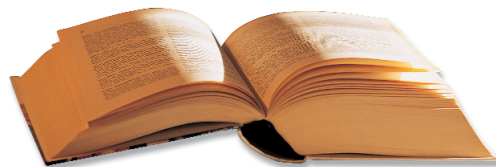


Book Reviews

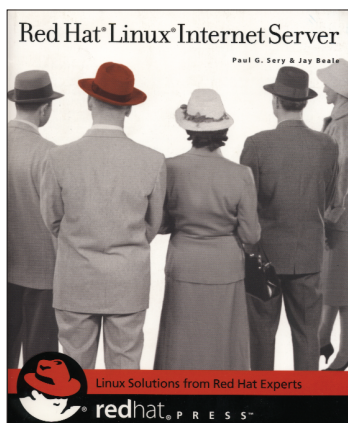


Red Hat Linux Internet Server

Emblazoned with Red Hat approval, this book sets out with high expectations. After reading from cover to cover the overall conclusion is that it meets and surpasses them.

The book takes the reader carefully through setting up an Internet server under Red Hat.

It starts with the basic principles of networks, DSL Internet connections, firewalls and troubleshooting. Part two introduces HTML and HTTP protocols and then shows how to construct and manage a simple Apache server. It then goes on to explain how to connect a database to the server and how to build an audio streaming server, using Ogg Vorbis. The next section deals with simple Internet ser-



vices such as building a DNS, sendmail, FTP and, of course, Samba. The book then explains management techniques before covering in the fifth part the all important aspect of security.

The first appendix deals with further information that you can download from the publishers website. A well balanced appendix on installing and configuring a modem to gain Internet access is useful for new users, but should not be needed if

you are at the stage of setting up web servers. The final appendices cover using DHCP and using KickStart to automate

your installations so that, once completed, you never have to do it again.

Overall the advice offered in the book is practical with much spent on the need for and ability to handle security. Each of the sections starts by explaining how something works. This valuable understanding will save you time when problems occur. The authors have taken the time to produce a valuable tool rather than a quickly put together tome. Their knowledge does seem to shine to make the book a must have.

This is a comprehensive manual, approved by Red Hat, which will show you everything that you ever wanted to know about setting up an Internet server and probably a bit more as well. ■

Paul G Sery and Jay Beale

550 pages

Wiley, 0-7645-4788-7

£37.50, US \$50.00, EUR 61.90

Linux Server Hacks

As the forward to this book is at pains to point out, Hackers are different from Crackers and hacks are everything to do with solving problems creatively and nothing to do with illegal activities. I think the forward was added as a sop to the general book buying public (and reviewers!) as those of us in the community already know, or should know the difference. Or possibly it was internal publicity as it was extracted from Eric Raymond's "Cathedral and the bazaar" book, also published by O'Reilly.

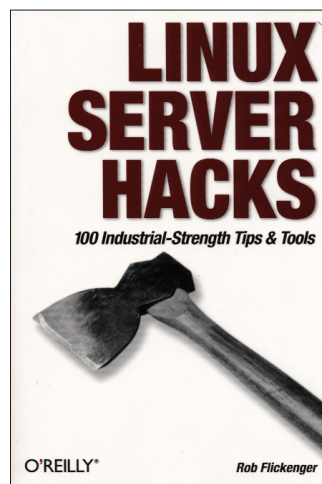
The hacks contained in this book cover a wide cross-section of problems and it really comes into its own in those "I know the answer to this, but I just cannot remember the exact details" moments that we all suffer with. You can flick through the book, saying all the time "How stupid of me to have forgotten" or "Oh why did I not think of that".

The book is aimed at administrators, although anyone who has a Linux com-

puter of their own will find the information wonderful. The hacks are distribution non-specific, so are useful to all Linux users. Each problem and solution in the book is briefly written which means you do not have to wade through pages of information and that you can very quickly find the answer.

The hacks are not just server related. If fact the majority seem to be for general Linux administration dealing with anything from locked out systems to CVS logins. This does not detract from its usefulness as they are all the usual problems in the life of a Linux user and administrator.

The publishers have set up a website where you can submit your own hacks



to help others and this is certainly worth adding to your favorite bookmark lists to read through every now and again <http://hacks.oreilly.com/>. They hope to include the best hacks submitted to the site in any future volumes.

The book is such fun, that it has become a great way to test the memory and knowl-

edge of other admins with quickfire questions over a drink. Overall the book is an excellent source of quick fixes for common problems. ■

Rob Flickenger

222 pages

O'Reilly, 0-596-00461-3

£17.50, US \$24.95, EUR 25.00

The Unix CD Bookshelf

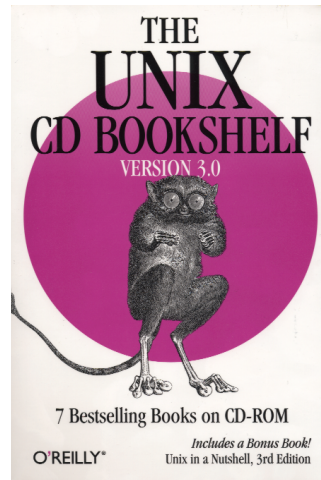
Seven books on a CD at less than half price, providing value for money if nothing else. You get Unix in a Nutshell (3rd edition), Unix Power Tools (3rd edition), Mac OS X for Unix Geeks, Learning the Korn Shell (2nd edition), sed & awk (2nd edition, 1996), Learning the vi editor (6th edition, 1998) and Learning the Unix Operating System (5th edition). You also get a paper copy of Unix in a Nutshell, probably so that the package looks more impressive than a single CD would. It is a shame that a couple of books are quite old, it would have been nice if they had been updated for this edition, as I am sure that there must have been something new to include about sed, awk and vi. Having said that, apart from those mentioned, the other books are all recent editions, mostly less than twelve months old.

If you are a beginner to Unix you could do much worse than starting with this CD. You will have all the standard texts

and techniques at the touch of a button and the search facility using any Java enabled browser, can find the answer to any query spread over the seven books. What you cannot do, however, is take it along to keep you occupied on a long train journey or to pass the time in the bath.

All the books are very good introductions to their subjects and it would be hard to find this range of information for under £100 anywhere else.

Unfortunately the search engine is not the easiest in the world to use, tending to give vast numbers of irrelevant results unless you are careful. If you already own some of the books, as many of us do, then the compendium's value is



reduced as there is nothing new added for this edition, indeed it might have been preferable to have included a different book as the hard copy text just to spread the variety still further. Personally I will hold out for the Linux CD bookshelf, which I am sure will be forthcoming eventually and if it follows the same format, will be very useful. In

the meantime the Unix bookshelf could come in handy, and will certainly take up less space on my overcrowded desk than all the equivalent books would. ■

Author – Various

600 pages plus CD

O'Reilly, 0-596-00392-7

£85.50, US \$129.95, EUR 130.00

advertisement