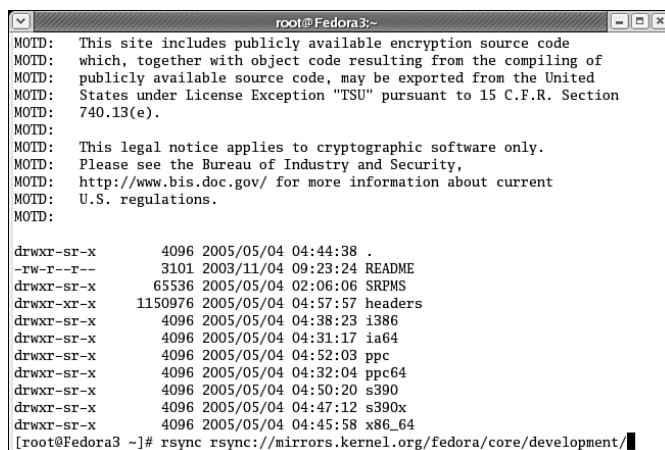
Do not mirror a Development repository unless it is absolutely necessary. Development RPMs are, by definition, not stable. They are not suitable for production systems. Because the RPMs in this repository are updated frequently, sometimes daily, updates take up a lot of bandwidth.

You or your users might want access to development repositories for different reasons. For example, your users might be interested in helping with Linux development. You might need to test the latest version of a package that is adding new features that you may need. You might want to test Fedora Linux on an architecture other than standard PC 32- or 64-bit CPUs.

Development repositories are available through most of the same mirrors associated with Fedora Linux. Unless your users need access to such packages frequently, it's best to leave such repositories on remote mirrors.

Using the techniques described earlier, find the `development/` repository associated with your favorite mirror. For example, as shown in Figure 7-4, the following command returns a substantial list of architectures available through this repository:

```
rsync rsync://mirrors.kernel.org/fedora/core/development/
```



```
root@Fedora3:~  
MOTD: This site includes publicly available encryption source code  
MOTD: which, together with object code resulting from the compiling of  
MOTD: publicly available source code, may be exported from the United  
MOTD: States under License Exception "TSU" pursuant to 15 C.F.R. Section  
MOTD: 740.13(e).  
MOTD:  
MOTD: This legal notice applies to cryptographic software only.  
MOTD: Please see the Bureau of Industry and Security,  
MOTD: http://www.bis.doc.gov/ for more information about current  
MOTD: U.S. regulations.  
MOTD:  
drwxr-sr-x      4096 2005/05/04 04:44:38 .  
-rw-r--r--      3101 2003/11/04 09:23:24 README  
drwxr-sr-x      65536 2005/05/04 02:06:06 SRPMS  
drwxr-xr-x     1150976 2005/05/04 04:57:57 headers  
drwxr-sr-x      4096 2005/05/04 04:38:23 i386  
drwxr-sr-x      4096 2005/05/04 04:31:17 ia64  
drwxr-sr-x      4096 2005/05/04 04:52:03 ppc  
drwxr-sr-x      4096 2005/05/04 04:32:04 ppc64  
drwxr-sr-x      4096 2005/05/04 04:50:20 s390  
drwxr-sr-x      4096 2005/05/04 04:47:12 s390x  
drwxr-sr-x      4096 2005/05/04 04:45:58 x86_64  
[root@Fedora3 ~]# rsync rsync://mirrors.kernel.org/fedora/core/development/
```

Figure 7-4 Many architectures associated with the Fedora Development repository

Note

Use the Development repository at your own risk. As defined by the `README` file associated with the repository, “DO NOT USE THESE RELEASES FOR ANY WORK WHERE YOU CARE ABOUT YOUR APPLICATION RUNNING, THE ACCURACY OF YOUR DATA, THE INTEGRITY OF YOUR NETWORK, OR ANY OTHER PURPOSE FOR WHICH A RESPONSIBLE HUMAN WOULD USE A COMPUTER.”

The available architectures are defined in Table 7-3.

Table 7-3 Fedora architectures

Label	Description
i386	Standard 32-bit PCs
ia64	Itanium 64-bit PCs
ppc	32-bit Power PC-based computers
ppc64	64-bit Power PC-based computers
s390	System 390 IBM computers; now known as zSeries
s390x	System 390 IBM computers; now known as zSeries
x86_64	AMD 64-bit PCs

7.4.4 Other Distribution Repositories

In some cases, you might want access to repositories available for other distributions. For example, if you’re running RHEL 4, you might want access to Fedora Core 3 repositories for additional packages. As RHEL 4 is based on Fedora Core 3, many packages from this version of Fedora work fine without modifications.

While you can mirror the repositories from other distributions, you should not do so unless you use packages from those repositories frequently. Otherwise, you’ll be using a lot of space with packages that might not work with your system. In fact, any Fedora Core 3 packages that you install on RHEL 4 are not supported by Red Hat.

If you’ve installed the `yum` and `createrepo` RPMs from Fedora Core 3 on RHEL 4, you can include the files of your choice in the `/etc/yum.repos.d` directory. However, you should not install the RPM that installs Fedora Core 3 repository files in this directory because it may change the version associated with your system and affect the way your RHEL 4 system communicates with the Red Hat Network.

If you do not have access to Fedora Core 3, you can get more information about the files in the `/etc/yum.repos.d` directory at <http://fedoranews.org/tchung/yum-mirrorlist/>. For details on how these files work (as well as those for Fedora Core 4), see Chapter 6.

7.4.5 Third-Party Repositories

In some cases, you might want access to repositories available from third parties. We've covered several of the third-party repositories in Chapter 6. As you've read, they're available for several different distributions, especially those related to Red Hat Enterprise Linux or Fedora.

Evaluation copies of RHEL are available as of this writing from www.redhat.com/software/rhel/eval/. The subscription is valid for 30 days, and it includes access and administration privileges on the Red Hat Network. You can read about some of the associated features in Chapter 2. After the subscription expires, you might be able to update your RHEL system using the repositories available from one of the RHEL rebuild distributions. Naturally, any packages that you download and install from a third-party are not supported by Red Hat and are done so at your own risk.

Unfortunately, many third-party repositories discussed in this book do not have `rsync` servers available. You'll have to use more conventional methods, such as FTP, to download the files associated with these repositories. Many of these mirrors are administered by small groups or even individuals. They might not be able to support enterprise-level package downloads. Therefore, if you use a third-party repository frequently, consider creating your own mirror of that repository.

7.5 MAINTAINING THE REPOSITORY

Patch management means that you have to maintain updates for all the computers on your network. For the repositories that you've created, that means you need to keep them up to date. Generally, that means configuring updates as a cron job, not only for clients, but between your local repository and the mirror of your choice. You've seen samples of the cron jobs you can use for clients in Chapter 6. In this section, we'll see how you can maintain a local repository.

As repositories are kept up to date, sometimes headers can be corrupted. In that case, you can delete the headers, whether from the `headers/` directory or from the compressed files in the `repodata/` directory.

7.5.1 Updating Packages

Generally, you'll want to update repositories on a daily (or nightly) basis. After a repository is created, the required downloads go down significantly. In most cases, you'll be able to create your own script in the `/etc/cron.daily` directory, which is automatically run on a daily basis, as determined by the schedule as defined in `/etc/crontab`.

As you saw earlier, the following command can synchronize files on the noted local directory with a remote server at `mirrors.kernel.org`:

```
rsync -av --exclude debug \  
rsync://mirrors.kernel.org/fedora/core/updates/3/i386/* \  
/var/ftp/pub/yum/3/i386/updates/
```

I've created the `repo` file in my `/etc/cron.daily` directory and added the following commands:

```
#!/bin/sh  
  
rsync -av --exclude debug \  
rsync://mirrors.kernel.org/fedora/core/updates/3/i386/* \  
/var/ftp/pub/yum/3/i386/updates/
```

7.5.2 Cleaning Header Information

If there are problems with updates, check the applicable log file. It's available in the `yum.log` file in the `/var/log` directory. In many cases, it can help to regenerate headers. In other words, you would take the following steps:

1. Delete the `headers/` or `repodata/` subdirectory in your repository.
2. Navigate to the directory with the repository.
3. Regenerate the headers with the command that applies to your distribution: `yum-arch` or `createrepo`.

7.6 CREATING AN ENTERPRISE REPOSITORY

In Chapter 2, you learned about patch management on RHEL computers. The Red Hat Network Proxy Server is an effective way to cache RPMs for multiple RHEL systems. However, some administrators prefer standard tools, such as `apt` and `yum`.

In this section, we'll show you how you can configure a `yum`-based repository from packages downloaded using the Red Hat Update Agent. If you want to use update other RHEL clients from this repository, you may be required by contract to have valid subscription for each of these clients, even if the packages are covered by an open source license.

Note

Do not use this book to update RHEL systems unless they have a current, valid subscription.

A working RHEL repository requires a combination of the existing installation packages, as well as the updates available over the Red Hat Network. When combined, you'll have a set of packages that includes all the dependencies you might need.

The repository creation process on an RHEL system requires four basic steps:

1. Download the packages required to update your system; make sure they aren't deleted after they're installed. Add the packages associated with the RHEL installation CDs.
2. Apply the `yum-arch` or `createrepo` commands to "yummify" the repository.
3. Share the repository directory with an appropriate service, such as Apache, FTP, or NFS.
4. Configure your clients to update from the new repository.

Depending on the channels you want to mirror, this process may require 2GB or more of downloads. If you have only one or two RHEL systems, you may find this process not to be worth the trouble. However, if you have several dozen RHEL systems, this might save you time and bandwidth.

If you have a substantial number of RHEL systems, you should consider the Red Hat Network Proxy Server described in Chapter 2. However, if you prefer standard tools, such as `yum`, and have the authorized Red Hat subscriptions for the RHEL clients on your network, you the approach taken in the following sections is a viable alternative.

Note

If you're working with a RHEL rebuild distribution, it's best if you use the patch management tool (`yum` or `apt`) configured for that distribution. Then you can keep it up to date by synchronizing your repository with that available from the mirror of your choice.

7.6.1 Creating a RHEL Update Repository

In Chapter 2, you learned to use the Red Hat Update Agent to update RHEL systems. With the right configuration, you can save the updated RPMs as an RHEL update repository. There are several basic steps in this process:

1. First, log into the Red Hat Network and assign desired channels to the RHEL Update Repository system.
2. Next, configure the Update Agent to keep downloaded packages.
3. Configure the system where you'll store packages as needed.
4. Download desired RPMs into your repository.
5. Add RPMs from the installation CDs.

Assign Desired Channels from the Red Hat Network

First, log into the Red Hat Network. Make sure your system is subscribed to the channels from which you want to create your repository.

As shown in Figure 7-5, you can configure your system with available channels, assuming that you have allowed subscriptions to that channel. To find your currently allowed subscriptions, click Channels on the top bar, then click Channel Entitlements on the left pane. Assign the channels of your choice, and then click Change Subscriptions. If you see the following error message, you may need additional subscriptions:

The assignment would exceed your allowed subscriptions in one or more channels

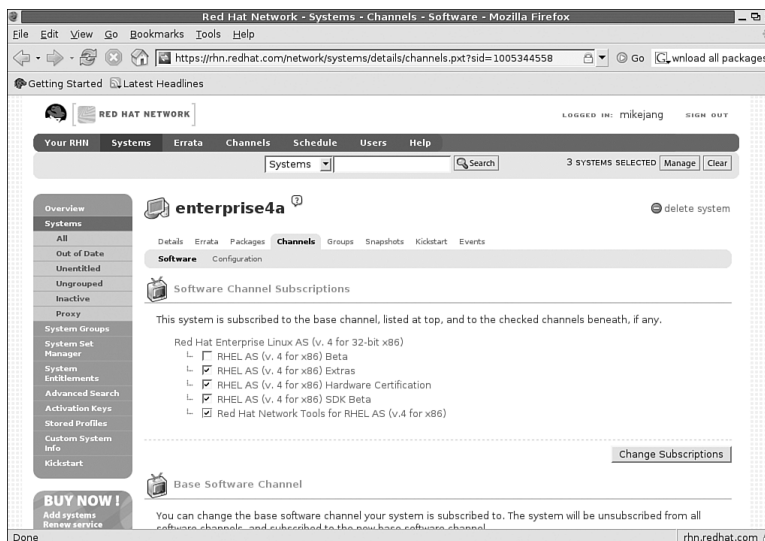


Figure 7-5 Assigning RHEL Channel Subscriptions

To confirm your channel assignments, log into the computer that you intend to use as the repository. The following command should return the channels that you've assigned:

```
up2date --showchannel
```

Based on Figure 7-5, the channels that you should see are as follows:

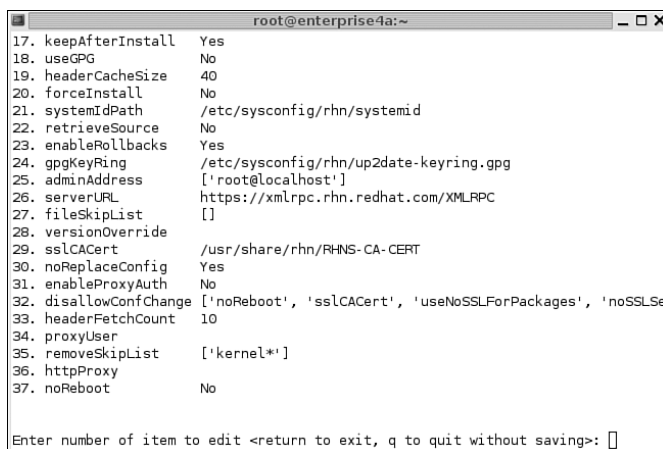
```
rhel-1386-as-4
rhel-1386-as-4-extras
rhel-1386-as-4-hwcert
rhel-1386-as-4-sdk
rhn-tools-rhel-4-as-1386
```

Configure the Update Agent to Keep Downloaded RPMs

Log into the computer that you intend to use as a repository. Updated RPMs are stored by default in the `/var/spool/up2date` directory. Make sure that updated RPMs are not deleted. To do so, run the `up2date-config` command. You'll see the screen shown in Figure 7-6.

Note

If you're in the GUI, you might need to run the `up2date-config --nox` command to access the options shown in Figure 7-6.



```

root@enterprise4a:~
17. keepAfterInstall Yes
18. useGPG No
19. headerCacheSize 40
20. forceInstall No
21. systemIdPath /etc/sysconfig/rhn/systemid
22. retrieveSource No
23. enableRollbacks Yes
24. gpgKeyRing /etc/sysconfig/rhn/up2date-keyring.gpg
25. adminAddress ['root@localhost']
26. serverURL https://xmlrpc.rhn.redhat.com/XMLRPC
27. fileSkipList []
28. versionOverride
29. sslCACert /usr/share/rhn/RHNS-CA-CERT
30. noReplaceConfig Yes
31. enableProxyAuth No
32. disallowConfChange ['noReboot', 'sslCACert', 'useNoSSLForPackages', 'noSSLse
33. headerFetchCount 10
34. proxyUser
35. removeSkipList ['kernel*']
36. httpProxy
37. noReboot No

Enter number of item to edit <return to exit, q to quit without saving>: 

```

Figure 7-6 Configuring the Update Agent to keep RPMs

Enter option 17 (the option number may vary). This is associated with the “`keepAfterInstall`” variable. If set to yes, packages which are downloaded remain available in `/var/spool/up2date` after they're installed. The next time you download packages from the Red Hat Network, packages will be stored in that directory, and they won't be deleted.

Note

You may also want to disable automatic updates to the `up2date` RPM, which is usually the option before `keepAfterInstall`. Any updates to `up2date` substitutes the default settings in `/etc/sysconfig/rhn/up2date`. If the `up2date` RPM is upgraded, you can restore your custom settings from the `up2date.rpmnew` file in the same directory. Just be aware, if you disable updates of `up2date`, updates will be disabled the next time there's a new version of `up2date` available.

Configure the Repository with Appropriate Partitions

As you've seen throughout this book, repositories require gigabytes of space. It often makes sense to configure repositories in separate partitions. For the purpose of this repository, I've configured `/var/spool/up2date` on a new partition or logical volume.

For details on how you can configure a new partition, refer to any good basic book on Linux administration, including *Linux Administration Handbook* by Evi Nemeth, Garth Snyder, and Trent Hein (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002) or *Mastering Red Hat Enterprise Linux 3* by Michael Jang (Alameda, CA: Sybex, 2004). If you want more information on these commands or settings, refer to that book. If you have free space on an available partition, you can assign it to `/var/spool/updates`. One method would use the following steps, which assume that you've added a new hard drive. The steps may vary widely depending on the hard drive and whether there are existing partitions on that drive.

1. Open the hard disk of your choice for editing. For example, assume you've added a new hard drive. If this drive is the first SCSI or SATA hard drive on your system, run the `fdisk /dev/sda` command.
2. Assign a new partition with the `n` command. You'll need to press `p` to assign a new primary partition. Assign partition number 1, start with the first cylinder, and assign the room you need. You can do so with a `+10GB` entry when prompted for the last cylinder. Press `w` to write the new partition table to the hard drive.
3. Format the drive. To format it with the default `ext3` file system, run the following command:

```
mkfs -t ext3 /dev/sda1
```

4. Mount the `/var/spool/updates` directory on that drive.

```
mount /dev/sda1 /var/spool/updates
```

5. Make sure the drive is mounted the next time you reboot your computer. Add the following line to your `/etc/fstab` configuration file:

```
/dev/sda1 /var/spool/updates ext3 defaults 1 2
```

Download Desired RPMs from the Repository

Now you can download the desired RPMs from the Red Hat Network. You can download just the updates, but because of dependencies, those might not be enough. Therefore, download all available RPMs from the Red Hat Network channels to which you subscribe. This is a multi-step process. With the following command (which specifies a RHEL 4 Workstation channel), you can download the RPMs from your desired channel not currently installed on your system. Shortly, you'll add RPMs from your installation CDs.

```
updates -d --installall --channel=rhel-i386-ws-4
```

There is no separate updates repository on the Red Hat Network. New packages are incorporated into existing channels. Therefore, this command downloads all packages you do not have installed, including any updated RPMs.

Naturally, because there are around 2GB of data on RHEL installation RPMs, the download may be extensive. Depending on the speed of your connection, you may need to wait several hours for downloads. One example is shown in Figure 7-7.

```

root@enterprise4b:~
xorg-x11-doc-6.8.1-23.EL.i3 ##### Done.
xorg-x11-sdk-6.8.1-23.EL.i3 ##### Done.
xorg-x11-twm-6.8.1-23.EL.i3 ##### Done.
xorg-x11-xdm-6.8.1-23.EL.i3 ##### Done.
xpdf-3.00-11.5.i386.rpm: ##### Done.
xrestop-0.2-4.i386.rpm: ##### Done.
xsane-0.92-13.i386.rpm: ##### Done.
xsane-gimp-0.92-13.i386.rpm ##### Done.
xterm-192-1.i386.rpm: ##### Done.
zisofs-tools-1.0.6-1.i386.r ##### Done.
zsh-4.2.0-3.i386.rpm: ##### Done.
zsh-html-4.2.0-3.i386.rpm: ##### Done.
The following Packages were marked to be skipped by your configuration:

Name                               Version      Rel   Reason
-----
kernel                             2.6.9       5.0.5.ELPk name/pattern
kernel-devel                       2.6.9       5.0.5.ELPk name/pattern
kernel-doc                         2.6.9       5.0.5.ELPk name/pattern
kernel-hugemem                    2.6.9       5.0.5.ELPk name/pattern
kernel-hugemem-devel              2.6.9       5.0.5.ELPk name/pattern
kernel-smp                        2.6.9       5.0.5.ELPk name/pattern
kernel-smp-devel                  2.6.9       5.0.5.ELPk name/pattern

```

Figure 7-7 Downloading updates

Add RPMs from the Installation CDs

Now you should add the RPMs from the RHEL installation CDs. If you have the physical CDs, the mount command is elementary. If you have the ISO files (as I do), the mount command requires a small trick. For example, when I've stored the ISOs on my /mnt/test partition, I can mount the first RHEL ISO with the following command:

```
mount -o loop /mnt/test/RHEL4-i386-AS-disc1.iso /media/cdrecorder
```

You can then copy the RPMs to the /var/spool/up2date directory with the following command:

```
cp -ar /media/cdrecorder/RedHat/RPMS/* /var/spool/up2date/
```

Naturally, when the process is complete with the first CD, you'll want to unmount and repeat the process with the other RHEL CDs until you've copied all available RPMs to the /var/spool/up2date directory.

7.6.2 Yummifying the RHEL Update Repository

After you've configured the files you need in the RHEL repository, you can set it up as a `yum` repository. As described earlier in this chapter, this requires the `yum-arch` or `createrepo` commands, depending on your distribution. The `createrepo` package was adapted for Fedora Core 3. Because RHEL 4 was built from Fedora Core 3, we'll use this package to "yummify" this repository.

If you haven't already done so, install the `yum` and `createrepo` RPMs. As discussed earlier in this chapter, they are not currently available from RHEL 4 channels. However, compatible versions are available from Fedora Core 3 repositories. Download guidelines are described earlier in this chapter.

Now you can yummify your repository with one of the following commands, whichever is appropriate to your distribution:

```
yum-arch /var/spool/up2date
createrepo /var/spool/up2date
```

If successful, you'll find `headers/` or `repodata/` subdirectories in the `/var/spool/up2date` directory. I've used the second command on my RHEL 4 system, with downloaded updates and installation RPMs that I've just described.

7.6.3 Sharing the RHEL Repository

Now you can share the RHEL 4 repository that you've just created. You can configure the Apache or NFS servers described earlier. Unfortunately, as described earlier, the vsFTP service does not follow symlinks, for the security reasons described earlier. In this case, we'll configure the server that we did not configure before, the Apache Web Server. We won't go into detail on how to configure Apache on your system; we'll just create a basic configuration that you can use for a RHEL repository.

If you want more information on how you can configure Apache on RHEL, there are many excellent books available, including *Apache Administrator's Handbook* by Rich Bowen (Indianapolis, IN: Sams Publishing, 2002).

In this case, I've just installed the `httpd` RPM package on RHEL 4. To make sure it works, start the daemon with the following command:

```
apachectl start
```

If you see a message related to “Could not determine the server’s fully qualified domain name,” do not be concerned. There is no URL specified in the default version of the Apache configuration file, `httpd.conf`, in the `/etc/httpd/conf` directory.

Test the result. If you’re on the computer with the repository, open a browser and navigate to `127.0.0.1`. If the service is working, you’ll see the Red Hat Enterprise Linux Test Page. Test the result on a remote computer. I’ve configured the repository computer with an URL of `yum.example.com`, and therefore can navigate to that URL to see the same test Web page.

By default, Apache files on this distribution are stored in the `/var/www/html` directory. You already have a repository in the `/var/spool/up2date` directory. To allow apache to work with the repository, you need to link directories. One method is with the following command:

```
ln -s /var/spool/up2date /var/www/html/up2date
```

If everything goes right, you should be able to navigate to the `up2date/` directory on the Apache server. In my case, I’ve navigated to `http://yum.example.com/up2date/`. However, that doesn’t work at first. I’ve started with the default RHEL 4 Apache configuration file. For more information, see the `error_log` in the `/var/log/httpd` directory. The key error message from this file is

```
Directory index forbidden by rule: /var/www/html/
```

To address this issue, I’ve modified the messages associated with the Apache root directory. The default configuration file includes the following stanza about 25 percent of the way into the file:

```
<Directory />
  Options FollowSymLinks
  AllowOverride None
</Directory>
```

The `Options` directive you need is `Indexes`, which leads me to substitute the following command line:

```
Options Indexes FollowSymLinks
```

Now, you can try the desired URL again. You should see a result similar to Figure 7-8, with a list of files linked from the `/var/spool/up2date` repository.

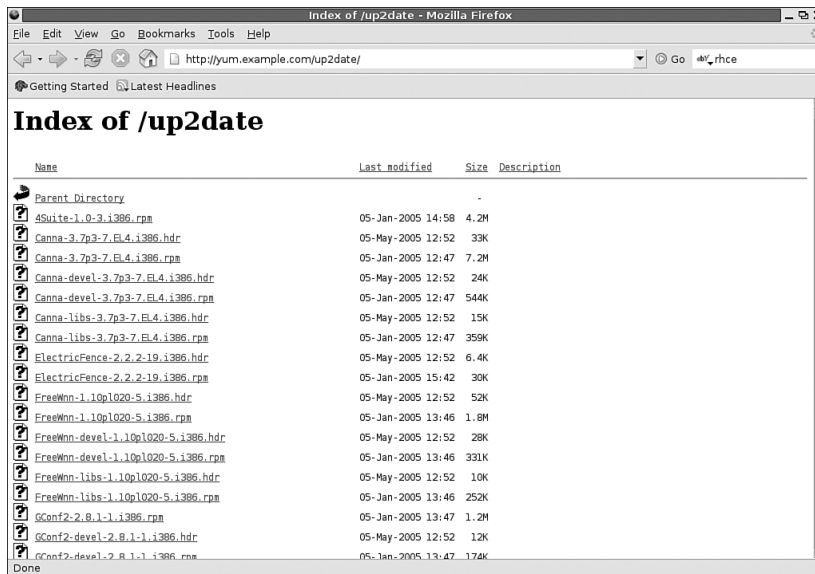


Figure 7-8 A RHEL 4 yum Repository

Naturally, you can also share `/var/spool/up2date` with an NFS server by using the techniques described earlier in this chapter.

7.6.4 Configuring Updates to the RHEL Repository

After you've added the packages you need to `/var/spool/up2date`, it is up to you to maintain that RHEL repository. While the Red Hat Network does not include a `rsync` server, the effect from updates is essentially the same. You can repeat the same commands described earlier, and only new packages are downloaded. However, obsolete packages are not removed from the local mirror.

However, if you've copied all of the installation files to the `/var/spool/up2date` directory, this is not necessary. You just need the updated RPMs, which are available with the following command:

```
up2date -u
```

If you want to keep using `/var/spool/up2date`, make sure that you never restore the defaults associated with the Red Hat Update Agent. Otherwise, the updated RPMs would be deleted after the next update. (You may also want to disable upgrades to the `up2date` RPM, as described in an earlier note.)

7.6.5 Configuring Clients to Use the RHEL Repository

Naturally, if you've created a repository on a RHEL computer, you may want to use it for that computer. You've already downloaded and installed the yum RPM package. You can now create a configuration file in the `/etc/yum.repos.d` directory similar to those you've created in Chapter 6. In this case, the repository is local; therefore, you can specify the `file:///` (that's three forward slashes) label described earlier to point to the `/var/spool/updates` directory.

For example, I've entered the following in the `local.repo` file in the `/etc/yum.repos.d` directory:

```
[local]
name=Mike's local RHEL 4 repo
baseurl=file:///var/spool/updates
gpgcheck=1
enabled=1
```

Now I can use the `yum` commands described in Chapter 6 to update the system with the repository. Naturally, you can configure other RHEL 4 clients to use the same repository. Based on the Apache server configured earlier, I've modified the aforementioned `local.repo` file accordingly:

```
[local]
name=Mike's local RHEL 4 repo
baseurl=http://yum.example.com/updates
gpgcheck=1
enabled=1
```

7.7 SUMMARY

While there are many Linux users who prefer other tools for doing their patch management, yum is designed for RPM-based distributions. Its popularity has grown as Fedora Linux has adapted yum as its primary patch management tool. Because the Red Hat Network is not available unless you're a subscriber, many RHEL rebuild distributions have also adapted yum for updates and more.

The repository creation process can be time-consuming. If you use packages from installation CDs, you can save some time. With the `rsync` command, you can download the remaining packages that you need. The advantage of `rsync` is that you can keep your repositories up to date with the same commands that you've used to download the packages you need.

When created, you'll need to share your repositories. There are three major sharing services: NFS, Apache, and FTP. When shared, you can configure your clients to point to the repositories on your local network, minimizing the loads on your Internet connection, allowing you to focus on those packages critical to security and functionality on your network.

While you can use the Red Hat Network Proxy Server described in Chapter 2 to manage patches and updates on RHEL computers, you can also configure a yum repository based on an amalgamation of RHEL installation packages and updates.

We've covered a broad array of patch management tools that you can use on almost any Linux distribution. There are other excellent tools exclusive to specific distributions, such as `uprmi` for Mandriva and `emerge` for Gentoo. Our lack of coverage of these tools is not intended to denigrate these excellent tools but simply reflects the scope of this book.